THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUALISTIC AND COLLECTIVISTIC VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND EARLY CAREER INDECISION

by

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DECLARATION

I, Elizabeth Lock, student number 40965295, declare that "**The relationship between individualistic and collectivistic value orientations and early career indecision"**, is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or have quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____   _____

SIGNATURE   DATE

EDITING DECLARATION

This is to certify that I, Moya Joubert, edited the dissertation **"The relationship between individualistic and collectivistic value orientations and early career indecision".**

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SIGNATURE   DATE

SUMMARY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUALISTIC AND COLLECTIVISTIC VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND EARLY CAREER INDECISION

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ELIZABETH LOCK

SUPERVISOR	**:**	**MR Z.C. BERGH**
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DEGREE	**:**	**MA (INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY)**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between early career indecision and individualistic and collectivistic cultural value orientations amongst new entrants to the workplace. The INDCOL (Triandis, 1995) was used to gather information on the vertical and horizontal scales of the individualism and collectivism of respondents, while the Career Decision Scale (CDS) (Osipow, 1987) was used to gather information on the levels of career certainty and career indecision. A sample of convenience of N=115 new entrants to the workplace in a typical South African governmental organisation was used. The results indicated that there is no relationship between individualistic and collectivistic cultural value orientations and career indecision and that biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision. However, it was found that the biographical variables of race and gender may have a significant impact on the cultural value orientations of individuals in the South African work context.

KEY TERMS

Individualism, collectivism, cultural value orientations, career indecision, vertical individualism, horizontal individualism, vertical collectivism, horizontal collectivism, certainty, indecision.

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CHAPTER 1

SCIENTIFIC OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

This dissertation focused on the relationship between career indecision and cultural value orientations towards individualism and collectivism.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the background to and rationale for the research. The chapter commences with a discussion of the background and rationale, followed by the formulation of the problem statement and research questions. On the basis of the aforementioned, the aims of the research are then stated. The paradigm perspective, which guides the research, is discussed and the research design and research method with their different steps, which give structure to the research process, are formulated. Finally, the chapter layout is explained. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Career indecision has long been a phenomenon of interest to researchers (Feldman, 2003) and has been used to refer to problems relating to career development, specifically pertaining to problems in making career-related decisions (Rojewski, 1994). Career decision making is a complex process (Germeijs & De Boeck, 2003) and the preparatory and decision-making stages involved in career decisions are becoming increasingly stressful and confusing (Lee, 2005). Career indecision in the context of prospective university students has been defined as the inability to select an occupation or university major (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992). Students are typically classified into two groups in career decision making, namely "decided" and "undecided" (Lee, 2005). According to the literature, the undecided group should not be treated as a homogeneous group, but should be classified into subtypes according to more specific factors (Chartrand, Robbins, Morrill & Boggs, 1990). Hence, more recent research has focused on the definition and determination of several types and categories of career indecision (Wanberg

& Muchinsky, 1992).

Career indecision, in particular, was investigated by vocational psychologists from the 1960s, and initially focused mainly on the negative consequences that young people are faced with as a result of lack of self-insight into their own skills and abilities, a lack of specific information about various occupations and labour markets and a particular fear of commitment to any specific career path (Feldman, 2003). The phenomenon of repeated and extended switching of career paths is becoming increasingly predominant among teenagers and young adults (Feldman & Whitcomb, 2005). There is growing evidence that young adults are changing career paths and fields of study more frequently, experiencing difficulty committing to specific career goals and taking longer to make even provisional commitments to initial career paths (Feldman, 2003). The high psychological and financial costs caused by career indecision could be an underlying factor in the continued interest in the field (Gordon & Meyer, 2002).

According to Super (1957), the problems of early career indecision among young adults are the result of the types of situations these young people face as well as the nature of their own personal development. Young adults are faced with complex professional decisions about what university degrees to obtain, what career path to follow, what organisation to select and what job offer to apply for and accept. What complicates career indecision even more for those between the ages of 18 and 30 is that it involves a perplexing array of personal decisions that have to be considered and made at the same time. Such decisions have a tremendous impact on the lives of young adults and include decisions about leaving home, marriage and starting a family, decisions about money, leisure, friendship and individuals' different roles in life (Feldman, 2003). All of these decisions have to be faced at a time when young adults' core personalities are not yet completely developed and when they have had minimal experience in making key decisions (Ployhart, Ryan & Bennett, 1999). By studying career indecision, one may be able to better understand the roots of this phenomenon and in so doing assist young adults in making suitable career choices.

The earliest research on career indecision focused mainly on the negative consequences that young adults faced because of their lack of self-insight into their own skills and abilities. More recently, researchers such as Betz and Voyten (1997) have noted that some of the short-term negative consequences of early career indecision may ultimately result in long-term positive consequences, such as when a better job-person fit is achieved as a result of young adults' extended search and exploration behaviour. Other researchers such as Rousseau (1995) and Sharf (1997) support this notion and state that a longer period of early career exploration may be better for young adults because it could ultimately help them find vocations that truly fit their interests and abilities. A certain degree of changing career paths and fields of study is natural among young adults as they explore the world of work and discover their strengths and weaknesses (Moss & Frieze, 1993).

According to Feldman (2003), early career indecision does not refer to an individual's inability to formulate life-long career goals or an unwillingness to plan all the intermediate steps required to achieve those ultimate career goals. Some researchers may argue that setting early career goals is in fact dysfunctional for young adults because the career landscape is so volatile. This volatility makes perfectly rational career decision making nearly impossible and only results in young adults setting themselves up for psychological failure. The prospect of boundaryless careers (those that cross multiple functions and stretch across multiple organisations) encourages young adults to experiment in their early career to broaden their horizons. This perspective therefore views early career indecision as desirable if it ultimately helps young adults find their true vocational interests and abilities (Hall, 1994).

When discussing the nature of career indecision, it is necessary to also consider the literature on decision-making theories. In the literature, much has been written about decision making, but only a small subset of the literature discusses the difficulty individuals experience when making vital decisions, and of this research, only a smaller number of studies investigate indecision (Elaydi, 2006). Although the research field has overlooked indecisiveness as

a unique construct that can have a significant impact on the decision-making process, organisations are starting to realise the ubiquitous occurrence of indecisiveness in their top management (Elaydi, 2006). Indecisiveness can be toxic to a leader's ability to perform and can be defined as "the state of experiencing negative concurrent emotions while being stuck in the decision-making process" (Elaydi, 2006, p. 1368). According to Elaydi (2006), indecision can give critical insight into CEOs' and boards of directors' decision making processes and perceptions. Understanding the role of emotions during the decision-making process is complex, and many individual and environmental variables can make an individual vulnerable to indecisiveness. Indecision, even in its earliest manifestation in the organisation, such as when new entrants enter the workplace and experience career indecision, could have a significant impact on the upper echelons of organisations, where indecisiveness can affect millions of lives and cost billions.

According to Feldman (2003), a potential area for theory development is the role of cultural values in the incidence and resolution of early career indecision amongst young adults. Culture may be defined as "the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group's response to its environment (Hofstede, 1980, p. 19). A value can be defined as "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally and socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). Values are an integral part of any culture (Rokeach, 1973), and have cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Hofstede's (1980) typology of cultural values offers an interesting starting point to address the issue of cultural values and its effect on early career indecision. According to Hofstede (1980), societies differ across four major cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. The dimension of interest in this research is individualism (versus collectivism) and how the particular values unique to each culture group (individualistic and collectivistic) relate to career indecision in the South African context.

South Africa underwent a democratic transformational process in 1994, resulting in a multi cultural society with rich cultures mixing (Afrikaners, Africans, English, etc.), and 11 official languages. The history of South Africa is largely one of racial divisiveness (Littrel & Nkomo, 2005). Apartheid was based on a system of racial categorisation and separation dividing the population into whites, which include Afrikaners and English speaking South Africans, Africans, Asians and coloureds (Schutte, 2000). Cultures manifest in the behaviours of the groups in a specific region, which follow from their cultural expressions (Karsten & Illa, 2005). Thus, in South Africa, whites are normally associated with Western cultures and are individualistically oriented, while Africans and Asians are mainly associated with a non-Western culture and are collectivistically oriented. This is confirmed by research by Hofstede (1980), Kim (1994) and Triandis (1986). There is no certainty about where the coloureds fit in.

Western cultures (i.e. whites in the South African context) are associated with individualism, and focus on individual personal qualities and self-achievement (Brand, 2004). In an individualistic culture, behaviour is explained with reference to personality, traits, principles and attitudes (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). In individualist societies, the self is more independent and autonomous, and the self-concept is associated with autonomy, egocentrism and independence (Scott, Ciarrochi & Deane, 2004). Individualists tend to be competitive, and achievement focused, and devalue the role of interpersonal relatedness (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai & Lucca, 1988). Greater priority is given to the individual's personal goals than to group goals, and individualists are therefore less likely to subordinate personal goals to group goals (Scott et al., 2004). Because determining one's own unique life course is extremely important in an individualistic culture (Brand, 2004), young adults in individualistic cultures may receive less pressure from their parents to pursue any one occupation in particular (Feldman, 2003). Owing to the fact that young adults in individualistic cultures are raised to be relatively autonomous, self-oriented, competitive and achievement focused it is hypothesised that individualists (whites in the South African context) will be more career decided.

In contrast, non-Western cultures (Africans and Asians in the South African context) tend to reflect a collectivistic self-concept in which the individual thinks of himself or herself more in terms of relations with others (Brand, 2004). Collectivism is characterised by an interdependent self-construal and emotional interdependence (Triandis, Chan, Bhawuk, Iwao & Sinha, 1995). In collectivistic cultures, children are educated to value the virtues of group life as found in the family, the school or the state (Brand, 2004). In a collectivist society, behaviour is explained as reflecting culturally mandated norms (Wang & Ollendick, 2001) and is regulated by in-group norms (Triandis et al., 1995). Seeing oneself as a larger social whole and as fundamentally interdependent is central to the collectivistic cultures. Success is attributed to help from others, while failure is attributed to lack of effort (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). Young adults in collectivistic cultures are socialised to weigh group expectations heavily in making personal decisions (Hofstede, 1980) and as a result, may view their career options as much narrower in scope. Owing to the fact that young adults in collectivistic cultures are raised to be interdependent, regulated by in-group norms and base personal decisions on group expectations, it is hypothesised that collectivists (Africans and Asians in the South African context) will be more career undecided.

It remains to be determined whether coloureds in South Africa are more individualistic or collectivistic. The nature of their cultural values (whether individualistic or collectivistic) may influence their levels of career indecision. The aim of this researcher is to establish this.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Although there are numerous studies on career indecision, career development and career interventions, researchers still advocate the need for further research and interest in this field (Gordon & Meyer, 2002). According to Fouad and Byars-Winston (2005), little information is available on the role of race, gender or sexual orientation in career interventions, and although research shows that career counselling is effective, it is not clear how cultural variables may influence the career decision-making process. To be effective,

career counsellors need to understand not only the cultural values of the client, as advocated by Brown (1996), but also the multiple contexts in which he or she lives and how society helped frame his or her opportunities for and barriers to success. Previous research on career indecision in the South African context consisted predominantly of Afrikaans and English-speaking participants, with no representation of the African language speakers (Gordon & Meyer, 2002). In addition, Feldman (2003) states that there has been no research on cross-cultural differences in early career indecision. The researcher is curious in terms of what people's cultural values are in South Africa, 14 years after the democratic transformation commenced. Are black Africans still collectivistic or have they become more Westernised? How do these cultural values impact on the career decision making of young adults in South Africa? And, are these values related to career indecision?

To address the above issues, this research was designed to answer the following literature and empirical question:

- Is there a relationship (correlation) between cultural value orientations (individualism and collectivism) and early career indecision?

1.3   AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

Given the specific problem to be investigated, the aims of this research project are formulated below.

1.3.1   General aim

The general aim of this study was to examine the effect of cultural value orientations (individualism and collectivism) on early career indecision amongst new entrants to the workplace.

1.3.2   Specific aims

The specific aims relating to the literature review were to

- conceptualise career indecision

- conceptualise cultural value orientations (individualism and collectivism)

- theoretically integrate cultural value orientations and career indecision

The specific aims relating to the empirical study were to

- identify the cultural value orientation in a sample of new entrants to the workplace in terms of individualism and collectivism

- identify the level of career indecision in the same sample of new entrants to the workplace

- investigate the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision amongst new entrants to the workplace

- determine whether biographical variables have an effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision

- investigate the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations

- investigate the relationship between biographical variables and early career indecision

- formulate recommendations in terms of future research directions in this field

1.4   HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses for this research were as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

H_{01}:   There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_1:   There is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Hypothesis 2:

H_{02}:   Biographical variables have no statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_2:   Biographical variables have a statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

There are several subhypotheses relating to the independent and dependent variables, which will be outlined below. Demographic variables such as gender, race, and age are also reviewed in the context of career indecision to enhance the understanding of the concept.

Hypothesis 3:

H_{03}:   Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H_3:   Biographical variables have a relationship with early cultural value orientations.

Hypothesis 4:

H_{04}: Biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision.

H_4: Biographical variables have a relationship with early career indecision.

1.5 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

With reference to the paradigm perspective of the research, the relevant paradigms will be discussed.

Paradigms are portrayed (Plug, Meyer, Louw & Gouws, 1986) as one of the following:

- a model or template which can be applied to a variety of aspects

- a set of assumptions, besides others, in particular science, which can be utilised to describe a particular phenomenon

- a basic approach utilised by all researchers of a particular science

- a research design, based on a particular set of assumptions

This research will be conducted in the field of industrial and organisational psychology, defined as the scientific study of the relationship between humans and the world of work. Based upon its focus on the relationship between individual cultural value orientations and career indecision, this research overlaps within the industrial and organisational psychology subject fields of organisational psychology and career psychology. As such, the research was based upon both the humanistic and career psychology paradigms.

The basic assumptions of the humanistic paradigm are as follow (Quitmann, 1985):

- A human being represents more than the sum of his or her parts.

- A human exists in context.

- Humans have to make decisions on the basis of choices. They need not be passive spectators, but can actively change their lives and situations. Underlying this is the need for actualisation of potential.

- Human existence is intentional. This forms the basis of human identity.

Humanistic psychology focuses on the significant role and function of subjectivity in people's living experiences (Corey, 2001). People are viewed as purposeful and intentional beings who make sense of their experiences. They construct their perceptions and reality through the interaction between their phenomenological world and external and social contexts. People function as holistic beings of social interest and it is the whole person who acts as a complex and integral human entity, integrating thinking, feeling and behaviour into a consistent operational flow (Chen, 2001). This holistic functioning enables a person to experience what he or she encounters in various personal and social contexts. From an existential perspective, human beings yearn for meaning in life. This search for meaning is a natural part of human existence and a necessity because from a meaning schema, individuals generate a hierarchy of values. Values provide people with a blueprint for life conduct; values tell us not only why we live but how to live (May & Yalom, 2000, p. 286). It has been suggested that values play a central role in forming various aspects of a person's career development path (Brown, 1996).

The notion of meaning taken from humanistic psychology provides a relevant conceptual basis for understanding and explaining an essential phenomenon

in people's way of being. People construct and interpret meaning while living a life. This principle applies to career psychology, for one's work life and career experiences are always an inseparable part of one's whole life episode. According to Super (1990) one's career identity reflects a part of one's total self-concept. Career experiences intertwine with general life experience, creating an integral system of human experiencing and functioning (Hansen, 1997). One of the key variables influencing personal preference is one's value system (Chen, 2001). It has been suggested that values play a central role in forming various aspects of a person's career development path (Brown, 1996). Values do not sprout from a psychological vacuum, but instead, are rooted in and grow from a deep sense of what one truly believes in. According to Chen (2001), people give meanings to their value system, and values exist because they are meaningful to people. Like the role of values in other aspects of life, values influencing one's career choices, planning and decision making are those considered to be meaningful to one's career selection, advancement and well-being. Ultimately, values convey and transcend rich meanings to a higher level of self-awareness, directing and managing one's career-coping behaviour (Chen, 2001).

The foregoing review of some of the key theoretical perspectives in humanistic psychology and career psychology seems to be heuristic in that the two schools share an important rationale behind the role and function of meaning in people's life career experiences. This parallel notion in humanistic and career psychology lies in the acknowledgement of the social dimension in subjective meaning making. Human experiences occur in various social contexts, and it is impossible to interpret meanings in a social vacuum. Social interests and interaction affect the process of meaning making. Thus, an individual's cultural values (derived from social interests and interactions) should impact on his or her career decision or indecision.

1.6   RESEARCH DESIGN

Research, as a process, is characterised by constant decision making, during which a rational decision-making process is employed, with the ultimate aim

of maximising both the internal and external validity of research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1990).

To ensure that this research complies with the values embodied in the aforementioned, attention will be focused on the following:

- control over the irrelevant variables (Huysamen, 2002) and

- control over internal validity by employing relevant and appropriate research methodology, using

- an objective and a rational decision-making process (Mouton & Marais, 1990)

- where the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable is measured (Huysamen, 2002)

1.6.1 Explanatory research

This research is characterised by a literature review of both value orientations (individualism and collectivism) and career indecision, which will be explanatory. Explanatory research goes further than merely indicating that relationships exist between variables (Mouton & Marais, 1990). It indicates the direction of the relationships in a causal relationship model. The researcher seeks to explain the direction of the relationships. This form of research will be applicable in the empirical study of the relationship between the value orientations of individuals and career indecision. The end goal of the research is to draw a conclusion about the relationship between the constructs of individualism, collectivism and career indecision.

1.6.2 Quantitative research

A quantitative research approach will be followed in this study. The statistical procedures that will be used consist of both descriptive statistical and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics is deemed necessary to summarise the results and convey the findings effectively; while inferential statistics provides insight into the degree of certainty with which predictions can be made about obtaining the same results in future research (Saslow, 1982). Pearson's product-moment correlation will be used to analyse the data.

1.6.3 Validity

Research design is synonymous with rational decision making during the research process. Irrespective of how structured or unstructured a research project is likely to be, it is the researcher's duty to ascertain which factor may pose a threat to the validity of the findings. By paying attention to nuisance variables in a critical and systematic manner, it is possible to ensure that the ultimate findings are likely to be more valid (Mouton & Marais, 1990).

Research must be internally and externally valid. This validity can be ensured by proper research design. According to Mouton and Marais (1990), for research to be internally valid, the constructs must be measured in a valid manner, and the data that are measured must be accurate and reliable. The analysis should be relevant to the type of data collected, and the final solutions must be adequately supported by the data. For the research to be externally valid, the findings must be applicable to all similar cases. The findings must be valid for similar studies other than the one under review (Mouton & Marais, 1990).

1.6.3.1 Validity with regard to the literature review

In this research, validity was ensured by making use of literature relating to the nature, problems and aims of the research. Some of the constructs, concepts and dimensions that form part of the concepts individualism,

collectivism and career indecision in this research are to be found in the relevant literature. Hence, there has not been a subjective choice of constructs, concepts and dimensions. The researcher also ensured that the concepts and constructs were ordered logically and systematically. Every attempt was made to search for and employ the most recent literature sources.

1.6.3.2 Validity with regard to the empirical research

In the empirical research, validity was ensured through the use of appropriate and standardised measuring instruments. The measuring instruments were critically examined for their criterion-related validity (to ensure accurate prediction of scores on the relevant criterion), content validity and construct validity (the extent to which the measuring instruments measure the theoretical constructs they purport to measure).

1.6.4 Reliability

Reliability was ensured by structuring the research model in such a way that nuisance variables were limited. The research context was respected at all times. Reliability of a literature review is ensured when other interested academics have access to the literature sources and the theoretical views in the literature.

In terms of the empirical research, reliability is ensured when a truly representative sample is used. In this research, confounding variables were minimised through the sampling procedure and by including instruments of which the reliability had been proven in previous research.

1.6.5 The unit of analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis was the individual. Where the individual is the unit of analysis, the researcher focuses on the characteristics and the orientations of individual behaviour. This research focused on the value

orientations and career indecision of the individual. The purpose was to determine whether there is a relationship between the value orientations and career indecision of individuals.

1.6.6 Variables

This research was interested in measuring the effects of the two independent variables on a dependent variable. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), an independent variable is the presumed cause of the dependent variable. In terms of this research, the criterion data of career indecision were the dependent variable and the criterion data of the two value orientations, individualism and collectivism, the two independent variables. In order to measure the relationship between the independent variables (individualism and collectivism) and the dependent variable (career indecision), criterion data on the dependent and independent variables were collected by means of the criteria forms (measuring instruments) selected for the purpose of this research.

1.7   RESEARCH METHOD

The research will be presented in two phases, the literature review and the empirical study. The flow of the research process is depicted in figure 1.1.
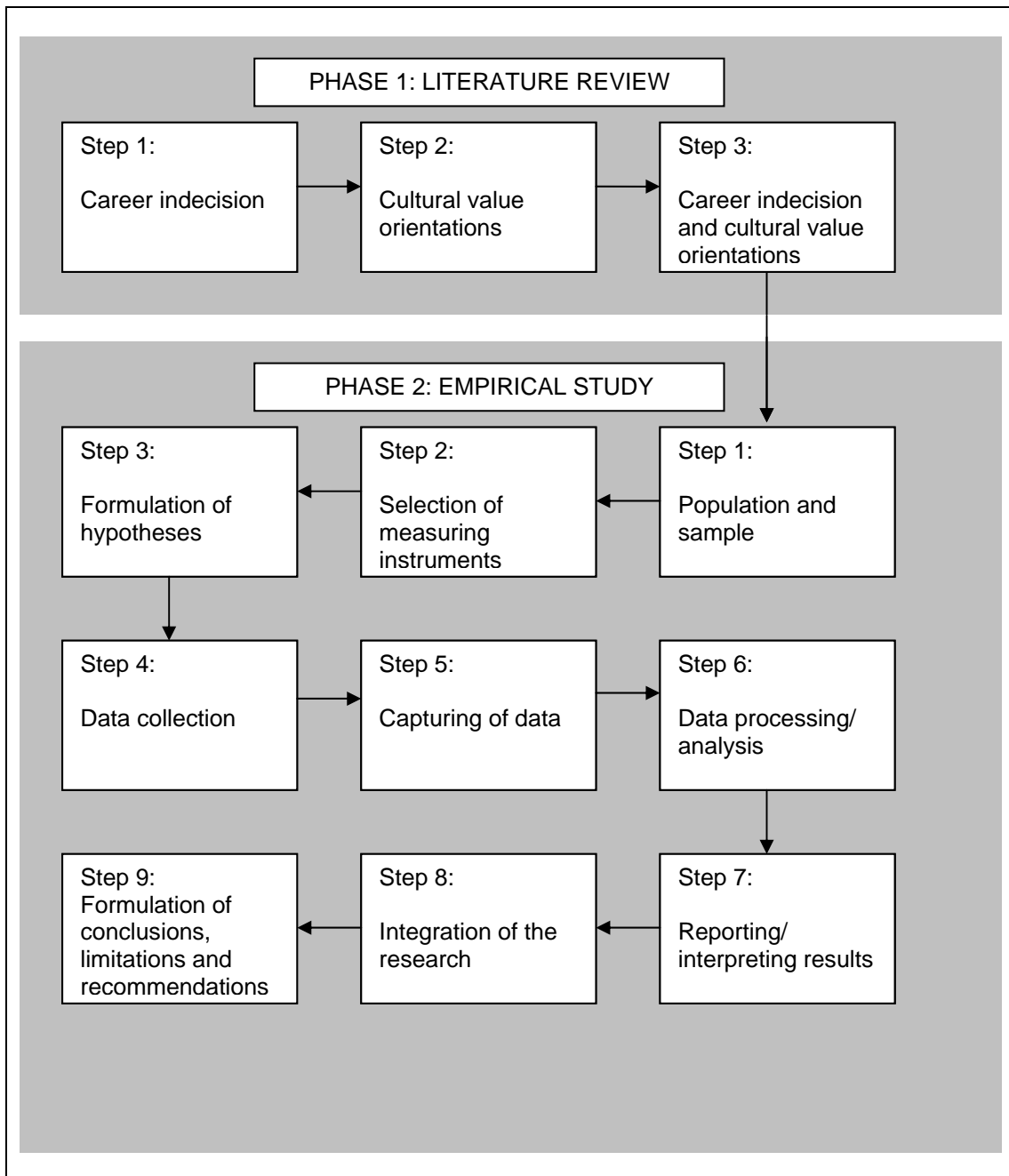
Figure 1.1   Flow diagram of the research method

1.7.1 Phase 1:   the literature review

The literature review consisted of a review of career indecision and individualistic and collectivistic value orientations.

Step 1:   *the conceptualisation of career indecision*

A critical evaluation was made of the concept of career indecision and research relating to the concept was discussed.

Step 2:   *the conceptualisation of cultural value orientations in the South African context*

A critical evaluation was made of individualistic and collectivistic value orientations in the South African context.

Step 3:   t*he theoretical integration of career indecision and value orientations*

This step relates to the theoretical integration of the constructs of career indecision, individualism and collectivism with the formulation of a conceptual framework for a theoretical relationship between these three constructs and its implications for industrial and organisational psychology practices in career counselling.

1.7.2 Phase 2:   the empirical study

An empirical study was conducted in the South African organisational context. The empirical study involved the following steps:

Step 1:   *choosing the organisation and participants*

The population was identified and the sample determined.

Step 2:   *selecting the measuring instruments*

The measuring instruments, which measure the dependent variable (the construct career indecision) and the two independent variables (individualism and collectivism), were selected.

The Career Decision Scale (CDS) developed by Osipow (1987) was used to assess the extent and nature of career indecision. This scale comprises 18 items that assess certainty (items 1 and 2) and indecision (items 3-18). Responses are recorded on a four-point continuum ranging from 1 (*like me)* to 4 (*not like me).* Higher scores on the remaining 16 items indicate career indecision. The CDS has an adequate temporal stability and validity (Osipow, Carney & Barak, 1976). In addition, Sabourin and Coallier (1991) reported alpha coefficients of .79 and .86 for the certainty scale and the indecision scale, respectively. There is evidence of the concurrent, construct and predictive validity of the CDS in numerous previous studies (Hartman, Fuqua, Blum & Hartman, 1985; Osipow, 1987).

The Individualism and Collectivism (INDCOL) instrument developed by Triandis and Singelis (Triandis, 1995) was used to assess individualism and collectivism. The INDCOL consists of 63 items, measuring two kinds of individualism (horizontal and vertical) and two kinds of collectivism (horizontal and vertical). The horizontal types refer to emphasis on equality and the perception of people having more or less the same self, which is typically found in homogeneous cultures. The vertical types refer to acceptance of inequality.

The first part of the INDCOL consists of 32 items divided evenly (8 each) among the four dimensions (VI, HI, VC, HC). The alpha reliabilities for the scales were horizontal individualism .67, vertical individualism .74, horizontal collectivism .74, and vertical collectivism .68 (Triandis, 1995). When the horizontal and vertical items were combined to give overall measures (16 items each) of individualism and collectivism, the alphas for the two scales were .66 and .78 respectively (Triandis, 1995).

The second part of the INDCOL includes some scenarios that provide an additional method for the measurement of horizontal-vertical, individualism-collectivism.

A questionnaire compiled by the researcher, containing biographical information was also administered. The biographical information included gender, race, age, year group, geographical data of origin, socioeconomic class, source of ethnic background and religion.

Step 3:   formulating the research hypotheses

In order to operationalise the research, empirical hypotheses were formulated. A detailed description of the central hypotheses and the subhypotheses can be found in chapter 4.

Step 4:   administering the research procedure

This step involved the collection of data from individuals in group settings. Individuals were required to complete a paper-based version of the two measuring instruments.

Step 5:   capturing the criterion data

The responses of subjects to each of the items of the two questionnaires where captured on an electronic database (an Excel spread sheet).

Step 6:   performing the statistical analysis

The statistical procedures relevant to this research included the following:

- frequency tables
- means
- standard deviations
- Cronbach alpha coefficients
- Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients
- analysis of variance (ANOVA)
- t-test

- level of significance (p-value)
- power

More detailed information on the statistical analysis techniques applied in this study is provided in chapter 4.

Step 7: *reporting and interpreting the results*

The results are reported in tables and figures, which provides the relevant statistical data. The results are interpreted to ensure clarity.

Step 8: *integrating the research*

The findings relating to the literature review are integrated with the findings from the empirical research in order to integrate the overall findings of the research.

Step 9: *formulating conclusions, limitations and recommendations*

The final step relates to drawing conclusions based on the results and their integration with the theory. The shortcomings of the research are discussed, and recommendations made in terms of individualism and collectivism as determinants of career indecision and industrial and organisational psychology practices in career counselling.

1.8   CHAPTER LAYOUT

The chapter layout is as follows:

Chapter 1   Scientific overview of the research

The aim of this chapter was to give a scientific overview of the research.

Chapter 2   Career indecision

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise the concept career indecision.

Chapter 3   Cultural value orientations towards individualism and collectivism

3.1   The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise the constructs of individualism and collectivism.

3.2   Integration of the literature review

The purpose of the theoretical integration of the constructs of career indecision, individualism and collectivism is to formulate a conceptual framework describing the theoretical relationship between these constructs.

Chapter 4   The empirical research

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the empirical research. Firstly, the aims of the empirical research are set out. The steps taken in terms of describing the sample, the questionnaire, data collection, administration and the statistical processing of the data are then reviewed. Finally, the research hypotheses are formulated.

Chapter 5   Research results

The purpose of this chapter is to test the research hypotheses. The results of the empirical study are reported by means of descriptive, common and inferential statistics.

Chapter 6   Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

This is the final chapter in which the results are integrated and conclusions drawn. The limitations of the study are explained and recommendations made

for the field of industrial and organisational psychology with regard to career indecision and further research. The chapter ends with a few concluding remarks to integrate the research.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided the scientific orientation to the research. It explained the background to and rationale for the research, the research problem, the aims of the study, the paradigm perspective, the research design and methodology. The chapter concluded with the chapter layout. The rationale for this study is based on the fact that no known research has been conducted on the relationship dynamics between cultural value orientations of individualism and collectivism and career indecision in the multicultural South African context.

In chapter 2, career indecision will be conceptualised as the first step in the literature study.

CHAPTER 2

CAREER INDECISION

The aim of this chapter is to focus on and conceptualise the concept of career indecision, as described in step 1 of the literature review. It sketches the 21st century career context in which individuals are faced with multiple decisions in terms of career choice, and makes specific reference to the South African workforce composition. Against this backdrop, career indecision is defined, the relationship between indecisiveness and career indecision described and the various types of career indecision examined. The nature of career indecision is discussed, from which perspectives of decision making flow. This is followed by a broad discussion of the factors associated with career indecision. Finally, career indecision among adults in the organisational context is highlighted. The chapter concludes with a summary.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Choosing a career is a vital step that affects the life course of an individual. According to Gati (1998), decisions about one's career are among the most significant decisions one has to make. A career choice may fulfil an individual's needs, values and interests and ultimately influence his or her quality of life.

The study of career indecision has made significant advances in the past 20 years (Gordon, 1998). Career indecision started as a dichotomous concept (Gordon, 1998) and initial efforts to study the construct of career indecision utilised the decided-undecided dichotomy (Fuqua, Newmamn & Seaworth, 1988). The construct of career indecision later evolved into a unidimensional continuum and more recently into a complex and multidimensional construct (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992).

Deciding what career to pursue is considered a main developmental task of late adolescence and early adulthood (Sharf, 2002). Consequently, research

on career indecision originally focused on the problem of career decision making among students (Osipow, 1999). In more recent years, the issue has grown to encompass a broad life spectrum owing to the increased frequency of events that require people to revise their career decisions over their life span.

The events that require people to revise their career decisions over their life span encompass a wide range of socioeconomic transformations. According to Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2007), contemporary society is undergoing a profound and wide range of socioeconomic changes, and South Africa is no exception. These transformations have a profound impact on the world of work in the 21st century and have modified the concept of career (Baruch, 2004).

Over the last decade, frequent change appears to have become an enduring feature of many workplaces with resultant implications for organisational and individual career development (Griffin & Hesketh, 2006). The way we view and enact careers has changed markedly (Forret & Sullivan, 2002). Instead of having to make a career decision only during one's late adolescence and early adulthood, the need has arisen to revise one's career plans in a variety of life transitions. Indecision is therefore now regarded as a developmental phase through which individuals may pass on their way to reaching a decision (Osipow, 1999). In these times, which are characterised by instability and constant change in organisations, career indecision is a state which may come and go over time as a decision is made, is implemented, grows obsolete and ultimately leads to the need to make a new decision.

In order to gain a better understanding of the context in which individuals need to make career decisions, it is necessary to take a closer look at the 21st century world of work.

2.2   THE 21st CENTURY CAREER CONTEXT

In the past, individuals were, generally, faced with a single, major choice of selecting a career after matriculating, and would pursue their career choice and follow that same career path for decades. Periodically, the need would arise for some to change from one organisation to another, and in extreme instances, individuals were forced to select an alternative career path. In those years, career indecision was most common among young adults, making the transition from school to work (Bartley & Robitschek, 2000). Career indecision could then be ascribed to a lack of knowledge in terms of oneself, the organisation, lack of self-confidence, decision-making fear and anxiety, nonwork demands and situational constraints (such as financial constraints).

Owing to the context in which career choices had to be made in the past, careers were traditionally described as "a sequence of jobs, roles and positions individuals hold during their lives" (Coetzee, 2006, p. 1). Another early definition by Wilensky (1960, p. 554) describes a career as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence".

However, in the late 1980s, environmental forces such as increased global competition, recessions and the shift from administration to efficiency and management, compelled organisations to restructure, downsize and reinvent themselves (Reitman & Schneer, 2003). According to literature in Schreuder and Coetzee (2006) organisations are now boundaryless, knowledge based and virtual; flexible in terms of numbers and functions; composed mainly of specialists; have a flatter structure; are equipped with a shrinking workforce; are active in learning; comprise less command and control; offer less defined jobs; outsource components; retain strong core competencies; employ a diverse workforce; are committed to the development of their employees; show a strong attachment to a profession or project team; and offer careers and jobs based on flexible work assignments.

The context in which individuals have to make career decisions has thus clearly changed. In this changing environment, careers are now defined as "significant learnings and experiences that identify an individual's professional life, direction, competencies and accomplishments through positions, jobs, roles and assignments" (Coetzee, 2006, p. 1).

A career in the 21st century is therefore not only defined by hierarchical progression but also includes individuals' work experiences. The concept of employment has expanded to include not only the individual's place of work and type of occupation, but also his or her employability over time (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). According to Hall (1996) the 21st century career is not measured by chronological age and life stages, but instead by continuous learning and identity changes. A contemporary career is said to no longer be made up of a lifelong series of developmental stages (as described by the 20th century developmental psychologists Daniel Levinson and Donald Super), but instead a series of short learning cycles (Hall, 1996; Coetzee, 2006). Coetzee (2006) states that each learning cycle is a mini-version of the previously known lifelong model of career stages. But the frame or duration of each cycle is much shorter. In this new model, an individual will *explore* new areas of career work followed by a *trial* period. If there is a good fit the worker will become *established* in that area. The cycle normally develops into a final phase of *mastery* after a duration of between approximately one to three years. When a change occurs in the work context, global environment or individual (such as new technological advances, better employment opportunities or new interests developed by the individual), the person will commence to explore new avenues, hence a new learning cycle will evolve. As such, individuals face multiple career decisions through their life span in the 21st century world of work context, and career indecision, previously associated mainly with the young adult, is now also applicable to employed adults (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1990).

All of the above-mentioned trends and changes relating to the 21st century world of work, contribute to the fact that career indecision is now associated with both young adults and employed adults entering the work force. In the

contemporary 21st century work context, individuals (both young adults and employed adults) are unsure about what they want from their careers or what they want to achieve and how to go about achieving it. Research has indicated that they are, for at least a period of time, undecided (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1990).

Now that the 21st century work context and how it impacts on career indecision have been scrutinised, the composition of the South African work force and how it relates to career indecision can be considered.

2.3   THE SOUTH AFRICAN WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

In light of the above-mentioned 21st century work context, it is evident that the traditional working relationship in which the employee offered loyalty, trust, commitment and conformity to the organisation, and the organisation, in turn, provided job security, promotional prospects and training opportunities to its employees, is subject to significant change. These changes result in instability and uncertainty and require individuals to adapt and change or be left behind. The South African work force is no exception in this regard.

South Africa is characterised by the legacy of apartheid followed by smooth democratic transition in 1994. In South Africa, organisations are now governed and regulated by the Labour Law and the Employment Equity Act of 1998. According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2006), the National Skills Development Strategy and the Employment Equity Act are legislative mechanisms introduced by the South African government to attempt to eradicate the gender and race inequities generated by apartheid in the workplace.

After the 1994 democratic election, there was a significant change in the composition of the South African workforce. This workforce is now more representative of all races, comprises more women and has more working couples than ever before (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006).

Currently, the South African labour force is affected by a number of variables including high rates of unemployment, unskilled and illiterate workers and unhealthy people affected by HIV/AIDS. Women, and in particular African women, are believed to be on the losing side in this regard.

In terms of career indecision, it is important to note that as a result of the above variables, various young adults leaving school as well as employed adults, are faced with these harsh realities and often mess around, jostling for positions in the saturated South African job market. Some continue with tertiary education, often hopping from one major or career to another because of the uncertainty and indecision. Others brace the world of work armed with little direction or knowledge, only a hunger for independence and self-sustainability. Many of these new entrants to the workplace embark on a career blindly, their decisions based on necessity, accompanied, again, by uncertainty which more than often results in career indecision.

With the above discussion as background, the concept of career indecision can be defined.

2.4   DEFINING CAREER INDECISION

Career indecision has to do with uncertainty about a future career (Sepich, 1987). Although some level of uncertainty is normal, uncertainty becomes a problem when it interferes with an individual's ability to make sound career decisions (Chartrand & Robbins, 1997). According to Chartrand and Robbins (1997), career indecision is the uncertainty that inhibits individuals from selecting a career or implementing career plans. Tokar, Withrow, Hall and Moradi (2003) define it as the inability to select and devote oneself to a career choice. Similarly, Feldman (2003, p. 500) defines early career indecision as "the inability to formulate initial career goals and experience commitment to initial vocational choices". Greenhaus, Callanan and Kaplan (1995, p. 7) define individuals as "career undecideds" if they have not established a career goal or if they have established a career goal with which they experience considerable uncertainty and discomfort.

The various definitions of career indecision illustrate that career indecision deals with a number of issues (such as uncertainty, the inability/unwillingness to make a choice and commitment) stemming from various antecedents (such as a lack of knowledge about occupations, lack of readiness to make decisions, etc.).

2.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDECISIVENESS AND CAREER INDECISION

There is an extensive record of the distinction between indecisiveness and career indecision (Slaney, 1988). According to Slaney's research, Tyler was the first to distinguish between indecision and indecisiveness. Van Matre and Cooper (1984, cited in Slaney, 1988) clarify the distinction when they contend that indecision is a transitory state that is normal in human development (Osipow, 1999), while indecisiveness is an enduring trait that affects decision-making tasks, and is not an ordinary part of human growth and development (Osipow, 1999). While indecision is described in relation to a specific domain (e.g. career indecision), indecisiveness is regarded as a personal trait that generalises to various domains (Osipow, 1999; Germeijs & De Boeck, 2002).

Individuals as human beings constantly have to make decisions. Indecisiveness has been used to describe individuals who have difficulty making various life decisions (Crites, 1969). According to Crites (1969), the indecisive person is incapable of making a career decision even under the most favourable conditions in which there are a number of available options, incentives for making a decision and the freedom to make a decision. Using Bowen's terminology, Zingaro (1983) describes the indecisive individual as undifferentiated. This undifferentiation makes it difficult for the individual to distinguish his or her wishes from the wishes of others. According to Zingaro (1983), indecisiveness may have its roots in the ineffective resolution of Erikson's identity-identity confusion "crisis". For the indecisive individual, making a decision implies movement away from his or her parents, instead of movement towards goals and aspirations, resulting in anxiety for the indecisive individual.

Jones (1989) suggests that one can categorise a person's decisional situation into four subtypes namely: decided-comfortable, decided-uncomfortable, undecided-comfortable and undecided-uncomfortable. In the undecided-uncomfortable state an individual is in a state of indecisiveness (Elaydi, 2006).

The most frequent way to determine whether or not an individual's career uncertainty is indecision or indecisiveness is to do it retrospectively (Osipow, 1999). Thus, if someone frequently has trouble making career or other decisions to the point where closure is not reached in time to implement the appropriate behaviour, one would view such a person as indecisive. Bear in mind that an individual can be undecided without being indecisive.

The focus now shifts to the various types of career indecision.

2.6   TYPES OF CAREER INDESICION

Career indecision is regarded as a complex, multidimensional construct represented by different forms of indecision (Wanberg & Muchinsky, 1992). Callanan and Greenhaus (1992) distinguish between four different subtypes of career indecision/career decidedness (see fig. 2.1).

	No	Developmental	Chronic
Selection of a career goal?	**Yes**	Vigilant	Hyper vigilant

Decision-making anxiety/pressure

Figure 2.1   Subtypes of career indecision/career decidedness

(Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992, p. 214)

2.6.1 Developmental Indecision

Developmental indecision (upper left panel in fig. 2.1) occurs when an individual experiences indecision mainly because of a general lack of information. Research has shown that developmentally undecided individuals tend to be younger (in their twenties and early thirties), and in comparison with the decided groups, have limited knowledge about themselves and the work environment. In addition, owing to their ages, such individuals tend to experience more extensive family demands (Greenhaus, Callanan & Kaplan, 1995).   Individuals characterised by developmental indecision should thus experience a decrease in career indecision over time as they gather information on themselves and the world of work (Guay, Ratelle, Senecal, Larose & Deschenes, 2006).

2.6.2 Chronic indecision

Greenhaus et al. (1995) refer to the second career indecision subtype as chronic indecision (upper right panel in fig. 2.1). This form of indecision

represents a more permanent inability to set career goals. According to Greenhaus et al. (1995), chronically undecided individuals are comparatively older that their developmentally undecided counterparts, and tend to display lower self-confidence, experience more extensive fear and anxiety in decision making. Such individuals also tend to face more extensive situational constraints than the developmentally undecided group. Chronically undecided individuals should remain stably undecided over time (Guay et al., 2006).

The lower half of figure 2.1 shows two types of career decidedness, namely hyper vigilant decidedness and vigilant decidedness.

2.6.3 Hyper vigilant decidedness

Hyper vigilant individuals (lower right panel in fig. 2.1) have selected a career goal, but their decision is based on insufficient knowledge of themselves and/or the organisational environment. The hyper vigilant individual prematurely rushes into a decision in response to extensive stress or other factors (Greenhaus et al., 1995).

2.6.4 Vigilant decidedness

According to Greenhaus et al. (1995), vigilant individuals (lower left panel in fig. 2.1) have also selected a career goal, but, unlike hyper vigilant individuals, their selection is based on sufficient personal and environmental knowledge and is made with a lower level of stress and anxiety. Vigilant career decision making produces the most positive work attitudes and the least stress for the individual.

2.7 THE NATURE OF CAREER INDECISION

Two elements, namely cognitive and affective, have been implicitly included in conceptualisations of career indecision (Feldman, 2003). Although many researchers have generally emphasised the cognitive elements over the

affective elements in their research, most have included both these components in their conceptualisations.

2.7.1 Cognitive elements

According to Feldman (2003), the cognitive component of early career indecision includes factors such as a lack of any career goals whatsoever, lack of information about the environment and lack of certainty about changing labour markets. Betz and Voyten (1997) define early career indecision mainly in terms of cognitive uncertainty, but acknowledge that the construct is closely related to fear of commitment, which is an affective element.

2.7.2 Affective elements

The affective component of early career indecision includes factors such as anxiety, ambivalence, feelings of lack of control and frustration because of the break between current job opportunities and long-term career goals (Feldman, 2003). According to Elaydi (2006), the immediacy and vividness of the regret that might occur because of an unwanted outcome, may trigger emotions during the decision-making process, such as anxiety, dread, fear and confusion.

When discussing the nature of career indecision, it is necessary to also consider literature on decision-making theories. The consequentialist (Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee & Welch, 2001; Elaydi, 2006) and nonconsequentialist (Loewenstein et al., 2001; Baron, 1994) perspectives will now be briefly examined since the nonconsequentialist perspective serves as the basis of the indecisiveness construct.

2.8 PERSPECTIVES ON DECISION MAKING

Traditionally, the consequentialist perspective on decision-making literature interpreted decision making as a bounded rational process and viewed

emotions as insignificant (Elaydi, 2006). However, recent theorists have begun to consider how emotions such as fear, stress and anxiety influence decisions. Nonconsequentialist theories follow the notion that emotions do influence choice, and research on this topic has grown exponentially (Elaydi, 2006).

2.8.1 Consequentialist perspective on decision making

The word "Consequentialist" is used in its general sense to describe how individuals make decisions on the basis of the probability of the consequences of each choice (Loewenstein et al., 2001). Loewenstein et al. (2001) state that the consequentailist perspective is most accurately represented by expected utility theory. Expected utility theory views decision making as a computational process based on expected outcomes and subjective probabilities of choice. Before making a decision, the individual will consider the severity and likelihood of expected outcomes, and through a subjective mental mathematical formula, attempt to predict the probabilities of all the alternatives. This theory argues that individuals have a strong sense of internal coherence and logical consistency, within a map of beliefs and preferences, which allows for a single and correct choice (Loewenstein et al., 2001). The expected utility theory suggests that cognitive evaluations of information form the totality of how a decision maker processes an unsafe choice. Emotions that occur during the decision-making process are regarded as irrelevant. This perspective does not suggest that emotions do not exist, but purports that they occur after the decision has been made, not during the actual decision-making process (Loewenstein et al., 2001).

2.8.2 Nonconsequential perspective on decision making

The nonconsequential perspective on decision making acknowledges the impact of emotions during the decision-making process (Baron, 1994). The nonconsequential model has three distinctive arguments (Loewnstein et al., 2001). Firstly, it is suggested that the intensity and clarity of the potential consequences caused by personal or vicarious exposure have a strong

impact on the way emotions are experienced during the decision-making process. Secondly, cognitive evaluations lead to affective responses, which may affect judgement and choice preference. Lastly, the model asserts that feelings may arise without cognitive mediation, and that affective responses can mediate cognitive evaluations and behaviour. Thus, an individual's emotions can take over before any cognitive processes.

2.9   FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CAREER INDECISION

The way in which individuals make decisions about what careers to follow has been a focal point of research in both the vocational behaviour and career literature for nearly half a century (Betz & Voyten, 1997). The main focus of this research has been on the vocational choices of young adults as they make the transition from school to work (Bartley & Robitschek, 2000). Research pertaining to the stages of career decision making suggests that individuals' career identities develop over time, commencing with broad explorations of talents and interests, followed by the tentative crystallisation of a narrower set of specific career options, and culminating in concrete choices about jobs and careers (Germeijs & De Boeck, 2002; Super, 1957).

Certainly, not all career choices young adults make result in positive outcomes and not all young adults use effective decision-making processes (Feldman & Witcomb, 2005). Career indecision may occur when an individual faces a difficult decision with no clear, easy choice. What makes a career choice difficult is often related to one's perceptions, values, personal preferences and gut emotional reaction (Elaydi, 2006). According to Callanan and Greenhaus (1990), career indecision has seven main antecedents, namely lack of information about oneself, the organisation, the work environment outside the current organisation, lack of self-confidence, decision-making fear and anxiety, nonwork demands, and situational constraints. The next section looks at the various factors that may contribute to young adults' career indecisions. These factors include differences in personality, demographic status, vocational interests and abilities, early work

experiences and family environments (see fig. 2.2). These factors will be discussed in more detail below.
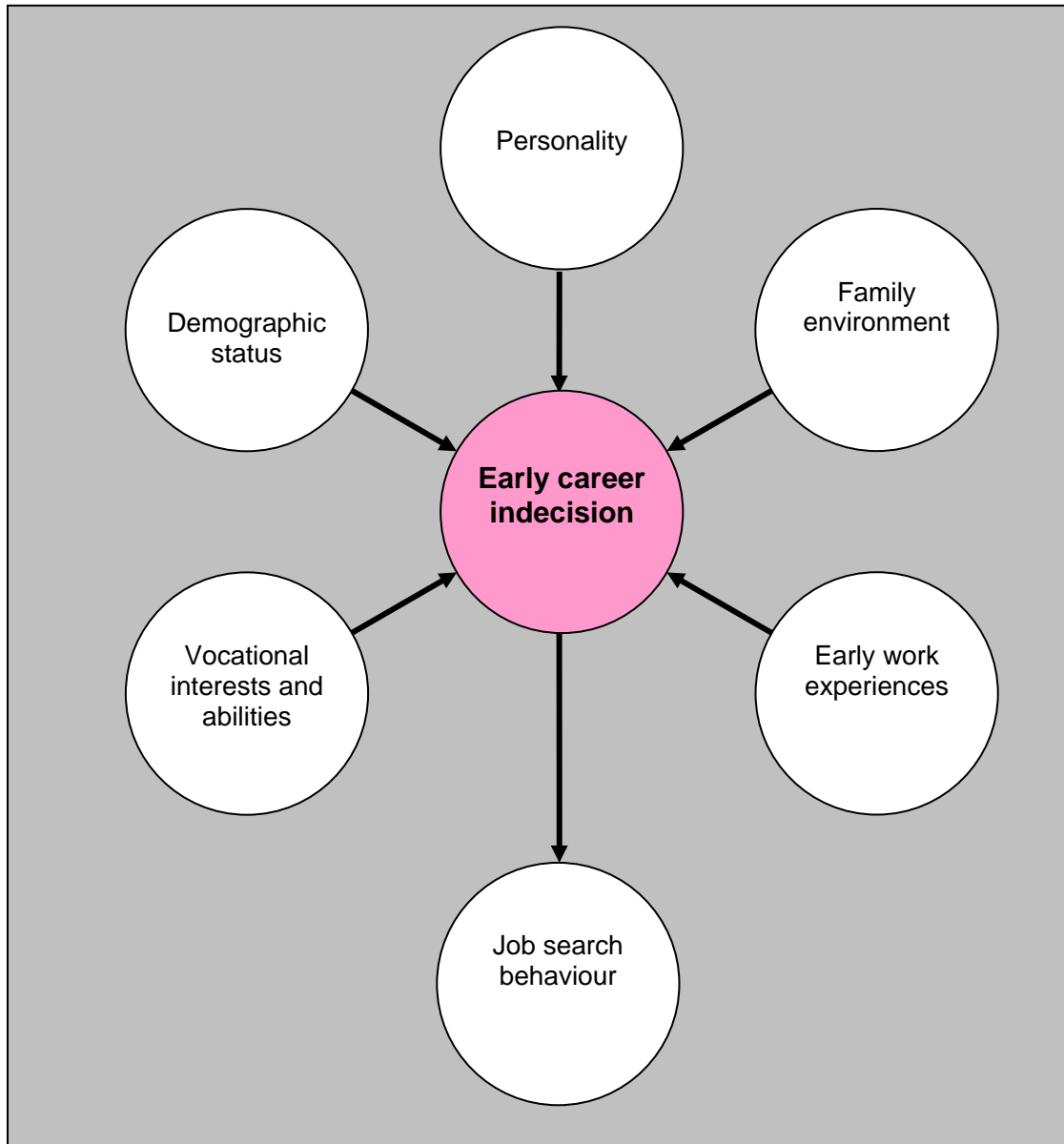
Figure 2.2   Factors contributing to career indecision

(Feldman, 2003, p. 503)

2.9.1 Personality

Various personality traits have been researched and linked to career indecision, including self-esteem, self-identity and the big five personality traits.

2.9.1.1   Self-esteem

The personality trait most frequently investigated in the context of early career indecision is self-esteem (Feldman, 2003). Literature indicates that individuals with low self-esteem are less accurate perceivers of themselves and often regard their own capabilities in an unnecessarily harsh light (Serling & Betz, 1990). Harriot, Ferrari and Dovidio (1996) support this by stating that there is evidence suggesting that negative self-statements and failure to use positive self-cognition are significantly related to indecision. Young adults with low self-esteem are more likely to attribute the source of their frustration in new activities to their own incompetence, to prematurely bail out of various career paths and to experience more false starts in their early careers (Feldman, 2003). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to adopt career decisions that please others instead of making decisions that satisfy their personal needs (Greenhaus & Callanan, 1992). Researchers have also found that low self-esteem is related to lower levels of job search activity (Boudreau, Boswell, Bretz, & Judge, 2001). Individuals with low self-esteem thus engage in limited exploration or distort the data obtained through exploration (Greenhaus & Callanan, 1992).

Based on the research reviewed, it would appear that there is a significant relationship between the construct of self-esteem and career decidedness. However, the strength of the relationship depends on the instruments used to assess the construct.

2.9.1.2   Self-identity

According to Lee (2005), career indecision appears to have a close relationship with self-identity. Lee (2005) states that individuals who are indecisive about their career choices, as a result of confusion about their self-identities, often lack confidence in their career preferences. Similarly, London (1983) contends that there are three key elements of career motivation which influence an individual's career maturity, namely career identity, career insight and career resilience. Career identity refers to how central one's career is to one's overall identity (Feldman & Turnley, 1995). Career identity includes aspects of self-efficacy such as work involvement and the desire for upward mobility. Self-efficacy (an individual's belief that he or she can successfully complete tasks necessary for making career decisions) is also believed to be inversely related to career indecision among young adults (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Career insight refers to the degree to which individuals have realistic perceptions of themselves and their environments, and this is largely cognitive. Individuals lacking career insight will lack the goal specificity and realistic expectations needed to make appropriate career decisions. Career resilience refers to an individual's fragility in the face of inordinate demands. Young adults without career resilience are prone to become frustrated and disheartened when they encounter obstacles in the pursuit of their career goals.

2.9.1.3   The big five personality traits

The big five personality traits have been the main focus for industrial and organisational (I/O) psychologists researching the role of personality in vocational choices (Digman, 1990). Two of these five traits appear to be most consistently related to career indecision, namely extroversion and neuroticism (Feldman, 2003). Extroverts are believed to display better social skills at work than introverts and the former appear to receive more favourable hiring recommendations (Caldwell & Burger, 1998). Conversely, neuroticism has been linked to problem-solving insufficiencies, a dependent decision making style and career indecision (Boudreau et al., 2001). According to Feldman

(2003), young adults rating high on neuroticism are more prone to be either hyper vigilant in their job-seeking behaviour or impulsive in making decisions purely to decrease stress levels. According to Leong and Chervinko (1996), key (personality) constructs that may result in indecisiveness are self-consciousness and perfectionism. There is also evidence to suggest that distractibility and daydreaming are significantly linked to indecision (Harriott, Ferrari & Dovidio, 1996).

2.9.2 Demographic status

Demographic status includes a number of variables such as gender, age and ethnicity.

2.9.2.1 Gender

As a demographic variable, gender has received the most attention in career choice literature (Huffman & Torres, 2001). However, there is inconsistency in terms of the findings related to gender differences and career indecision (Osipow, 1987). Several investigators have found evidence of significant gender differences, suggesting either less indecision for males (Gordon & Osipow, 1976; Westbrook, Cutts, Madison, & Arcia, 1980) or for females (Taylor, 1979). Other reports show no difference (Cellini, 1978; Osipow, Carney, & Barak, 1976a). In more recent years, most of the evidence suggests that women experience less early career indecision than men (Feldman, 2003). According to Feldman and Witcomb (2005), research has shown that women tend to make career decisions somewhat earlier than men. Among the reasons cited for these differences are the idea that women mature more rapidly than men, which enables them to identify appropriate career goals for themselves at an earlier age (Post-Kammer & Smith, 1985) and that woman are more likely to be channelled into a smaller set of sex-stereotypical occupations when they are young (Hochschild, as cited in Feldman & Witcomb, 2005).

2.9.2.2 Age

The literature indicates that career indecision tends to be higher among young adults than older adults (Feldman, 2003). During their late teens and early twenties, young adults go through a developmental phase of exploration in which they enjoy their freedom and tend to avoid the constraints of daily routine. However, with time, young adults may feel pressures to actively take on the responsibility to start their careers (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1990). As young adults enter their early and mid-twenties, they get married and have families, which require both partners to become more serious about their careers (Lorence & Mortimer, 1985). It takes young adults several years in the work force to discover their true strengths, weaknesses and preferences for vocations (Greenhaus et al., 1995).

2.9.2.3 Race and ethnic differences

Cultural context makes a difference in the way people make decisions and choose their work (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). According to Gloria and Hird (1999), race and ethnicity play a vital role in career development.

The term "race" is used to specify groups of individuals who are distinguished on the basis of physical characteristics (Kendall, 1999). In South Africa, the public believes that the population essentially comprises four racial groups: blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians (or Asians). According to Fouad and Brown (2000), there is a lack of consensus on what "race" is, and racial categories are variably and arbitrarily defined. Analyses of DNA indicate that there are extensive genetic differences within races (Feinstein-Messinger, 2007). Therefore, the actual validity concept of race has been questioned (Fouad & Brown, 2000). In addition, Kendall (1999) states that the concept of race is a myth since pure racial categories do not exist. Nevertheless, despite the questionable validity of the concept of race, it is not feasible to abandon this concept because the sociopolitical significance of the term "race" has significant psychological consequences in our society (Fouad & Brown, 2000).

Race tends to be considered a biological concept referring to people's genetic and physical characteristics, such as skin pigmentation (Etaugh & Bridges, 2001). The concept of ethnicity, on the other hand, refers to a shared identity, shared feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values and shared behaviours resulting from "ethnic group membership" (Fouad & Brown, 2000). It has also been argued that the concept of race is considered a social category comparable to ethnicity (Papalia, Wendkos Olds & Duskin Feldman, 2003). An ethnic group refers to people who are united by place of origin, ancestry and/or language. More specifically, ethnic groups are said to have five main characteristics in common, namely: (1) distinctive cultural traits including language, clothing, holidays or religious customs; (2) a sense of unity; (3) a sense of ethnocentrism; (4) membership ascribed from birth; and (5) a persistent attachment to a specific territory (Kendall, 2004). Some individuals identify with a specific ethnic group, while others do not. There are no universally accepted labels that identify an individual's ethnicity. For some individuals, their ethnicity may be based on geographical origin and for others it may be based on skin colour. Moreover, the various ethnic categories may comprise diverse ethnic subgroups (Feinstein-Messinger, 2007).

As mentioned above, the career development of individuals is influenced by so called "person factors" and "environmental influences" (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). The person factors of ethnicity and race have considerable psychological and social consequences for the career development of the individual (Lent et al., 1994). These consequences result from dissimilar academic and career opportunities for individuals from different ethnic and racial backgrounds (Feinstein-Messinger, 2007). What is the significance of race and ethnicity in South Africa? According to Kendall (2004), race and ethnicity permeate the life of every individual; they are a part of people's thought processes. A person's ethnic identity is a part of his or her social identity (Phinney, 1992). As such, ethnic identity is a part of the person's self-concept that originates from his or her knowledge of social group membership (i.e. ethnic group) and the emotional significance that the person attaches to ethnic group membership. Cultural context makes a difference in the way people make decisions and choose their work (Fouad & Byars-Winston,

2005), and according to Gloria and Hird (1999), race and ethnicity play a significant role in career development.

Work is a cultural construction (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). According to Carter and Cook (1992, p. 199), "from a cultural frame of reference, work is a functional aspect of life in that individuals contribute their skills and labor to their cultural societies and the maintenance of their families". As such, the meaning of work, the value placed on it, and the expectations about who should perform what types of work reflect the society in which work is organised (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). People search for meaning through their careers (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007). Career decision making is not merely a matter of which vocation, profession, job or career people choose. The meaning people attach to work is central to their career choices.

Various researchers such as Cheatham (1990) and Smith (1983) have argued that the concept of work has different meanings for different groups because of their sociocultural, historical and political experiences. This concurs with the findings of Cook, Heppner & O'Brien (2002) that individuals do not make career decisions in a vacuum. They state that society's norms and values and the context in which individuals live (home, school and work) interact with the individual to shape career decisions.

One study in the past has addressed the issue of ethnic difference, finding greater indecision in blacks than in whites (Westbrook et al., 1980). In more recent studies (Johnson, 2007; Feinstein-Messinger, 2007), the results of the data indicate that there is no statistical significance between race and career indecision between black and white students. Feinstein-Messinger's (2007) study, however, did reveal that Asian Americans reported significantly higher levels of career difficulties than the other racial and ethnic groups.

Several studies have examined the role of culture in aspiring to a career. Four such studies (Lauver & Jones, 1991; Leung, Ivey, & Suzuki, 1994; Mau & Bikos, 2000; Tracey & Hopkins, 2001) found that racial/ethnic groups did not

differ significantly in the careers to which they aspire. Thus, race and ethnicity do not appear to restrict the career dreams that people have. However, according to Fouad and Byars-Winston (2005), clearly something occurs between the time at which those career dreams and aspirations emerge and the time at which individuals enter an occupation, because racial/ethnic minorities are not proportionately represented across career fields in the labour force. In South Africa, it is the previously disadvantaged who are not proportionately represented across career fields in the labour force.

Six studies (Arbona & Novy, 1991; Chronister & McWhirter, 2004; Chung & Harmon, 1999; Luzzo, 1993; McWhirter, 1997; Perrone, Sedlacek, & Alexander, 2001) examined perceptions of expected career attainment or barriers to that attainment. They found that such racial/ethnic minorities perceived fewer career opportunities and greater career barriers than racial/ethnic majorities. Helms and Piper (1994) also found that individuals may perceive race to be a significant factor in one's occupational options.

2.9.3 Vocational interest and abilities

The vocational guidance literature reflects largely on the role of vocational interests and abilities in young adults' choice of careers (Donnay & Borgen, 1999). Fundamental to this research have been various models of "person-environment fit" (Feldman & Witcomb, 2005). The "person-environment fit" models suggests that when young adults attain a fit between their career orientations and vocational choices, they are more likely to derive occupational satisfaction and to have more stable career paths (Kristof, 1996). The earliest literature on person-job fit emphasised the importance for individuals to find jobs that fit both their personal needs and their skill sets (Holland, 1985). According to Ostroff, Shin, and Feinberg (2002), researchers have typically examined the similarity of people considering various careers to current job incumbents in terms of their interests.

Austin and Hanish (1990) are of opinion that research on skills acquisition among young adults suggests that abilities may actually be more strongly

related to person-environment fit than interests. According to Werbel and Gilliland (1999), when individuals have poor skills fit, they are more likely to quit, receive low performance ratings, be required to take additional training or be counselled to leave the organisation. Without skills fit, interest fit may become largely unimportant or irrelevant to career success. Thus, according to Ostroff et al. (2002), over time, individuals tend to gravitate towards jobs that correspond to their abilities and then stay fairly rooted in those occupations.

Feldman and Witcomb (2005) argue that making career decisions on the basis of skills is more likely to help young adults narrow down their sets of career options. According to them, identifying skills accurately requires a greater sense of self-insight than identifying interests. In addition, Ryan (2000) states that individuals' interests are more diffused in adolescence and young adulthood than their skills. It is clear then that both interest and abilities play a role in terms of individuals selecting a career. However, interests may result in a broader spectrum of occupations to choose from than abilities, which may complicate the decision-making process for young adults, ultimately resulting in career indecision.

2.9.4 Early work experiences

Increasing attention has been paid to teenagers' work experiences and how those experiences shape their career choices (Feldman, 2003). Contrary to the belief that part-time work builds character and teaches discipline, it was found instead that, part-time work distracted teenagers from academic performance and taught antisocial behaviour, such as loafing on the job or taking organisational merchandise for personal use (Greenberger & Steinberg, as cited in Feldman, 2003, p. 507). Both the quantity and quality of part-time work have been found to have an impact on early career indecision. Feldman and Turnley (1995) found that negative attitudes towards careers in general were more prevalent among young adults who were underemployed in jobs that did not require much education or training. However, because structured, well-supervised tasks assist individuals to crystallise their

vocational interests, the quality of part-time work may be inversely related to career indecision because it lowers the cognitive uncertainty associated with career choice (Feldman, 2003).

2.9.5 Family environment

Lopez and Andrews (1987) conceptualise career indecision as an outcome of a complex set of interactions between the individual and the family. According to Feldman (2003), teenagers' and young adults' levels of career indecision are also influenced by their parents' income, their parents' involvement in career planning activities and their parents' own job insecurity. Parents' income influences how much education students can obtain and whether young adults can study full time. This income is generally positively associated with their children's level of education (Feldman, 2003). Parents' involvement in their children's' career planning is also inversely related to career indecision (Feldman, 2003). Parents who are involved in their children's' career planning can influence their children's self-efficacy by obtaining career-related information and encouraging them to follow employment opportunities. Studies have found that teenagers are more heavily influenced by their parents' attitudes about their abilities than they are about their own previous accomplishments (Parsons, Adler, & Kaczala, 1982). Early career indecision is believed to be higher among young adults whose parents have low job security than among those whose parents have high job security (Feldman, 2003). It has been found that teenagers whose parent's are experiencing job insecurity receive poorer school grades and their parents' employment problems distract the children's attention from their school work and studies and contribute to the teenagers' unfavourable attitudes towards work in general (Feldman, 2003).

2.10 CAREER INDECISION OF ADULTS IN AN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Over the past 25 years, career indecision has evolved into a complex, multidimensional construct (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992). Deciding on what a career to pursue is considered a main developmental task of late adolescence and early adulthood (Sharf, 2002). This life-career stage typically involves some career exploration, and this changing of career paths and fields of study is natural among young adults as they explore the world of work and discover their strengths and weaknesses (Moss & Frieze, 1993).

However, the phenomenon of repeated and extended switching of career paths is becoming increasingly prevalent among teenagers and young adults (Feldman & Whitcomb, 2005). There is growing evidence that young adults are changing career paths and fields of study more frequently, having difficulty committing to specific career goals and taking longer to make even provisional commitments to initial career paths (Feldman, 2003). Young adults are faced with complex professional decisions about what university degrees to attain, what career path to follow, what organisations to select and what job offers to apply for and accept. What complicates career indecision even more for those between the ages of 18 and 30 is that it intersects with a perplexing array of personal decisions which have to be considered and made at the same time. Such decisions have a tremendous impact on the lives of young adults and include decisions about leaving home, marriage and having children, decisions about money, leisure, friendship and individuals' different roles in life (Feldman, 2003). All of these decisions have to be faced at a time when young adults' core personalities are not yet completely developed and when they have had minimal experience in making key decisions (Ployhart et al., 1999).

Although research on career indecision has been almost exclusively studied from a student's perspective, the construct is also applicable to employed adults (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1990). Many bright, well-educated and motivated employees are confused (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992). They are

unsure about what they want from their careers or about what they want to achieve and how to go about achieving it. For at least a period of time, they are undecided. The relevance of career indecision to an employed population is based on the view of adult development as a series of transitions throughout life that have career implications (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978).

The same demographical, individual and societal changes that cause disruption in individual careers also necessitate employees to reassess their career in terms of its role in their overall life space (Greenhaus, 1987). According to Greenhaus (1987), the combined influence of these factors can result in either periodic or chronic feelings of self-doubt and adult career indecision. The definition of career indecision from an adult perspective is broader than the definition of career indecision formulated for students. Students' main vocational task is to select an occupation, whereas adult employees face multiple career decisions, such as the selection of a position in an organisational hierarchy, the choice of a future career path, the intention to remain with an organisation or the consideration of a different career field (Callanan & Greenhaus, 1992).

According to Callanan and Greenhaus (1992), adult career indecision may produce deteriorated levels of work motivation and job performance, since a lack of career focus can weaken the value of an organisation's reward system.

2.11   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter commenced with a sketch of the 21ˢᵗ century career context and referred specifically reference to the South African workforce composition. Against this backdrop, career indecision was defined, the relationship between indecisiveness and career indecision described and the various types of career indecision highlighted. The nature of career indecision was discussed, from which perspectives of decision making flow. This was followed by a general discussion of the factors associated with career

indecision. Finally, career indecision among adults in an organisational context was examined.

This satisfies the first literature aim, namely to conceptualise career indecision.

Chapter 3 will focus on cultural value orientations towards individualism and collectivism.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATIONS TOWARDS INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise the constructs of individualism and collectivism, as depicted in step 2 of the literature review.

This chapter will focus on cultural value orientations towards individualism and collectivism, and commences with an introduction to and the definitions and attributes of individualism and collectivism. Cultural factors encouraging individualism and collectivism are discussed as well as the factors that influence personal tendencies towards individualism and collectivism. This is followed by a discussion of individual attributes that reflect individualism and collectivism. Individualism and collectivism in an organisational context are pinpointed. The chapter concludes with a theoretical integration of the constructs and a chapter summary.

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Human behaviour is a function of both the person and the physical and social environment (Hui, 1988). The mixing of backgrounds and experiences is increasingly a reality of the modern world (Triandis & Singelis, 1998). It is thus important, when interacting with people, to not only know the culture of an individual, but also to take into account additional information such as demographic information and life experience, when explaining a behaviour.

Values are fundamental in explaining and predicting human behaviour (Marini, 1992). They are core beliefs that are standards against which individuals can judge their daily performance and that of others (Rokeach, 1973). Values are also the basis for establishing short- and long-term goals because they provide individuals with idealised end states of their lives (Rokeach, 1973). According to Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) values are expressions of different human needs and requirements. Values can be distinguished at cultural and

individual levels (see fig. 3.1). In every culture there are people who are allocentric, who believe, feel, and act much like collectivists do around the world (Triandis, 1995). There are also people who are idiocentric, and believe, feel and act the way individualists do around the world. Thus in every culture one will find the full distribution of both types. For the purpose of this study, the focus will fall on individual values at cultural level that is, individualism and collectivism, and not specifically idiocentrism and allocentrims.
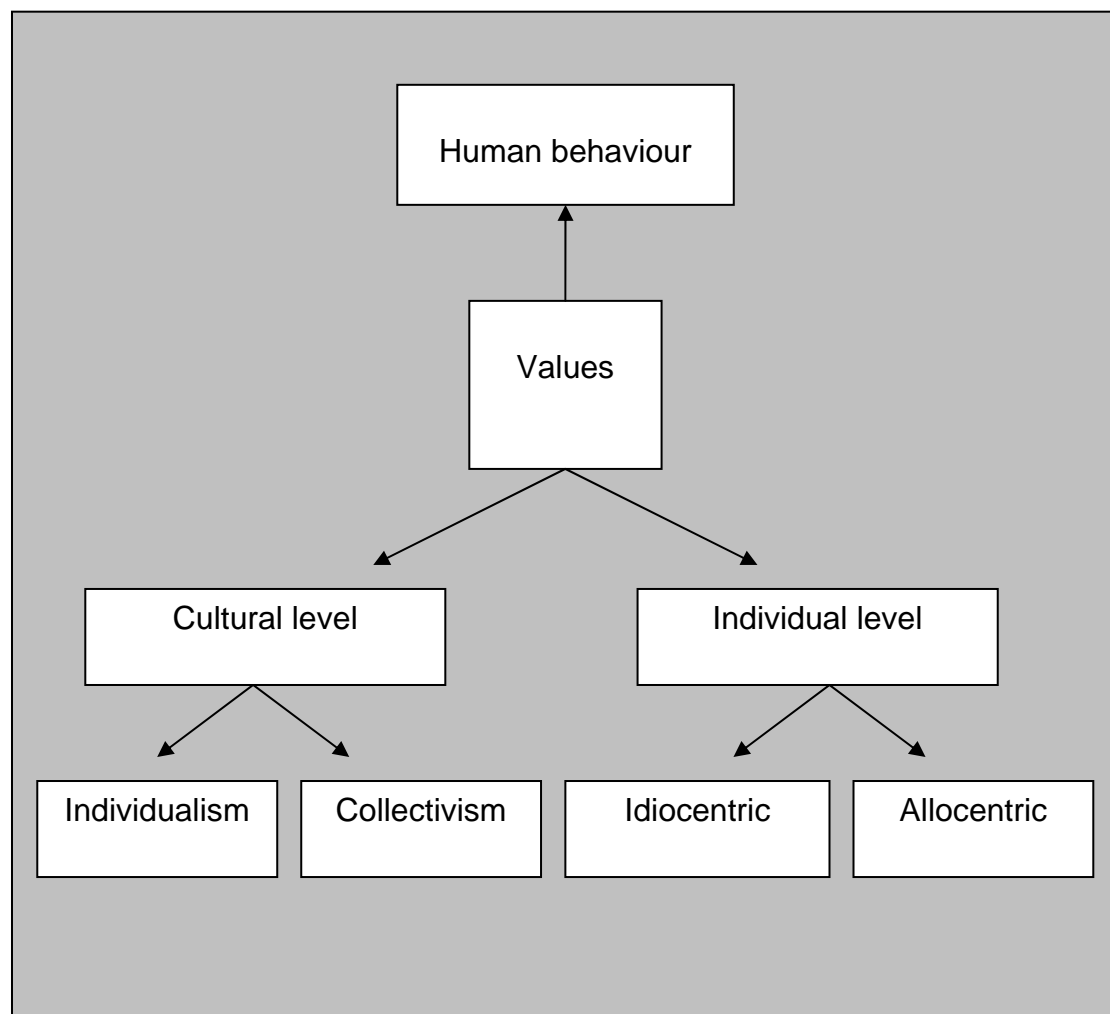
Figure 3.1   Conceptualisation of the values, at cultural and individual levels, that influence human behaviour

The terms "individualism" and "collectivism" have a history of about 300 years, are used by many people in different parts of the world and are given various meanings (Triandis, 1995). In 1980, Hofstede (1980) analysed 117 000 protocols that IBM had collected from its own employees, concerning their value preferences. Hofstede (1980) identified four factors (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity) in a study relating to individuals' value preferences. Relevant to this research are power distance and individualism. Power distance refers to people seeing that those at the top of the social structure are totally different from those at the bottom (Hofstede, 1980). This is a characteristic of societies in which the people in power are arrogantly dominant, and this is to be expected and acceptable. Hofstede (1980) found a negative correlation (-.70) between power distance and individualism, which suggests that acceptance of hierarchy is low in individualistic cultures. Hofstede's individualism-collectivism factor was similar to the contrasts identified by Triandis in 1972 (Triandis, 1995), in a study of traditional Greeks and Americans. The Greeks were collectivists and the Americans individualists.

In recent years, researchers have made numerous attempts to measure the tendencies towards individualism and collectivism, and in so doing discovered considerable complexity in what should be included in these constructs. Researchers have also discovered that people are typically both individualists and collectivists (Triandis, 1995). According to Triandis (1995), all of us have both collectivist and individualist elements in our cognitive systems, but in different mixtures. When we are in social situations, we sample these elements (of individualism and collectivism) differentially hence social behaviour is different across cultures.

The concepts of individualism and collectivism will now be defined in more detail.

3.2 DEFINING INDIVIDUALISM

Although the term "individualist" has its roots in social philosophy and political science, the term "individualism" when used to describe a person's psychological characteristics should be understood somewhat differently. According to Waterman (1984), individualism represents the following four psychological qualities:

(1) a sense of personal identity refers to the knowledge of who one is and what one's own goals and values are. According to Waterman (1984, p. 30), this Eriksonian concept relates to the philosophical concept of the "true self", which indicates "what an individual deems personally expressive and therefore what is to be actualized".

(2) Maslow's self-actualisation involves the striving to be one's true self.

(3) Rotter's (1966) internal locus of control reflects one's willingness to accept personal responsibility for life's happiness and sorrows.

(4) the fourth quality is principled (postconventional) moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1969). In Waterman's opinion, individualists hold moral principles that are universally applicable and they act in accordance with what is right.

Similarly, Chen and West (2007), drawing from existing literature, identified three elements that appear to underlie individualism:

(1) *Independence.* This element reflects an individual's value of autonomy in judgment, decision making and actions.

(2) *Competitiveness.* This element indicates an individual's desire to get ahead of others and striving for individual achievements.

(3) *Uniqueness.* This component emphasises the importance of developing one's unique identity and expressing characteristics that are different from others.

Traditionally, individualism was identified as "the habit or principle of being independent and self-reliant: self-centred feeling or conduct; egoism" (Jewell

& Abate, 2001, p. 865), or "a situation in which people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only" (Hofstede & Bond, 1984, p. 419). Hofstede (1980, p.221) defines individualism as "the emotional independence from groups, organizations, or other collectivities". Triandis (1995, p. 2) defines it as "a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights, and the contracts they have established with others; give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others; and emphasize rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others".

The main characteristic of individualism seems to be the "separateness" of oneself from others (Kagitcibasi, 1997; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The basic unit of survival is the individual rather than the group. Individuals in individualistic cultures are encouraged to become independent from others, and to discover and express their unique attributes.

3.3   DEFINING COLLECTIVISM

Hui and Triandis (1986) define collectivism as a syndrome of feelings, emotions, beliefs, ideology, and actions related to interpersonal concern, reflected in the following seven categories:

  (1) consideration of implications (such as cost and benefit) of one's own decisions and/or actions for other people
  (2) sharing of material resources
  (3) sharing of nonmaterial resources (such as time and effort)
  (4) susceptibility to social influence
  (5) self-presentation and face-work
  (6) sharing of outcomes
  (7) feeling of involvement in others' lives

Based on the conceptual framework of Hui and Triandis (1986), Chen and West (2007) identify the following three important elements that appear to underlie collectivism:

(1) *Consideration of the implications of one's decisions and actions for others.* This element reflects a person's tendency to think about how his or her behaviour may affect the benefits and costs of others.

(2) *Sharing of each other's successes.* Given that personal goals are often embedded in the ingroup's goals, and that these goals are achieved through collective efforts, one would expect collectivists to share in the glory of each other's achievements.

(3) *Sharing of each other's failures.* By the same taken, a person's failure may be the whole group's failure. The concern of bringing shame to the family, clan or group may be one of the main fears of collectivists.

The term "collectivism" has been used to refer to the general pattern that "pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51). According to Triandis (1995, p. 2), collectivism may be defined as "a social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as part of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation); are primarily motivated by the norms of, and duties imposed by, those collectives; are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own personal goals; and emphasize the connectedness to members of these collectives."

The main element of collectivism seems to be the perceived "oneness" with other people (Hui, 1988; Hui & Triandis, 1986), "fundamental connectedness with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) or relational orientation.

3.4   ATTRIBUTES OF INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

This section gives an overview of the defining characteristics of individualism and collectivism.

3.4.1 Horizontal versus vertical

The definition of the self is interdependent in collectivism and independent in individualism (Reykowski, 1994). There are four kinds of self: independent or interdependent and same or different (Triandis, 1995). The combination of these four types can be categorised as horizontal individualism (independent/same) and horizontal collectivism (interdependent/same), vertical individualism (independent/different) and vertical collectivism (interdependent/different) (see fig. 3.2).

	HORIZONTAL	VERTICAL
INDIVIDUALISM	Independent/ same	Independent/ different
COLLECTIVISM	Interdependent/ same	Interdependent/ different

Figure 3.2   The four types of self

(Adapted from Triandis, 1995, p. 44)

Chirkov, Lynch and Niwa (2005) describe these orientations to be four modes of social relations that were created through cultural evolution to solve certain basic problems of human coexistence. According to Hofstede (1997), these four orientations address two of the most fundamental questions of human social life, namely: (1) the problem of attitudes towards authority, and (2) the relations between the individual and the group.

The first problem of attitudes towards authority was conceptualised by Hofstede (1997) as the power distance dimension, as horizontality-verticality

by Triandis (1995), and as mastery and hierarchy versus egalitarian commitment and harmony by Schwartz (1994). Each of these constructs addresses the issue of inequality among people with regard to different attributes, ranging from the physical and psychological to the social and political. In essence, they address the relationships between those in power and those not in power (Chikov et al., 2005). The second problem pertains to the coordination of the individual's needs and strivings with the group/community's goals and norms. Traditionally, this has been conceptualised as the individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1997; Triandis, 1995) dimension or as autonomy versus conservatism (Schwartz, 1994).

Each of the four cultural dimensions offers a possible solution to the above mentioned two problems. For example, vertical collectivism (VC) requires the subordination of individual's strivings and goals to the goals of their collective and to be ready to sacrifice individual interests to the interests of their group and its leaders. It directly emphasises the necessity of a well-structured hierarchy of power and the priority of the collective over the individual (Chikov et al., 2005). Vertical individualism (VI) stresses hierarchy and status, but also encourages individual competition, striving for higher positions in the hierarchy and supports the desire to be the best among other ingroup members (Chikov et al., 2005). Horizontal collectivism (HC) sets norms for communal living, cultivating sharing, trust and strong collective identity combined with mutual respect and a feeling of equality towards ingroup members (Chikov et al., 2005). Horizontal individualism (HI) supports individual development, privacy and autonomy which are accompanied by respect and tolerance towards other people (Chikov et al., 2005).

This typology of the four cultural dimensions by Triandis (1995) is closely intertwined with Fiske's (1992) theory of sociability.

3.4.2 Fiske's theory of sociability

Fiske (1992) identified four basic forms of social behaviour which occur in every culture, although the specific appearance of the form may vary across

cultures. The central suggestions of the four forms are sharing, hierarchy, equality and proportionality. If one focuses on how resources should be distributed, the first pattern dictates to do so "according to need", the second "according to status", the third "according to equality", and the fourth "according to contribution". The four forms of sociability will now be briefly discussed.

(1) *Communal sharing (CS).* This is typical behaviour in most families. Resources are divided according to need. People take what they need and no one keeps a record. Communal sharing is characterised by need-based responding among everyone in the group. There is also a strong sense of belonging to the group. The self is relational and includes the group's identity and most thinking is in terms of "we" and "they" as opposed to "I" and "you". Land belongs to all and is sacred. Decisions are made through consensus. There is a great deal of emphasis on intimacy, nurturance, altruism, caring, selflessness, generosity, sharing and concern for others. On the downside, there is also strong ingroup favouritism and hostility towards outgroups, which could be linked to racism, genocide, and supernationalism.

(2) *Authority ranking (AR).* Here, resources are divided according to rank. The self is either exalted or humble and inequality is "natural". Authority ranking leads to a focus on respect, deference, loyalty and obedience, and those who are disrespectful are punished. Land belongs to the king or equivalent, there is identification with the leader and some followers are willing to die for the leader.

(3) *Equality matching (EM).* Resources are distributed equally and equality is the total essence of this pattern. In this pattern, gift giving must be comparable, justice means equality, and reciprocity is essential. Work is shared equally, and the self is like every other self. Misfortunes are distributed equally and revenge is an appropriate way to deal with enemies.

(4) *Market pricing (MP).* In this pattern, each individual receives resources equal to their contributions, thus the more one gives, the more one will receive. If one spends twice as many years studying, one's salary should be twice as large. Gifts are given according to previous contributions to the relationship, and achievement is vital. Land is regarded as an investment and people allow the market to decide most things. The self in market pricing is defined by one's occupation, and politically, the belief is that one's decisions should result in the greatest good for the greatest number. Market value is considered more important than social or personal value.

According to Fiske (1992), these patterns of interpersonal relationships are found everywhere. The specific content of each pattern, however is, different in each culture. Triandis (1995) links Fiske's patterns to individualism and collectivism. In general, in collectivist cultures, people use communal sharing and in individualist cultures people are more prone to use market pricing. Horizontal cultures tend to use equality matching and vertical cultures tend to use authority ranking. Vertical collectivism is thus communal sharing and authority ranking; vertical individualism is market pricing and authority ranking; horizontal collectivism is communal sharing and equality matching; and horizontal individualism is market pricing and equality matching (summarised in fig. 3.3).

	HORIZONTAL	VERTICAL
INDIVIDUALISM	Market Pricing + Equality Matching	Market Pricing + Authority Ranking
COLLECTIVISM	Communal Sharing + Equality Matching	Communal Sharing + Authority Ranking

Figure 3.3   Attributes and typology of collectivism and individualism
in sociability

(Adapted from Triandis, 1995, p. 50)

With this background on the attributes of individualism and collectivism, the focus will move to the factors encouraging either individualism or collectivism.

3.5   CULTURAL FACTORS CONDUCIVE TO INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

The degree of individualism and collectivism in any culture is influenced by a number of factors, including two specific cultural syndromes: cultural tightness versus looseness and cultural complexity versus simplicity (Triandis, 1995).

3.5.1 Cultural tightness versus cultural looseness

Cultural tightness refers to the degree to which members of a culture, firstly, agree about what is correct action or acceptable behaviour; secondly, must behave in exactly according to the norms of the culture; and thirdly, suffer or offer severe criticism for even slight deviations from norms (Triandis, 1995). In tight cultures, there are few appropriate ways to respond to a specific

situation, all members have unambiguous ideas about what to do and everyone is expected to follow the norms. According to Triandis (1995), tightness occurs in homogeneous cultures that are relatively isolated from other cultures. There is often a high population density, and these cultures are not especially dynamic. Tightness appears to be associated with precision in manufacturing and law and order and crime rates in general are lower in tight cultures (Triandis, 1995). One theory of criminal behaviour (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) is based on the concept of self-control. According to Triandis (1995), it is highly probable that impulse control is stressed in a tight culture.

Loose cultures, on the other hand, have multiple, often conflicting, norms about what to do (Triandis, 1995). Those who deviate from norms are not necessarily punished. Triandis (1995) states that looseness occurs in heterogeneous societies, where people are rewarded for independent action and there is little population density. Interestingly, extremely hot climates tend towards loose cultures, whereas colder climates press towards tight ones (Robbins, De Walt & Pelto, 1972). According to Robbins et al. (1972), greater control of self may result in tightness and also in high suicide rates, whereas looseness may contribute to high homicide rates. Looseness reflects a culture in which deviances are tolerated, norms are expressed in many ways and group organisations, formality, durability and solidarity are not fostered as often.

Triandis (1995) asserts that both tightness and looseness are situational. A culture may thus be tight in social and political situations and loose in economic or religious situations. According to Triandis (1995), individualism is linked to looseness and collectivism to tightness.

3.5.2 Cultural complexity and cultural simplicity

Cultural complexity tends to be related to cultural looseness, whereas cultural simplicity is linked to cultural tightness (Triandis, 1995). Complex cultures tend to be more individualistic than simplistic cultures because there are many potential ingroups and individuals have an opportunity to choose whether to

stay in or leave these ingroups (Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). A number of factors contribute to shaping a culture's complexity or simplicity. One such factor is homogeneity of members of a culture and the distribution of traits and attributes (Triandis, 1995). Members of a culture can agree on the norms that must be imposed if they are homogeneous, and there is also likely to be cultural simplicity. Homogeneity thus predisposes a culture toward collectivism. The more homogeneous the culture is, the more beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles and values are shared. If there is a deviation from norms, it is clear and something must be done to rectify the situation. Homogeneity therefore leads to tightness and collectivism. In heterogeneous groups, there is a wide distribution of most traits and attributes, people are more diverse and cultivate a "different self" that is distinct and unique. Heterogeneity thus predisposes a culture towards individualism and complexity.

There are several membership characteristics of a culture which predispose the group to complexity or simplicity. These characteristics will be briefly discussed.

3.5.2.1   Rate of change

The greater the rate of change of group membership, the greater the individualism will be in that culture (Triandis, 1995). If members come and go and there is a continuous influx, there will be more heterogeneity of point of view and more complexity, resulting in a more individualistic culture.

3.5.2.2   Density

When the number of individuals per unit of area is large, people have to develop many rules to guide social behaviour in order to reduce the probability of conflict. Thus, the greater the density, the greater the collectivism will be (Triandis, 1995). However, it should be stated, that in large societies, it is possible to achieve conflict reduction through an elaborate bureaucracy. Therefore, in small, dense societies one would expect

collectivism, while in large, dense societies, one would expect elaborate bureaucracies.

3.5.2.3   Number of choices

In complex environments, such as modern information societies, individuals have a variety of options for choice. In most preliterate cultures, there are few options for choice. As affluence and complexity increase, the number of options also increases. According to Triandis (1995), the significance of the number of choices is that it implies that individuals may arrive at different decisions, depending on how they process the information. People make their own decisions and may therefore be labelled as individualists.

3.5.2.4   Number of ingroups

If there is a single ingroup present, it dominates the social life of the members of that culture. Collectivists may have relatively few ingroups with which they identify strongly. The presence of multiple ingroups encourages individualism. With more ingroups and looseness, there is an increase in social diversity, tolerance for deviance and multiculturalism. Thus the factors that make cultures loose and allow many choices, favour individualism (Triandis, 1995), and factors that make cultures tight, and where there are few choices, favour collectivism.

3.6   FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PERSONAL TENDENCIES TOWARDS INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

Several factors can increase a person's inclination towards either individualism or collectivism. These factors include age, social class, child rearing, ethnicity, travel, education, occupation and a situation-predisposition interaction (see fig. 3.4).
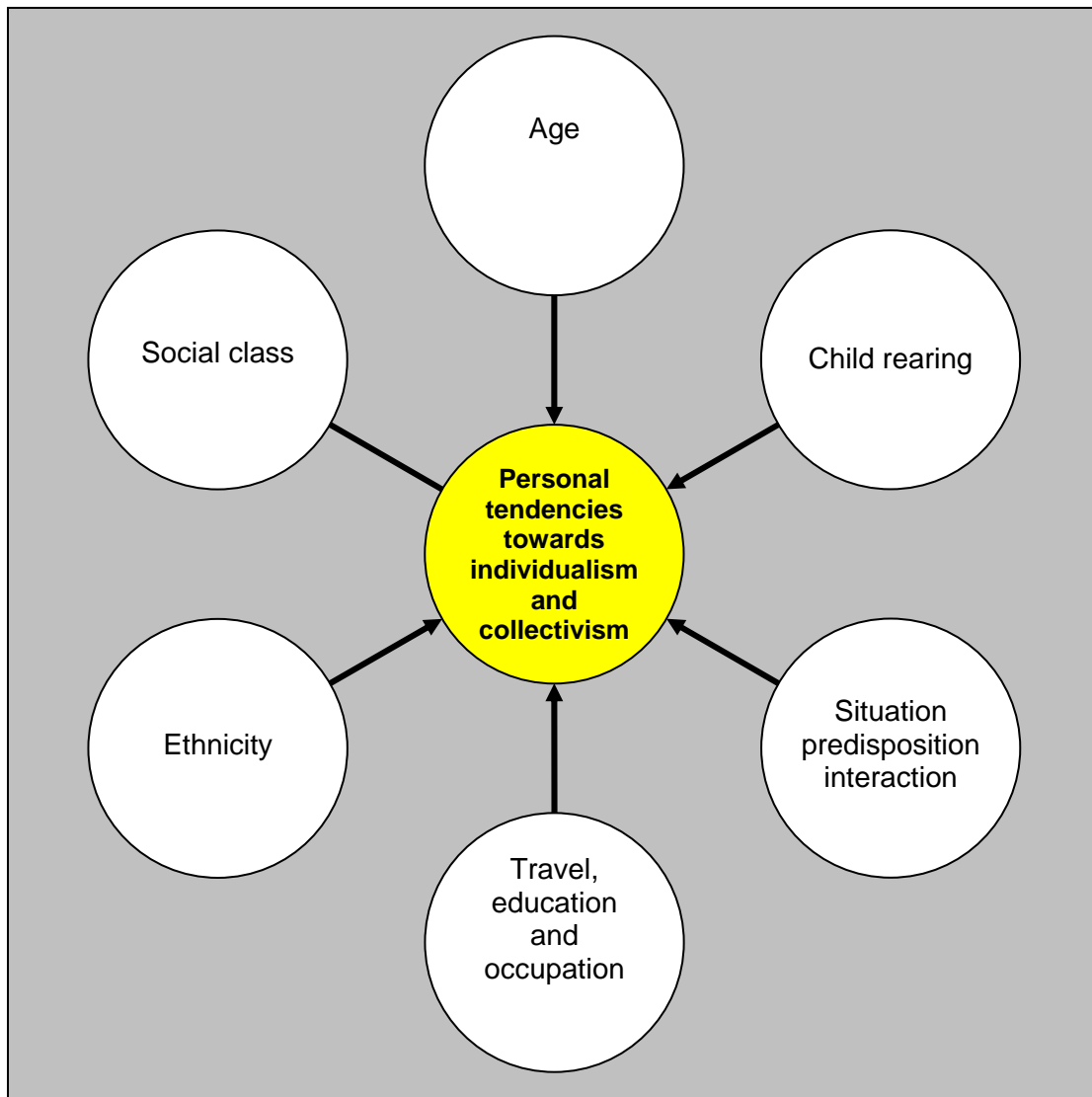
Figure 3.4   Conceptualisation of factors that influence personal tendencies towards individualism and collectivism

3.6.1 Age

Research has shown that the older one is, the more social relations one is likely to have established (Triandis, 1995), and that people become more collectivist with age (Noricks, Agler, Bartholomew, Howard-Smith, Martin, Pyles, & Shapiro, 1987). As people age, they become more embedded in a mobile society, establish more networks, and have more opportunities to describe people in context (Triandis, 1995).

3.6.2 Social class

Daab (1991) states that in all societies, the upper social classes are likely to be relatively more individualistic than the lower social classes. As people become affluent, they become financially independent and independent from their ingroups (Triandis at al., 1990). Affluence is also normally associated with industrialisation and is related to cultural complexity. Affluence also relates to having small families, including having only one child. Small families allow parents to raise their children individualistically and children from such families tend to be idiocentric (Triandis et al., 1990).

Interestingly, a greater emphasis on obedience is found in the lower social classes in modern, complex societies, whereas the upper classes emphasise creativity and self-reliance (Kohn, 1969). It is of more use for a worker than a professional to be obedient, thus the child-rearing pattern matches the likely future occupations of the child, based on social class (Triandis, 1995).

3.6.3 Child rearing

Child-rearing patterns around the world can be described by using two dimensions, namely, acceptance-rejection and independence-dependence (Adamopoulos & Bontempo, 1984). The independence-dependence pattern is especially relevant for individualism and collectivism (Triandis, 1995). In individualistic cultures, independence is expected and valued, and self-actualisation is encouraged. Mother and child are distinct and the child is encouraged to leave the nest. Individualists tend to use acceptance/independence, which leads to high self-confidence. Child-rearing practices that characterise individualist cultures emphasise the child's autonomy, creativity, self-reliance and independence from the family (Triandis et al., 1990).

Collectivists tend to use acceptance/dependence, which results in conformity. There is much evidence that collectivists rate high on conformity (Triandis, 1995). In collectivist cultures, obedience, duty and sacrifice for the ingroup are

emphasised (Triandis et al., 1990). As such, collectivists conform more often to ingroup authorities, such as parents, than individualists do and children are then more likely to pursue a career decided upon by their parents. In collectivist cultures, dependence is expected and valued. Mother and child are one and can be "the same". In collectivist cultures, child-rearing is often intrusive (Guthrie, 1961) and breaking the will of the child to make him or her obedient is sometimes evident (Triandis, 1995). Dependence of the child on the parents is often encouraged. Collectivists manage their children by providing high rates of interaction, guidance and consultation. This results in their children becoming dependent on teachers and other adults for help in making significant choices, such as career choices.

Parental control tends to have opposing meanings in individualist and collectivist societies. In individualistic cultures, parental control is often perceived as "over controlling" and generates negative affect (Triandis, 1995). By contrast, collectivist cultures perceive parental control as "love" because it is part of the effort of the parents to make the child a useful member of the ingroup or the society (Triandis, 1995).

The size of the family in which a child is raised also impacts on the child's inclination towards individualism and collectivism. In extended families, collectivism is more likely because children cannot receive preferential treatment (Triandis, 1995). In such extended families, there is greater uniformity in child rearing and general consensus about how a child should be raised the ideal child is the one that obeys. In smaller families, individualism is more probable because children may be given preferential treatment. Small families allow parents to raise their children individualistically and children from such families tend to be idiocentric (Triandis et al., 1990).

3.6.4 Ethnicity

A person's ethnic identity is part of the person's social identity (Phinney, 1992). As such, ethnic identity is a part of the person's self-concept that originates from the individual's knowledge of social group membership (i.e.

ethnic group) and the emotional significance that the person attaches to ethnic group membership (Feinstein-Messinger, 2007). Literature indicates that individuals from certain ethnic groups tend to display characteristics associated with either individualism or collectivism (Triandis, 1986). Thus, individuals from Western ethnicity tend, generally to be more individualistic, whereas individuals from Asian or African ethnicity tend to be more collectivistic.

3.6.5 Travel, education and occupation

Social mobility and geographical mobility also contribute to individualism (Triandis et al., 1990). Travelling and living abroad raise the probability of having to decide for oneself about what lifestyle to choose, resulting in individualism (Triandis, 1995). Voyagers become exposed to different viewpoints and such experiences encourage individualism. According to Triandis et al., (1990) those who have migrated to other countries are more individualistic and movement from rural to urban centres is also correlated with individualism.

In general, education leads to greater exposure to cultural diversity and tends towards individualism (Triandis, 1995). However, those who have been educated more traditionally (Sunday School, Qur'anic School, language of own ethnic group) are more likely to become collectivists.

In cultures where people make a living by gathering food, hunting or fishing, self-reliance tends to be more functional than dependence on authorities (Triandis et al., 1990). In such cultures, child-rearing practices emphasise self-reliance and independence, and people thus conform less than in cultures based on agriculture. In agricultural cultures, there is more collectivism and conformity (Berry, 1979) owing to the fact that it is more functional to conform to authorities while public works are being performed.   According to Triandis (1995), the occupation one engages in may result in working in teams or autonomously. The more teamwork one does, the more one learns to pay

attention to the needs of others, and thus the more likely one is to move towards collectivism.

3.6.6 Situation-predisposition interaction

According to Triandis (1995), when an individual is faced with a social situation, it causes a specific behavioural pattern. For example, when at a funeral, the probability that horizontal collectivism will become activated is high across the world. Then again, if a situation requires an individual to write a unique book, the probability of vertical individualism emerging is high. However, situations are often ambiguous. For example, the situation requires a person to take a trip, which may inconvenience many other people. In that case, a person from a modal pattern of vertical collectivism will activate themes of duties that cannot be performed during the trip and may decide not to go; an individual from the horizontal collectivism pattern may think about the social support that he or she will not be able to give during the trip and may cancel it. However, both kinds of individualists suppress such themes and feel emotionally detached from the ingroup and will thus be able to take the trip. In general, collectivists tend to change themselves to fit into situations whereas individualists try to change the situation to fit themselves.

With reference to the above, there is clearly a strong situation-predisposition interaction impacting on an individual's inclination towards individualism or collectivism.

Triandis (1995) states that one should bear in mind that people who frequently use a specific cultural pattern, such as vertical collectivism, are most comfortable doing what that pattern implies. Individuals then develop beliefs and attitudes and select norms and values that fit the pattern they feel most comfortable with. They will behave according to that pattern and thus develop habits consistent with the pattern. When they find themselves in a new social situation, they will try to use that cultural pattern. They have thus developed a structure of habits that fits that pattern and will aim to use that pattern in most situations. According to Triandis (1995), if the person is an individualist,

overriding the individualist structure of habits will require extreme cognitive effort. Such a person must instruct himself or herself to suppress individualistic tendencies in situations that require collectivist behaviour.

In addition to factors that influence personal tendencies towards individualism and collectivism, there are also a number of individual attributes that indicate whether an individual is an individualist or a collectivist.

3.7   INDIVIDUAL ATTRIBUTES THAT REFLECT INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

Various attributes indicate whether a specific individual is an individualist or a collectivist. These attributes are culture specific, which by implication, means that each species of collectivism is created by some combination of the collectivist attributes and each individualist culture is characterised by a combination of the individualist attributes (Triandis, 1995). These attributes include self-perception, attributions, identity and emotions, cognitions, motivations, attitudes, norms, values, social behaviour, attitudes towards privacy and communication (see fig. 3.5).

3.7.1 Self-perception

Individualists find it natural to use individuals as the basic unit of social perception, whereas collectivists use groups as the basic unit of social perception (Triandis, 1995). Social perception among individualists focuses on an individual who does have relationships, whereas social perception among collectivists consists of a set of relationships organised around an individual. Research has shown that individualists have flattering self-perceptions, while collectivists tend to have more realistic self-perceptions about their abilities (Triandis, 1995).
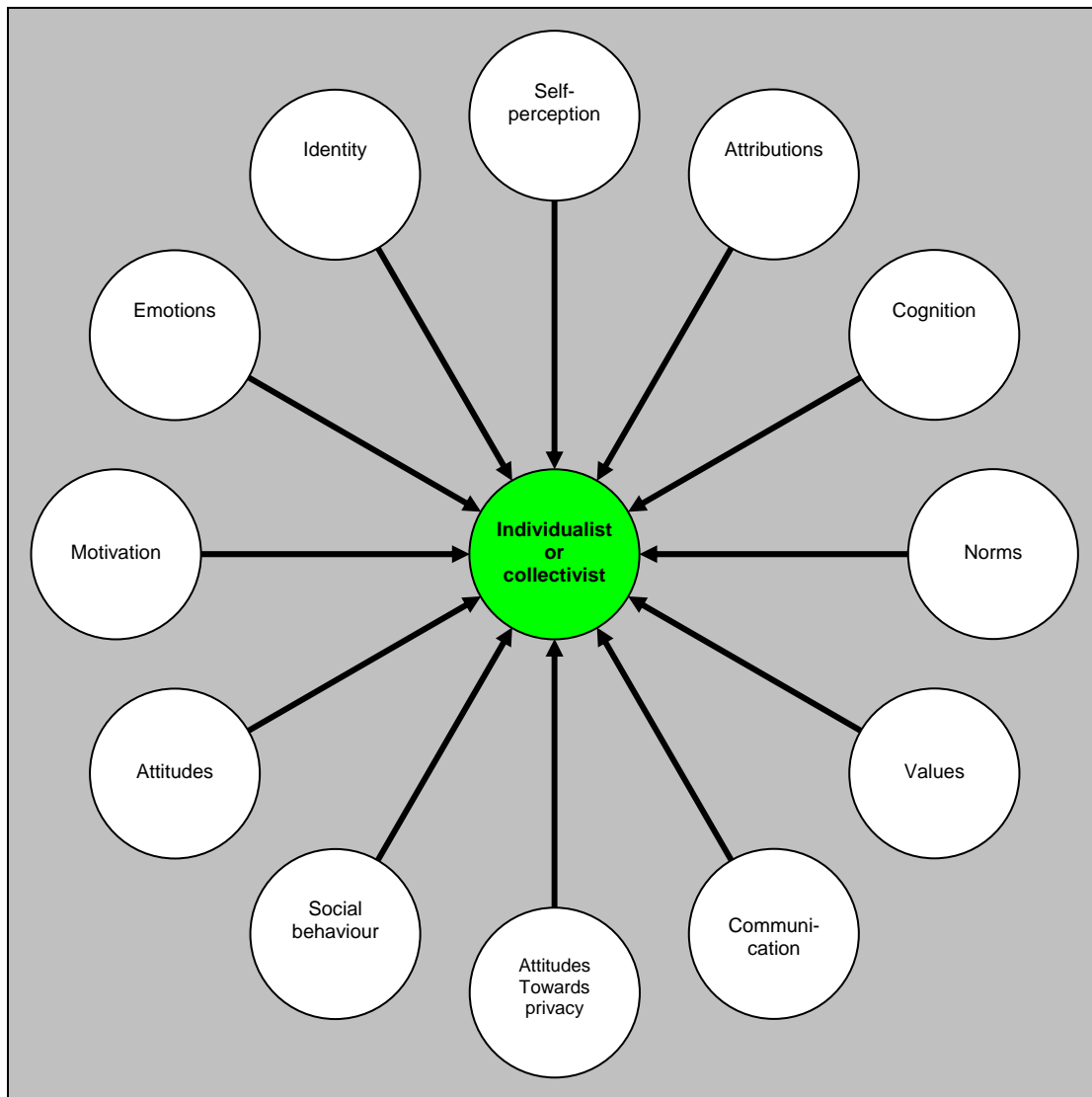
Figure 3.5 Conceptualisation of individual attributes that reflect individualism and collectivism

3.7.2 Attributions

Essential elements in providing meaning to events are the attributions that individuals make (Triandis, 1995). Individualists attribute events to internal individual causes whereas collectivists tend to attribute them to external causes (Newman, 1993).

3.7.3 Identity

Individualists base identity on what they own and their experiences, whereas collectivists define identity according to relationships and group memberships (Triandis, 1995).

3.7.4 Emotions

Not surprisingly the emotions of individualists are ego-focused (e.g. anger) and of long duration (implying that their emotions do not necessarily change with the situation). The emotions of collectivists tend to be other-focused (e.g. empathy) and of short duration (their emotions last as long as the collectivists are in a situation) (Triandis,1995).

3.7.5 Cognitions

Individualists tend to focus on personal needs, rights, capacities and the contracts they have made. Collectivists, on the other hand, think about the needs of their ingroup (Triandis, 1995).

3.7.6 Motivation

The motive structure of individualists indicates their needs, rights and capacities, including the ability to withstand social pressure (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The basic motive structure of collectivists indicates receptivity and adjustment to the needs of others.

3.7.7 Attitudes

Individualists believe in self-reliance (e.g. when the group is slowing me down, I do the job myself), hedonism (e.g. I value the good life), competition (e.g. I want to be the best) and emotional detachment from ingroups (e.g. if my brother fails in school, it is not my problem) (Triandis, 1995). Collectivists prefer attitudes that reflect sociability (e.g. I like to live close to my good

friends), interdependence (e.g. I can depend on my relatives for financial support if I need it), and family integrity (e.g. old parents should live with their children until they die).

3.7.8 Norms

Collectivists feel that when a kin member is rich he or she must distribute much of what he or she owns to the ingroup (Hofstede, 1982). In collectivist cultures, there is more consensus regarding the roles of men and women than in individualistic cultures (Williams & Best, 1990). Collectivists use equality or need as the basis for allocating resources to ingroup members, and equity as the basis for allocation to outgroup members (Smith & Bond, 1994).

3.7.9 Values

Individualists value creativity, broadmindedness, being curious and having an exciting and varied life, full of pleasure (Triandis, 1995), whereas the values of collectivists include security, good social relationships, ingroup harmony, respect for tradition, honouring parents and elders and politeness.

3.7.10 Social behaviour

Collectivists tend to shift their behaviour depending on the context more so than individualists (Triandis, 1995). Social behaviour is totally different when a collectivist is interacting with an ingroup member than when he or she is interacting with an outgroup member; it is only slightly different in the case of an individualist (Triandis, 1972). Collectivists behave somewhat differently when interacting with each other when a relative, co-worker, neighbour, or acquaintance is involved (Hui, 1984), and behave more or less the same only with strangers. This implies that personality is less evident in collectivist than it is in individualist cultures, because the situation is such a powerful determinant of social behaviour.

Compared to individualists, collectivists behave with more intimacy towards their friends and co-workers (e.g. revealing personal information), and towards their outgroups with less intimacy (Triandis et al., 1990). Interestingly, collectivists are more intimate with same-sex close friends than with their different-sex friends or spouse (Gudykunst, 1993). Collectivists are also more likely than individualists to be embarrassed in social situations (Singelis & Sharkey, cited in Triandis, 1995). The behaviour of collectivists also differs more in private versus public settings than the behaviour of individualists (Kim, 1994). Collectivists expect social situations to be pleasant (Triandis, 1995) and have fewer skills than individualists in dealing with new groups and strangers (Cohen, 1991). However, once a relationship is formed it tends to last longer and become more intimate than the relationships of individualists (Gudykunst, 1983). Because individualists must enter and leave many ingroups, they develop superb skills for superficial interactions, but lack the skills for intimate relationships (Triandis et al., 1990). Conformity with ingroup norms is internalised by collectivists to such an extent that it is automatic, and people enjoy doing what is expected of them (Gudykunst, 1993). Conformity with outgroups, however, is rare amongst collectivists. Social behaviour, especially during leisure time, occurs in small groups with greater frequency among collectivists, whereas individualists prefer socialising in couples (Triandis, 1995).

3.7.11 Attitudes towards privacy

Individualists feel that people should mind their own business, privacy should be respected and people should be able to think open mindedly (Triandis, 1995). Collectivists feel that one's business is also the business of the group and friends should therefore be concerned with each other's personal matters. They are of opinion that the collective is entitled to know and even regulate what individuals do and think in private (Ho & Chiu, 1994). Collectivists and individualists also treat space differently. Collectivists use few partitions and often use the same space for different purposes at different times of the day. Individualists, on the other hand, use more partitions and designate spaces for specific purposes, such as a bedroom and a living room (Triandis, 1995).

3.7.12 Communication

In speech, individualists tend to use "I" and emphasise content and clarity (Kim, Sharkey, & Singelis, 1994). Collectivists use "we" often and the context (such as tone of voice, gestures, posture, etc.) to convey meaning (Triandis, 1995). Collectivists are also likely to say "what is mine is yours", whereas individualists are likely to maintain that "what is mine is not to be used without my permission". Silence is also perceived differently by individualists and collectivists. Individualists are embarrassed by silence and collectivists view it as a sign of strength (Iwao & Triandis, 1993). During communication, individualists tend to be direct and say what is on their minds, even if it risks damaging the relationship (Triandis, 1995). Collectivists are more indirect, they make use of hints, the eyes, distance between bodies, and so on, and other collectivists are expected to "read the other's mind" (Triandis, 1995). During arguments, individualists point out unfavourable consequences, such as threats (Gudykunst, 1993), while individualists tend to use duty and obligation arguments to persuade others.

3.8 INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM IN AN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Cross-cultural researchers have suggested that the distinction between individualistic and collectivistic cultural values influences work-group composition, processes and outcomes (e.g. Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991; Earley & Gibson, 1998; Gibson, 1999; Watson, Kuman, & Michaelsen, 1993).

In work groups, individualists highlight differences between group members, whereas collectivists emphasise shared values, similarities and commonness among group members (Earley & Gibson, 1998). As such, individualists regard perceived diversity in group members as a way of bringing to the group unique qualities and multiple perspectives on problem solving (Eisenhardt & Tabrizi, 1995). Preference for teamwork is also likely to be higher for collectivists than for individualists (Sosik & Jung, 2002). Collectivists prefer working on interdependent tasks that require collective motivation and action

to attain a common goal or outcome (Triandis, 1994). Collectivists have also been found to be more confident and better motivated to perform well when they were evaluated and rewarded on the basis of group, rather than individual performance (Erez & Somech, 1996).

Collectivists value interdependence and affiliation in long-term relationships (Breer & Locke, 1965). As collectivists learn more about each other's abilities and experiences over time, they quickly find common ground to build interdependent relationships (Shamir, 1990). In contrast, individualists gain knowledge about each other's abilities and experiences over time, they may identify similarities but may place more emphasis on identifying distinctions and complementary skills, to maintain autonomy and independence in group-based working relationships they regard as temporary and self-serving (Lincoln, Hanada & McBride, 1986).

In a study of individualism-collectivism as an individual difference predictor of organisational citizenship behaviour, Moorman and Blakely (1995) found that many new and emerging management techniques based on more collectivistic concerns are gaining popularity. Currently, there is increased emphasis on participatory management and team-based manufacturing systems (e.g. TQM, employee involvement programmes and quality circles). Previous research has reported that collectivists show strong concern for the welfare of the group and will often subordinate their self-interest for the good of the group or organisation (Earley, 1989). Employees who are collectivistic may go beyond their in-role requirements and offer examples of interpersonal helping, individual initiative and loyal boosterism as a way to help the group (Moorman & Blakely, 1995). Employees who have a tendency to support the welfare of the collective appear more likely to perform the small, discretionary, yet helpful acts which in the aggregate promote the effective functioning of the work group and the organisation (Moorman & Blakely, 1995). According to Moorman and Blakely (1995), a focus on collectivism may assist organisations to realise the full benefits of cooperation.

3.9   THEORETICAL INTEGRATION OF CONSTRUCTS

The purpose of the theoretical integration of the constructs career indecision, individualism and collectivism is to formulate a conceptual framework describing the theoretical relationship between these constructs.

Deciding upon a career to pursue is considered a main developmental task of late adolescence and early adulthood (Sharf, 2002). According to Super (1990), people undergo numerous career transitions throughout their lives, the first of which is the transition from student to worker. This life-career stage typically involve some career exploration, and this changing of career paths and fields of study is natural among young adults as they explore the world of work and discover their strengths and weaknesses (Moss & Frieze, 1993).

However, the phenomenon of repeated and extended switching of career paths is becoming increasingly prevalent among teenagers and young adults (Feldman & Whitcomb, 2005). There is growing evidence that young adults are changing career paths and fields of study more frequently, having difficulties committing to specific career goals, and taking longer to make even provisional commitments to initial career paths (Feldman, 2003). It would therefore appear that career indecision is becoming increasingly prevalent among young adults. Career indecision pertains to uncertainty about the future (Sepich, 1987). And, although some level of uncertainty is normal, uncertainty becomes a problem when it interferes with an individual's ability to make sound career decisions (Chartrand & Robbins, 1997).

According to Super (1957), the problems of early career indecision among young adults are the result of the nature of the situations these individuals face, as well as the nature of their own personal development. What makes a career choice difficult often relates to one's perceptions, values, personal preferences and gut emotional reactions (Elaydi, 2006). Factors associated with career indecision include differences in personality, demographic status, vocational interests and abilities, early work experiences and family environments (Feldman, 2003).

Whether individuals are making an initial career choice or have to move from their current job, they hope to secure an occupation that will satisfy their values (Super, 1990).

A number of research studies have suggested that values might be a key factor in career choice (Rosenberg, 1957; Gray, 1963; Cherry, 1975; Duff & Cotgrove, 1982). Researchers have found that workers select jobs (and are selected by employers into jobs) that tend to be consistent with their values (Judge & Bretz, 1992; Lindsay & Knox, 1984; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979).

According to Brown (1995), values have cognitive and affective dimensions. The cognitive dimension is used in the decision-making process (Rokeach, 1973). Cognitive functioning, however, is not independent of the affective state of the decision maker (Brown, 1995). The quality of decisions will depend on the clarity of the individual's values and the extent to which information about choices is available. Clarity has two dimensions, namely the degree of crystallisation of individual values and the extent to which values have been prioritised. A crystallised value is one that has a label that has meaning to the individual (e.g. integrity) and can be used to interpret current behaviour and the outcomes of that behaviour. The affective dimension can be either positive or negative (Brown, 1995). Positive affect in the form of satisfaction (e.g. happiness or excitement) occurs when people act in accord with their values and achieve the desired outcomes. Negative affect (e.g. anxiety, anger or depression) may occur when individuals fail to act in accordance with their values hence their self-evaluations are diminished. Negative affect can also occur when individuals' actions do not achieve the outcomes desired for satisfaction or when they perceive their goals to be unattainable (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Actions that are in conflict with or that fail to achieve desired outcomes may impair decision making (Feather, 1992).

Although much research has reported that values influence career choice of individuals, little is known empirically about the role of cultural value orientations (individualism/collectivism, i.e. factors that have been used to

simplify the assessment of culture) – in vocational processes (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). This applies even more to research in the South African context.

Several studies have examined the role of culture in aspiring to a career (Berry, 1979; Triandis et al., 1990; Triandis, 1995).

Many factors should be considered in understanding how cultural patterns operate. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, language, historical period and geographic region reflect specific "subjective cultures" (Triandis, 1995). Subjective culture may be defined as shared beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles, and values found among, say, speakers of the same language, who live during the same historical period in a specified geographic region (Triandis, 1995, p. 6). These shared elements of subjective culture are then usually transferred from one generation to another. Often the elements of subjective culture become organised around a central theme. The result is a "cultural syndrome" (Triandis, 1995, p. 6). Regarding the cultural syndromes of individualism and collectivism, the central themes include the idea that individuals are the units of analysis and are autonomous (individualism), while for collectivism, the theme incorporates the notion that groups are the units of analysis and individuals are tightly intertwined parts of these groups.

Because of different geographical, ecological and historical conditions, each society has developed its own pattern of cultural orientations, which reflects its idiosyncratic way of resolving the problem of attitudes towards authority, and the relations between the individual and the group. Hence each culture may be described by a specific configuration of the four cultural orientations (Cohen, 2001). These four cultural orientations are referred to as horizontal individualism, horizontal collectivism, vertical individualism and vertical collectivism. The norms and practices that constitute these cultural orientations are expected to guide people's behaviour in order to maintain the established way of resolving the two core problems of human social life (Fiske, 1992). These four cultural orientations are long-lasting patterns of

social life which represent themselves in various domains of society - family, education, health care, job relations, political structure, and so forth.

In this research, the aim was to assess these cultural orientations in the domain of new entrants to the workplace and how these cultural orientations relate to career indecision.

Individuals seeking career counselling are increasingly coming from diverse cultural perspectives and need services that incorporate their beliefs, values and world views (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). By studying cultural value orientations such as collectivism and individualism and their relationship with career indecision, one might be able to better understand the roots of this phenomenon, and in so doing, assist young adults in making suitable career choices.

3.10   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 3 commenced with an introduction and the definitions and attributes of individualism and collectivism. Four cultural patterns were examined: horizontal individualism, horizontal collectivism, vertical individualism and vertical collectivism. These patterns were found to correspond to Fiske's (1992) four modes of sociability. Cultural factors encouraging individualism and collectivism, such as tightness and looseness, complexity and simplicity, were also discussed, as well as the factors that influence personal tendencies towards individualism and collectivism. This was followed by an explanation of various individual attributes that reflect individualism and collectivism. Finally, individualism and collectivism in an organisational context were examined. The chapter will now conclude with a theoretical integration of the constructs.

The second literature aim, namely to conceptualise the constructs of individualism and collectivism, as well as the third literature aim, to theoretically integrate the constructs of career indecision, individualism and collectivism, have now been achieved.

Chapter 4 presents the empirical study.

CHAPTER 4

THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The aim of this chapter is to describe the empirical research, as depicted in steps 1 to 5 of the empirical study outlined in chapter 1.

Firstly, an overview is provided of the study's population and sample. The measuring instruments will be discussed and the choice of each justified, followed by a description of the data gathering and processing. An operational review of the problem will be provided, the research hypotheses will be formulated and the chapter will conclude with a chapter summary.

4.1 RESEARCH METHOD

An explanatory approach was followed in this study. The end goal was to draw conclusions about the relationship between the constructs of individualism, collectivism and career indecision. A quantitative research approach was followed and both descriptive and inferential statistical methods employed.

4.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A population refers to the entire collection of events, things or individuals to be represented, whilst a sample refers to a subset of the population - that is, the set of actual observations, which may include any number of individuals fewer than the population (Christensen, 1997; Howell, 1989).

This research was conducted in a South African military organisation which provides tertiary training and development for its employees. Large groups of diverse new entrants to the workplace are accommodated in this organisation - hence the suitability of the organisation for a study of career indecision and collectivism and individualism.

The manner in which the sample of participants is selected depends on the goals of the research project. The entire student population of 298 represented a nonrandom sample of convenience. Of the 298 students attending the organisation's tertiary training and development (at the time of administering the questionnaires), 205 voluntarily completed the measuring instruments. The responses of 90 participants had to be discarded because various sections of the questionnaires were either incomplete or filled in incorrectly (such as the ranking of questions 33 – 63 in the INDCOL). This brought the final research sample to 115 (N=115) and a response rate of 55%. The apparent reason for this low response rate was the students' lack of knowledge in completing questionnaires involving ranking.

4.3   MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

For the purpose of this research, two questionnaires were used, namely the INDCOL (Triandis, 1995) and the CDS (Osipow, 1987). Both questionnaires and a biographical data form were presented in a single A-5-size booklet.

A paper-and-pencil mode of administration was utilised in the completion of the research booklet, and the respondents were requested to fill in their names and biographical details in the space provided. The purpose of the study was briefly explained to the sample group, and they were also informed that participation was voluntary and that their anonymity would be ensured. Those candidates willing to participate were asked to complete and sign an informed consent form. The test administrator presented the sample group with a set of standardised instructions for each questionnaire, also captured in the booklet. The candidates were advised that the booklet contained questionnaires and not tests and they were encouraged to respond honestly and accurately. They were also reminded that the questionnaires had no set time limit but were advised to work swiftly and decisively. The questionnaires and instructions were completed in English under standardised testing instructions.

Each of the two questionnaires used will be described in the pages to follow in terms of the following:

- aim and rationale

- administration and interpretation

- reliability and validity

- justification for inclusion

4.3.1 The Individualism Collectivism (INDCOL) instrument

The Individualism and Collectivism (INDCOL) instrument developed by Triandis and Singelis (Triandis, 1995) was used to assess individualism and collectivism in this study.

4.3.1.1   Aim and rationale

As mentioned in chapter 3, the individualism and collectivism constructs have been discussed in many contexts in the social sciences. Although the utility of the constructs is indisputable, there is still the tendency to conceive of individualism and collectivism as pure dichotomies (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). An alternative view put forward by Triandis (1995), is that individualism and collectivism are polythetic constructs. Triandis and Gelfand (1998) argue that both individualism and collectivism may be *horizontal* (emphasising equality) or *vertical* (emphasising hierarchy), and that this is a viable and important distinction.

The INDCOL consists of 63 items, its aim being to measure two kinds of individualism (horizontal and vertical) and two kinds of collectivism (horizontal and vertical). The horizontal types involve an emphasis on equality and the perception of people having more or less the same self, as is typically found in homogeneous cultures. The vertical types refer to acceptance of inequality.

4.3.1.2   Administration and interpretation

The first part of the INDCOL consists of 32 items evenly divided (8 each) among the four dimensions (VI, HI, VC, HC). Respondents are required to respond to each of the 32 items on the basis of a nine-point Likert-type scale. On the nine-point scale, a "1" represents "strongly disagree", and a "9" "strongly agree", to indicate to what extent each item describes the respondents.

The second part of the INDCOL includes 30 scenarios that provide an additional method for the measurement of horizontal-vertical, individualism-collectivism. Each scenario is followed by four options (A, B, C and D) which the respondents are required to rank by placing a "1" next to the option considered the "best" or "most right" or "appropriate", a "2" next to the "next best" option, a "3" next to the "third best" option and a "4" next to the "least best" option.

For scoring the first part of the INDCOL (items 1-32), the responses to the eight items that are shown as measuring horizontal individualism (HI), horizontal collectivism (HC), vertical individualism (VI) and vertical collectivism (VC) are added to obtain four scores measuring these qualities. One item (30) is formulated in the negative, and has to be reverse scored. The scenarios (items 33-63) are scored by taking into account the percentage of the time that the HI, HC, VI, and VC responses were given rank 1 and, separately, the percentage of time they were given rank 2.

The 4HI, 4HC, 4VI and 4VC scores are then correlated with the four percentages given rank 1, and the four percentages given rank 2. These four scores should correlate to form a multimethod, multitrait matrix. In other words, for example, the correlations between the measures of HI should be higher than the correlations between HI, on the one hand, and HC or VC on the other.

4.3.1.3   Reliability and validity

Numerous studies attesting to the construct validity of the INDCOL have been conducted (Helmreich & Spence, 1987; Budner, 1962; Hui, 1984; Villareal, 1985). Hui (1988) conducted six studies to examine aspects of the validity of the INDCOL. In study 1, 48 social scientists role-played either an individualist or a collectivist, when responding to the scale. The score profiles followed the predicted pattern. In study 2, INDCOL subscale scores and the General Collectivism Index (GCI) were demonstrated to be positively related to social interest among both Chinese and American students. In study 3, collectivism and social desirability were positively related among Chinese, but not American respondents. The difference between the two correlation coefficients was statistically significant. Study 4 demonstrated the individualist-collectivist difference in the psychological link between perceived obligation and behavioural intention. In studies 5 and 6, the sharing of responsibility was examined. Collectivists were found to hold relatively favourable attitudes towards sharing others' burdens and troubles.

In addition to the above studies, investigations conducted by Triandis, Leung, Villareal and Clark (1985), in which five of the INDCOL subscales were used, also confirmed the construct validity of the scale.

Singelis and Triandis (Triandis, 1995) tested the INDCOL's internal consistency reliability. The alpha reliabilities for the scales were horizontal individualism .67, vertical individualism .74, horizontal collectivism .74, and vertical collectivism .68 (Triandis, 1995). When the horizontal and vertical items were combined to give overall measures (16 items each) of individualism and collectivism, the alphas for the two scales were .66 and .78 respectively (Triandis, 1995).

More recently Robert, Lee and Chan (2006) conducted an empirical analysis of measurement equivalence with the INDCOL. They systematically explored the robustness of the INDCOL for various statistical uses in the face of four sample threats (translation, culture, organisation and response) to the validity

of cross-cultural inferences. An analysis of measurement equivalence using multigroup mean and covariance structure analysis compared samples of INDCOL data from the USA, Singapore and Korea. The INDCOL was found to be robust with regard to the interpretability of correlations, whereas differences in culture and translation posed an important potential threat to the interpretability of mean-level analysis.

4.3.1.4 Justification for inclusion

The INDCOL (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995) is a popular and well-validated measure of individualism and collectivism (Robert, Lee, & Chan, 2006). It has undergone numerous iterations and has benefited from inputs by researchers from multiple cultures (e.g., Triandis et al., 1995). Given the relevance of individualism and collectivism to organisational issues, and the growing recognition of the utility of cultural value measures in research, the INDCOL measure was considered adequately suitable for the purposes of this study. Combined with its psychometric properties and frequent use for research purposes, this provides sufficient justification for the use of the INDCOL in this study.

4.3.2 The Career Decision Scale (CDS)

The Career Decision Scale (CDS) developed by Osipow (1987) was used to assess the extent and nature of career indecision in this study.

4.3.2.1   Aim and rationale

Originally devised as part of a proposed modular system to promote self-counselling about career indecision (Osipow, Winer, Koschier & Yanico, 1975) the CDS stems from the rationale that a limited number of relatively discrete problems prevent people from reaching closure for educational and career decisions. The CDS is intended as a rapid and reliable instrument for surveying respondents about their status in the career decision-making process. The scale provides an estimate of career indecision and its

antecedents as well as an outcome measure for determining the effects of interventions relevant to career choice or career development (Osipow, 1987).

The CDS comprises 19 items, the first 18 of which require a self-rating. These 18 items are of a four point Likert-type. Item 19 is an open-ended item which affords respondents an opportunity to clarify or expand on prior items. Items 1 and 2 comprise the Certainty Scale, which provides a measure of the degree of certainty that the respondent feels in having made a decision about a major and a career. Items 3 to 18 constitute the Indecision Scale, a measure of career indecision.

4.3.2.2   Administration and interpretation

Administration of the CDS is uncomplicated for either individual or group administration. Each respondent is required to circle one of four response categories (ranging from 1-4), indicating the degree to which each of the 18 items accurately describes him or her. A rating of "4" indicates a strong similarity between the item and the respondent, while a rating of "1" indicates a considerable difference.

Scoring of the CDS requires the calculation of the total ratings for each of the two CDS scales. To obtain the raw score for the Certainty Scale, one simply adds the ratings for items 1 and 2 and enters the total in the scoring box under the heading *Total 1-2*. The Indecision Scale consists of items 3 to 18. One simply adds the ratings for items 3 to 18, and enters this total under the heading *Total 3-18* in the scoring box.

Four normative groups are available for the calculation of percentile scores. See the appropriate norm table and find the percentiles corresponding to the raw scores for the Certainty Scale (Total 1-2) and Indecision Scale (Total 3-18). Normative data for university students, based on grade and sex, were used to compare the results from this study. These percentiles and the norm group are then entered under the appropriate heading in the scoring box.

For interpretation, the Certainty Scale percentile score should first be examined. High Certainty Scale scores indicate certainty of choice of career and study major. Certainty Scale scores which are at the 15th percentile or less should be considered significant, suggesting that the respondents are uncertain about the selection of either career and/or major (Osipow, 1987). High Indecision Scale scores indicate indecision about career choice. Scores that equal or exceed the 85th percentile should be considered significant, indicating a serious level of indecision.

4.3.2.3   Reliability and validity

In the original version of the CDS (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1976b), 16 items reflecting antecedents of career indecision were compiled from surveys of records of students seeking career guidance. These original 16 items have remained unaltered throughout revisions of the scale and constitute the Indecision Scale (Osipow, 1987). Several additional items, however, have been added over time. Two items, comprising the Certainty Scale were added to measure career certainty. In order to capture unique barriers to the decision-making process, an open-ended question was also added, to allow respondents to list other barriers not represented in the scale items (Osipow, 1987).

The CDS has an adequate temporal stability and validity (Osipow et al., 1976a). Osipow et al. (1976a) reported two retest correlations of .90 and .82 for the Indecision Scale for two separate samples of university students (N=50, N=59, respectively). Item correlations for the Certainty and Indecision Scales ranged from .34 to .82 , with the majority of the correlations in the .60 to .80 range. Slaney, Palko-Nonemaker, and Alexander (1981) examined test-retest reliabilities over a six-week period for the Certainty and Indecision Scale items. Their results indicated item correlations ranging from .19 to .70, with total CDS scores giving a correlation of .70. In addition, Sabourin and Coallier (1991) reported alpha coefficients of .79 and .86 for the Certainty Scale and the Indecision Scale, respectively.

A number of studies have examined the underlying structure of the CDS. A factor analysis of Indecision Scale items done by Osipow et al. (1976b) with a sample of N=837 university students identified four factors that accounted for over 81% of the total variance. Kazin (as cited in Osipow, 1987, p. 4) administered the CDS to 341 students drawn from the same population used in the Osipow et al. (1976a) study. The resulting factor structure reproduced the first three factors identified in the Osipow study. Slaney (as cited in Osipow, 1987, p. 4) did a factor analysis based on a sample of 268 introductory psychology students. A factor analysis using the varimax method resulted in four factors, with only the first and fourth factors giving similar interpretations to those in the Osipow et al. (1976a) study. In another study, Slaney et al. (1981) replicated factor 1 found by Osipow et al. (1976a), but the results for factors 2 and 3 were confusing. Rogers and Westbrook (1983) found only two factors in their factor analysis. Slaney (as cited in Osipow, 1987, p. 4) hypothesised that the lack of consistency of the factor structure across studies can be attributed to the nature of the scale items, because several items consist of two or three sentences describing different aspects of a barrier to decision making. Subjects in different studies may respond differentially to these factors. The status of the factor structure certainly suggests caution in the use of the factor scores in any application.

Evidence of the concurrent, construct and predictive validity of the CDS were examined, directly or indirectly, in numerous previous studies (Hartman et al., 1985; Osipow, 1987). Generally, these validity studies appear to fall into four main methodological approaches, namely group comparisons and correlations with instruments measuring the construct of indecision (Osipow & Schweikert, 1981), treatment studies (Osipow et al., 1976a), relationships with other personality variables of interest (Jones cited in Osipow, 1987, p. 5), and relationships with demographic variables (Niece & Bradley, 1979; Osipow, 1978; Westbrook et al., 1980). It is beyond the scope of this research to review all of these studies here. In summary, however, these studies have reported the validity of the CDS.

4.3.2.4   Justification for inclusion

The CDS was selected for its appropriateness, brevity, psychometric properties, culture-free property and user-friendliness. The CDS has proven test-retest reliability, and although factor studies have not always revealed the same underlying structure, the validity of the CDS has been demonstrated by studies indicating the scale's expected relationships between various hypothetical constructs. Proven to be both reliable and valid, the CDS is accepted as a measurement instrument of career indecision, differentiating between career decideds and career undecideds.

4.3.3 Biographical variables

A biographical data form was included in the research booklet to collect sample data on the following: gender, race, age, year group, geographical data of origin, socioeconomic class, source of ethnic background and religion. The biographical data enabled the sample to be profiled and was deemed necessary to consider in observing potential moderating effects. The biographical data were also necessary to answer hypothesis 2 and subhypotheses 3 and 4. A summary of the biographical data of the sample is provided in chapter 5.

4.3.4 Ethical considerations

In the majority of organisations, there are official policies governing the use of psychological tests (Foxcroft, Paterson, Le Roux, & Herbst, 2004) and research. In South African organisations, such policies are based on the ethical code prescribed by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and comply with legislation in terms of the Employment Equity Act (Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk, 2000), the Labour Relations Act and the Constitution of South Africa. The updated Standards for educational and psychological testing (Standards), published under the joint auspices of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Psychological Association (APA) and the National Council on Measurement in

Education (NCME) also guide psychological testing in general and employment testing in particular in the South African context (Huysamen, 2002). In addition, there are guidelines on developing a psychological assessment policy in the International guidelines for test use developed by the International Test Commission (International Test Commission, 2001).

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, section 8, prohibits "psychological testing and other similar assessments of an employee" unless "the test or assessment being used (a) has been scientifically shown to be valid and reliable; (b) can be applied fairly to all employees; and (c) is not biased against any employee or group".

In order to comply with legislation, care has been taken in the choice and administration of the psychometric battery by evaluating the validity of items, both content and face validity; the process followed in data collection (procedural reliability); and the manner in which the data are analysed (appropriate, valid and reliable analysis procedures). In addition, the anonymity of the organisation and all respondents must be ensured, and participation in the study is voluntary.

4.4 DATA GATHERING

Owing to the nature of the organisation in which this study was conducted, the researcher had to obtain permission from governing authorities in the organisation to conduct the research. Written permission was received, provided that no reference was made to the specific units and/or respondents, and that the respondents participated voluntarily.

Once permission was obtained, a data-gathering plan was negotiated with the relevant unit. With the assistance of designated individuals, a special session was arranged with the candidates. During this session the aim of and rationale for the study was explained and the participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that anonymity was assured. All those candidates willing to participate were asked to complete and sign an informed

consent form. Each participant received a single A-5 size research booklet containing the two questionnaires (INDCOL & CDS) and pens were distributed to those who did not have one. Also included in the booklet was a biographical data form to collect specific sample data. The test administrator presented the sample group with a set of standardised instructions for each questionnaire. The respondents were reminded that there was no time limitation and requested to place their completed booklets in a central data collection box.

It was decided to compile the A-5 size research booklet for the following reasons:

- It simplified administration of three questionnaires at one time.
- It ensured that the anonymity of respondents could be maintained – no names or codes had to be written to identify the respondent and match the two questionnaires and biographical data for data processing.
- It saved time, money and space.

4.4.1 Capturing of criterion data

The responses of 115 of the subjects on the two measuring instruments were captured on an Excel spreadsheet by the researcher. The data were then sent to a statistician who converted them into SPSS data bases.

4.5 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

A variety of statistical methods were utilised in this study to test the hypotheses outlined in section 4.9 of this chapter. Additional analyses were also conducted to enhance some of the findings. These are detailed below.

4.5.1 Internal consistency reliability analysis of the scales (Cronbach alpha coefficient)

The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient (Lemke & Wiersma, 1976) was utilised to calculate the internal consistency reliability for the CDS and the INDCOL because of their limited use in the South African context. Internal consistency refers to the degree to which the items intercorrelate or the degree to which the items measure the same trait. Defined as the instrument's accuracy or precision (Kerlinger, 1986), the reliability of the CDS is an important psychometric property that determines the overall utility of the measure. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of between .50 and .60 is sufficient for basic research purposes (Nunnally, 1978), while coefficients of .80 and higher are considered ideal.

4.5.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics enable a researcher to obtain an overall picture of the research data and assist by summarising and presenting the data in a user-friendly and orderly manner (Durrheim, 2002). For the purpose of this research, descriptive statistics were calculated for reporting on the profile of the sample. Frequency distribution tables were calculated for the biographical variables and were used to verify the data, and to enable the researcher to describe the sample population. Descriptive statistics were also calculated by way of means, standard deviations and reliabilities for the sample, predictors and criteria. Means represent the average response values, and the standard deviations highlight the degree of variance or distance away from the mean (Durrheim, 2002).

4.5.3 Pearson product moment correlations

The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient is one of the most common ways of computing correlation coefficients (Anastasi, 1988) and was utilised for this research. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient r is calculated as a measure of the linear relationship between any two

variables when one or more scales are considered to be measured on an interval scale. The correlation coefficient indicates the estimated extent to which the changes in one variable are associated with changes in the other variable on a range of +1.00 to -1.00. A correlation of +1.00 indicates a perfect positive relationship, in such a relationship, the higher the score is on one variable, the higher the score tends to be on the other. A correlation of 0.00 indicates no relationship. A correlation of -1.00 indicates a perfect negative relationship, in which case, the higher the score on one variable, the lower the score on the other variables tends to be (Howell, 1989; Tredoux & Durrheim, 2002).

In this study, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses on the relationships (positive or negative) between the scores on the CDS and cultural value orientations (individualism and collectivism).

4.5.4 T-test analysis

The t-test is a statistical method used to determine significant differences between two sample means (Howell, 1999). For the purposes of this study, t-tests were used to determine statistically significant differences between respondents on the basis of race and gender.

4.5.5 Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

ANOVA deals with differences between the sample means, but unlike the t-test, it has no restrictions on the number of means (Howell,1999).

4.5.6 Statistical significance

The level of significance refers to the risk of error that researchers are willing to take in drawing conclusions from research data. In practice, a level of significance of .05 or .01 is customary, although other values may be used. If a .05 or 5% level of significance is used to test the hypothesis, then there are approximately five chances in a hundred that the researcher could reject the

hypothesis when it should be accepted. Hence the researcher is 95% confident that the right decision has been made. In such an instance, the researcher would reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance, which means that the decision could be wrong with a probability of .05. If a level of .01 or 1% level of significance is used to test the hypothesis, there is approximately one chance in a hundred that the researcher could reject the hypothesis when it should be accepted.

Statistical power refers to the probability of finding statistical significance when the hypothesis being tested is true. In terms of the power of a statistical test, not only is the level of significance important, but also the sample size. The larger the sample size, the more powerful the statistical test will be, owing to the fact that it is more likely that the null hypothesis will be rejected when it is false (Jaccard & Becker, 2002).

For the purpose of the research, it was decided to use a significance level of .05 as the cutt-off point for rejecting the null hypotheses.

4.6 STATISTICAL HYPOTHESES

Kerliger (1986) outlines the criteria for a complete problem statement. According to him, there are essentially two criteria for acceptable hypotheses and hypothesis statements, namely:

- Hypotheses are statements about the relations between variables.
- The hypothesis statements should be such that they carry clear implications for the empirical testing of the stated relations.

These criteria thus imply that hypothesis statements contain two or more variables that are measurable or potentially measurable and that they specify how the variables are tested.

Research hypotheses were formulated for the research to indicate whether a relationship exists between career indecision and individualism and collectivism. Since the problem was outlined in chapter 1, and the variables integrated in the theoretical review in chapter 3, for operational reasons it will merely be stated here. The following hypotheses were formulated (see fig. 4.1):
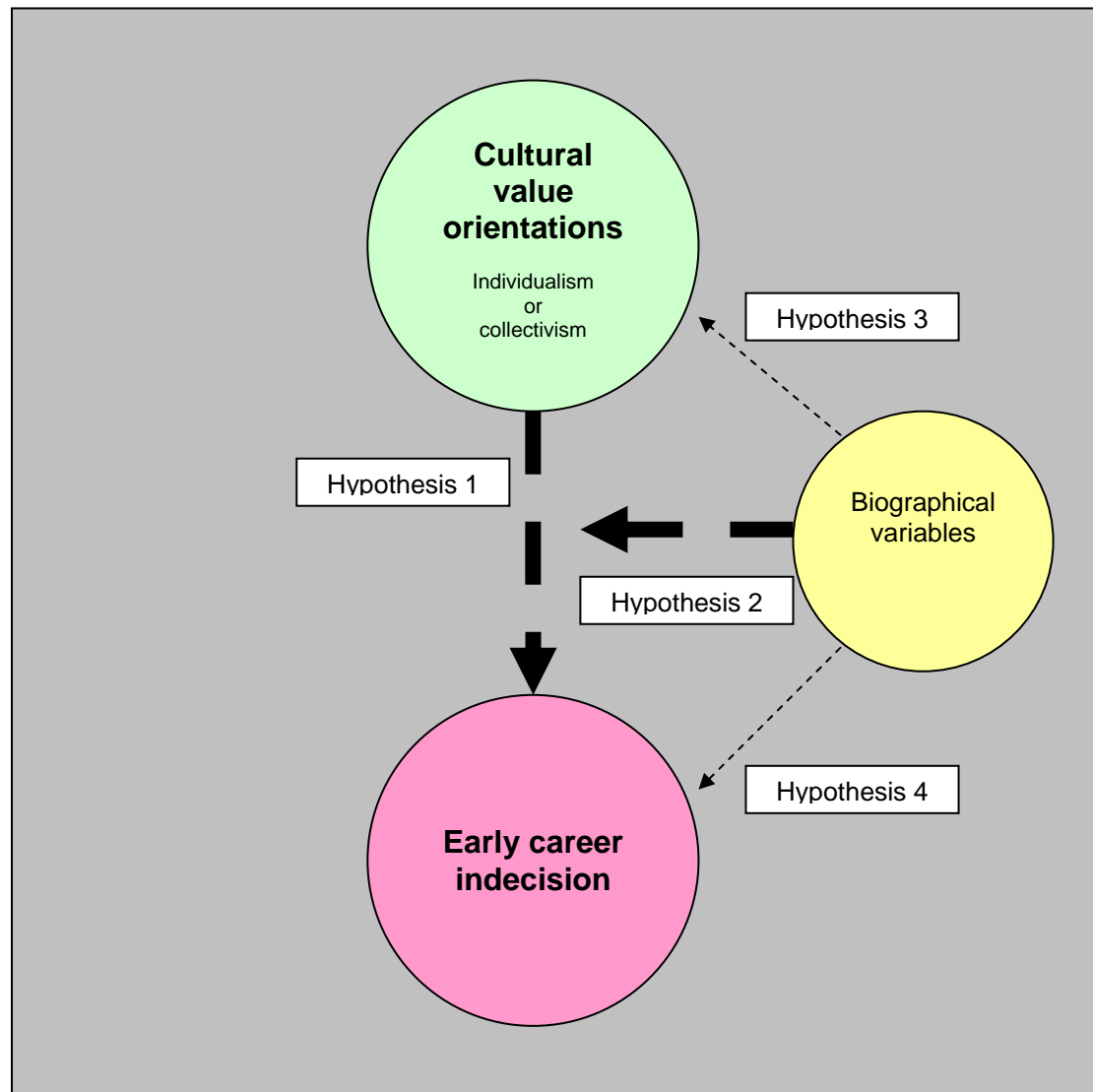
Figure 4.1 Conceptualisation of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

H_{01}:   There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_1:   There is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Hypothesis 2:

H_{02}:   Biographical variables have no statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_2:   Biographical variables have a statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Several subhypotheses relate to the independent and dependent variables, and will be outlined below. Demographic variables such as gender, race, and age are also reviewed in the context of career indecision to enhance the understanding of the concept.

Hypothesis 3:

H_{03}:   Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H_3:   Biographical variables have a relationship with cultural value orientations.

Hypothesis 4:

H_{04}:   Biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision.

H$_4$:   Biographical variables have a relationship with early career indecision.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the research methodology. The chapter outlined the population and sample. The measuring instruments for the independent and dependent variables and the data-gathering procedure were discussed. Data processing was explained and the chapter concluded with the formulation of the research hypotheses.

Aims 1 to 5 of the empirical study have therefore been achieved. These aims were to select the population and sample, select the measuring instruments, formulate the hypotheses and collect and capture the data.

In chapter 5, the results of the empirical study will be reported and interpreted.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to conduct the statistical analysis, reporting and interpret the statistical results of the study and integrate of the research, as depicted in steps 6, 7 and 8 of the empirical study outlined in chapter 1. The statistical results will be reported in terms of descriptive statistics, common statistics and inferential statistics.

The chapter commences with the reliability analysis of the measurement scales, followed by a presentation of the biographical composition of the sample. Thereafter, the results of the hypotheses testing will be provided. The chapter concludes with an integration of the results and a chapter summary. It should be noted that because of the nature of the research topic, limited previous research was available, and the researcher was thus restricted in terms of the integration of the current research results with results in previous literature.

5.1   RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Since the measuring instruments in this study had enjoyed limited previous application in the South African context, the researcher deemed it necessary to conduct a reliability analysis of all the measuring instruments used in this study. Cronbach alpha coefficients are provided in table 5.1 as indices of internal consistency reliability for each of the measures used.

Table 5.1   Cronbach alpha coefficients (N=115)

MEASURE	SCALE	CRONBACH ALPHA
INDCOL	Horizontal collectivism (HC)	.75
	Horizontal individualism (HI)	.64
	Vertical collectivism (VC)	.49
	Vertical individualism (VI)	.66
CDS	Certainty	.55
	Indecision	.88

The overall alpha coefficients for individualism and collectivism measured by the INDCOL were .57 and .69 respectively, while the alpha coefficients for the certainty and indecision scales measured by the CDS were .55 and .88 respectively. Although a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .80 and higher is considered ideal, coefficients between .50 and .60 are sufficient for basic research purposes (Nunnally, 1978; Stevens, 1992). Given this, the internal consistency for the indecision scale in the CDS can be considered high and the internal consistency for the vertical collectivism scale in the INDCOL low. Overall, the internal consistency of both the instruments used in this study can be considered acceptable.

It should be noted that the alpha coefficients for the four scales of the INDCOL in this study were considerably lower than the alpha reliabilities obtained by Singelis et al. (1995) and Probst, Carnevale and Triandis (1999), specifically on the vertical scales. Table 5.2 provides a comparison between the results obtained for this study and those of Singelis et al. (1995) and Probst et al. (1999).

Table 5.2   **Comparison of Cronbach alpha coefficients obtained by Singelis et al. (1995), Probst et al. (1999) and the present study**

SCALE	CRONBACH ALPHAS OBTAINED BY SINGELIS ET AL. (1995) (N=267)	CRONBACH ALPHAS OBTAINED BY PROBST ET AL. (1999) (N=165)	CRONBACH ALPHAS OBTAINED IN PRESENT STUDY (N=115)
Horizontal collectivism (HC)	.74	.85	.75
Horizontal individualism (HI)	.67	.72	.64
Vertical collectivism (VC)	.68	.82	.50
Vertical individualism (VI)	.74	.82	.66

Cronbach (1990) refers to the so-called "bandwidth versus fidelity dilemma". Bandwidth refers to the amount of information and is a linear function of the number of different questions asked. Fidelity refers to the accuracy of the information, that is, the consistency of the answers obtained. Bandwidth is inversely related to fidelity. Cronbach and Gleser (1965) concluded that when questions are of equal importance, obtaining rough answers to most or all of them is more profitable than precisely measuring only one or two aspects of the constructs. In short, several scores with relatively low alphas will provide more valid information (covering the whole bandwidth) than fewer scores with high alphas. According to Singelis et al. (1995), the difficulty with individualism and collectivism is that because they are broad constructs (e.g. large bandwidth), high alphas are difficult to find. Another issue is that when the instrument (measuring individualism and collectivism) is generated in one culture, the factors extracted from a factor analysis may not emerge as clearly in other cultures (such as in South Africa). Hence the differences between the

alpha coefficients in this study and those of Signelis et al. (1995) could be ascribed to the difference in sample size and cultural context.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics are aimed at describing sets of data. Descriptive statistics are essential to an understanding of common and inferential statistics (Howell, 1989). The frequency distribution tables of the biographical variables, the four cultural dimensions (VC, VI, HC, HI) on the INDCOL and the two scales (certainty scale, indecision scale) measured on the CDS, will be reported and subsequently interpreted.

Frequency distributions of the following biographical data will be presented: gender, race, age, year group, origin, socioeconomic class and religion.

5.2.1 Gender distribution of the sample

Table 5.3 illustrates the gender distribution of the respondents.

Table 5.3 Gender distribution of the sample

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	72	62.61
Female	43	37.39
Total	115	

Of the total sample, 63% comprised male respondents and 37% female respondents. This distribution is not representative of the natural demographic of the population, since the organisation employs approximately 79.5% males and 20.5% females.

Figure 5.1 provides a graphical illustration of the sample distribution by gender.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER

■ Male
■ Female
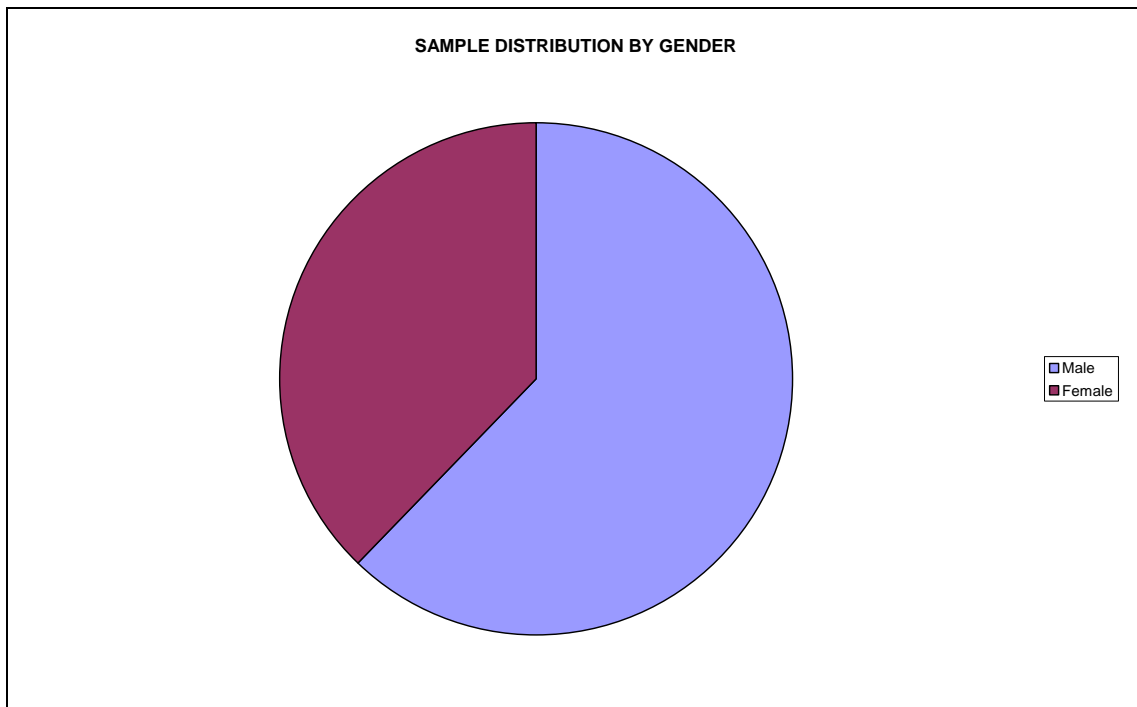
Figure 5.1   Sample distribution by gender

5.2.2   Race distribution of the sample

Table 5.4 illustrates the race distribution of the respondents.

Table 5.4   Race distribution of the respondents

RACE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Black	73	63.48
White	19	16.52
Coloured	23	20
Total	115	

Of the total sample, 63% comprised black respondents, 17% white respondents and 20% coloured respondents. This distribution is not representative of the natural demographics of the population, because the organisation employs approximately 70.8% blacks, 16.4% whites, 11.6% coloureds and 1.2% Indians.

Figure 5.2 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by race.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY RACE

- Black
- White
- Coloured
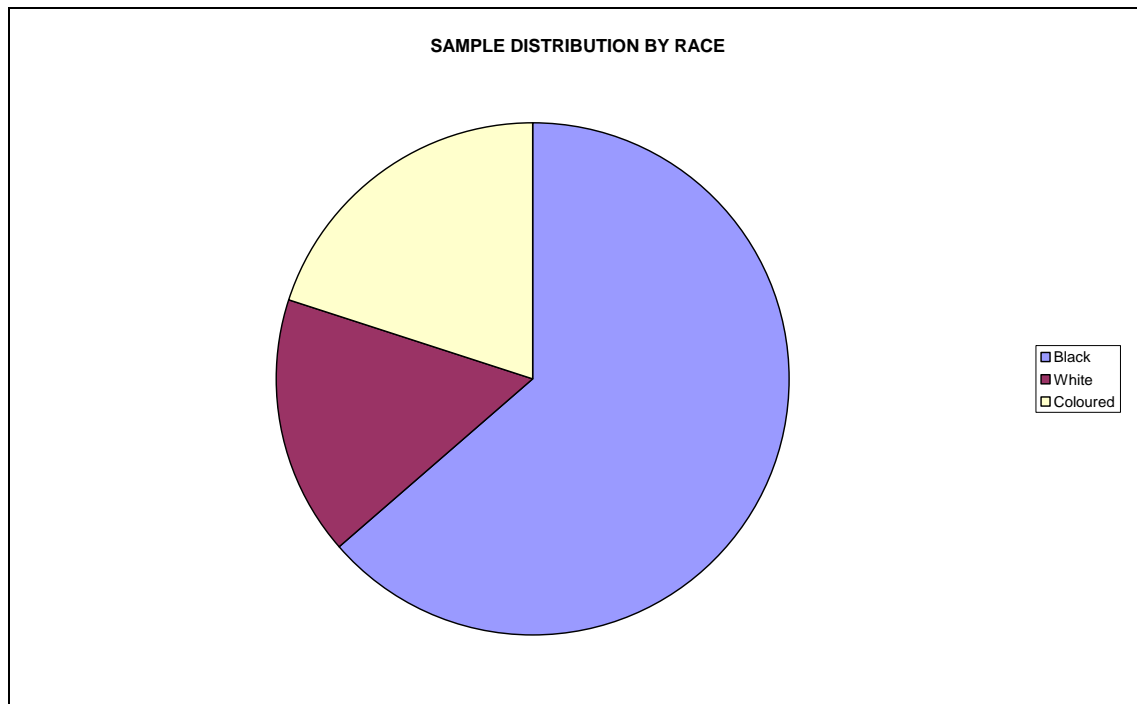
Figure 5.2   Sample distribution by race

5.2.3 Age distribution of the sample

Table 5.5 shows the age distribution of the respondents.

Table 5.5   Age distribution of the sample

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
17 – 25	100	86.96
26 – 45	15	13.04
Total	115	

This distribution implies that the greatest portion of the sample (87%) were between the ages of 17 and 25 years. The remaining 13% comprised respondents between the ages of 26 and 45 years.

Figure 5.3 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by age.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

17-25
26-45
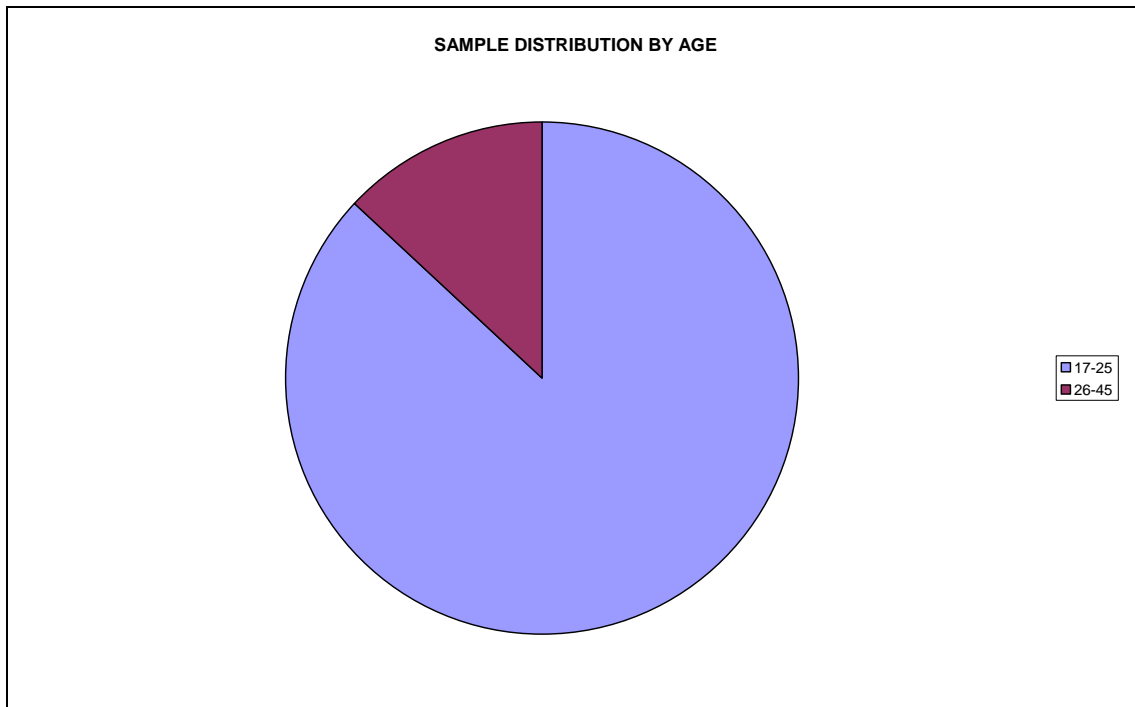
Figure 5.3   Sample distribution by age

5.2.4 Sample distribution by year group

Table 5.6 indicates the year group distribution of the respondents.

Table 5.6   Year group distribution of the sample

YEAR GROUP	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
First year	56	49.12
Second year	24	21.05
Third year	34	29.82
Total	114	

As the above table indicates, the majority of respondents (49.12%) were first years and had thus been employed by the organisation for at least a year. Of the respondents, 21% were second years and 30% were third years. The breakdown indicates that the majority of respondents were new entrants to the organisation.

Figure 5.4 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by year group.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY YEAR GROUP

First year
Second year
Third year
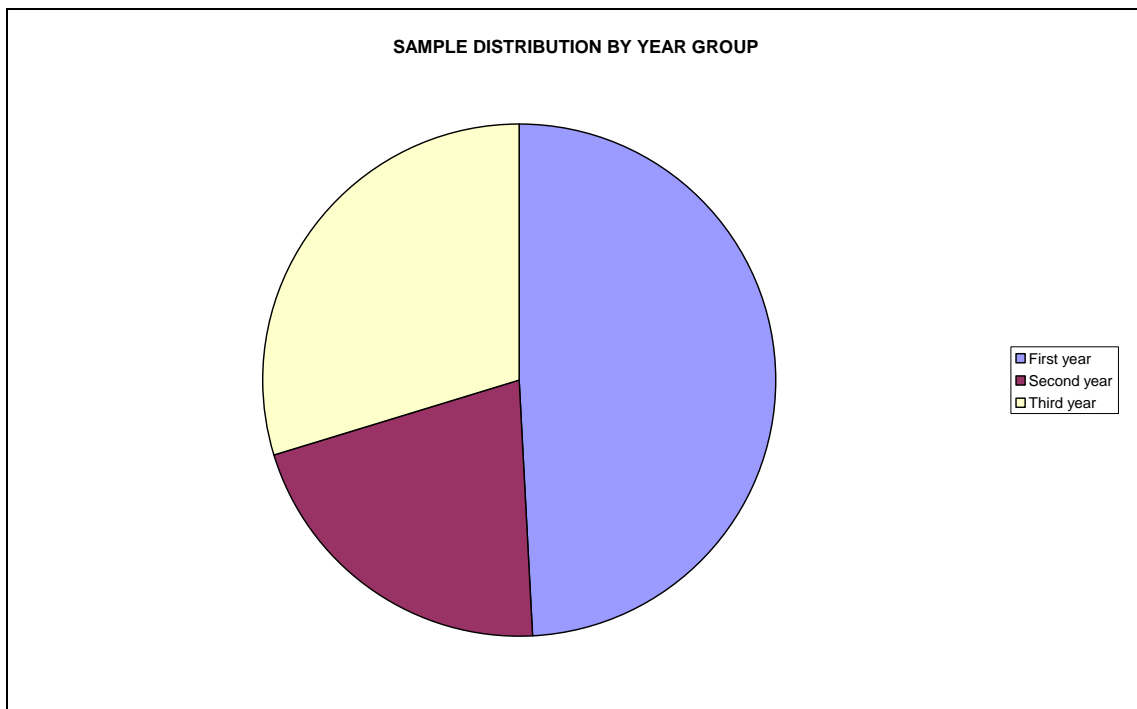
Figure 5.4   Sample distribution by year group

5.2.5 Origin of the sample

Table 5.7 illustrates the distribution of respondents according to their origin.

Table 5.7   Origin of the sample

ORIGIN	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Urban area	68	59.13
Rural area	47	40.87
Total	115	

Of all the respondents, 59% were from urban areas, while the remaining 41% were from rural areas.

Figure 5.5 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by origin.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGIN
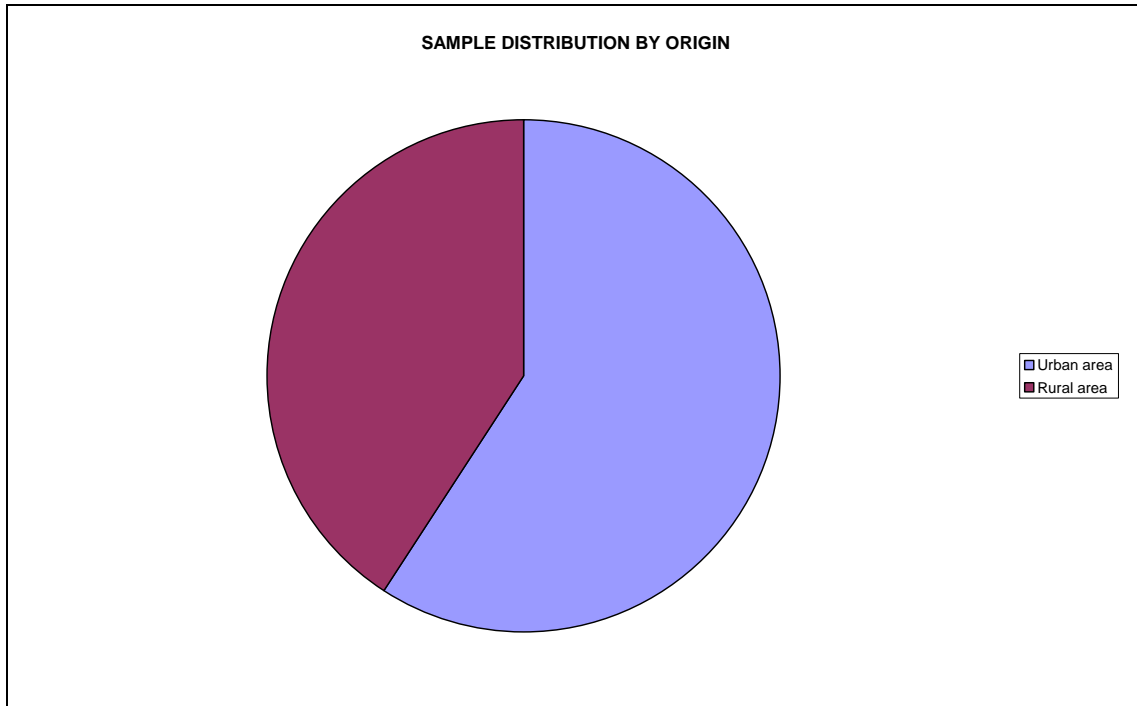
Figure 5.5   Sample distribution by origin

5.2.6   Socioeconomic class of the sample

Table 5.8 indicates the distribution of respondents according to their socioeconomic class.

Table 5.8   Socioeconomic class of the sample

SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Upper upper class	2	1.74
Lower upper class	12	10.43
Upper middle class	55	47.83
Lower middle class	25	21.74
Upper lower class	20	17.39
Lower lower class	1	.87
Total	115	

As indicated in the above table, the majority of the respondents (47.83%) considered themselves to fall within the upper middle class, 21.74% within the lower middle class and 17.39% within the upper lower class, and 10.43% within the lower upper class. Only 1.74% fell within the upper upper class and a mere .87% within the lower lower class.

Figure 5.6 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by socioeconomic class.
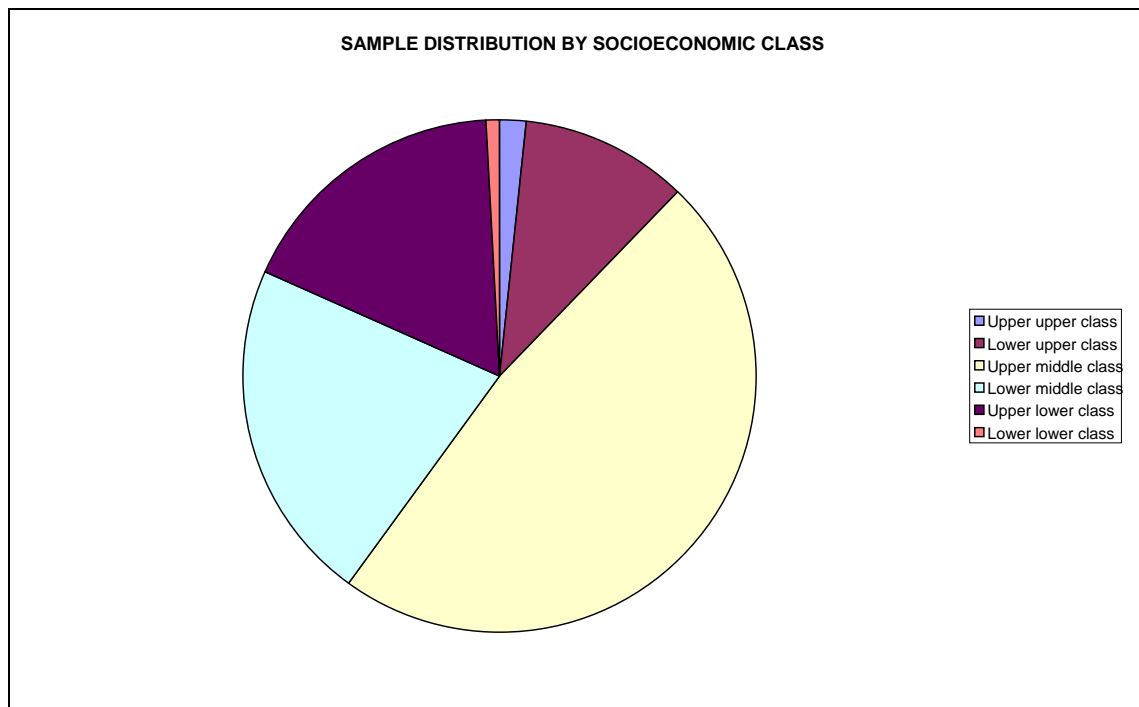
Figure 5.6   Sample distribution by socioeconomic class

5.2.7   Religious distribution of the sample

Table 5.9 indicates the distribution of respondents according to their religion.

Table 5.9   Religious distribution of the sample

RELIGION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Christianity	109	94.78
Rationalism	5	4.35
Other	1	.87
Total	115	

The vast majority (94.78%) of the sample's respondents indicated that they were Christians. Four percent of the respondents indicated that they had a sceptical view of religion or no religion at all (rationalism), while .87% of the respondents indicated that they followed another religion (unspecified).

Figure 5.7 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution by religion.
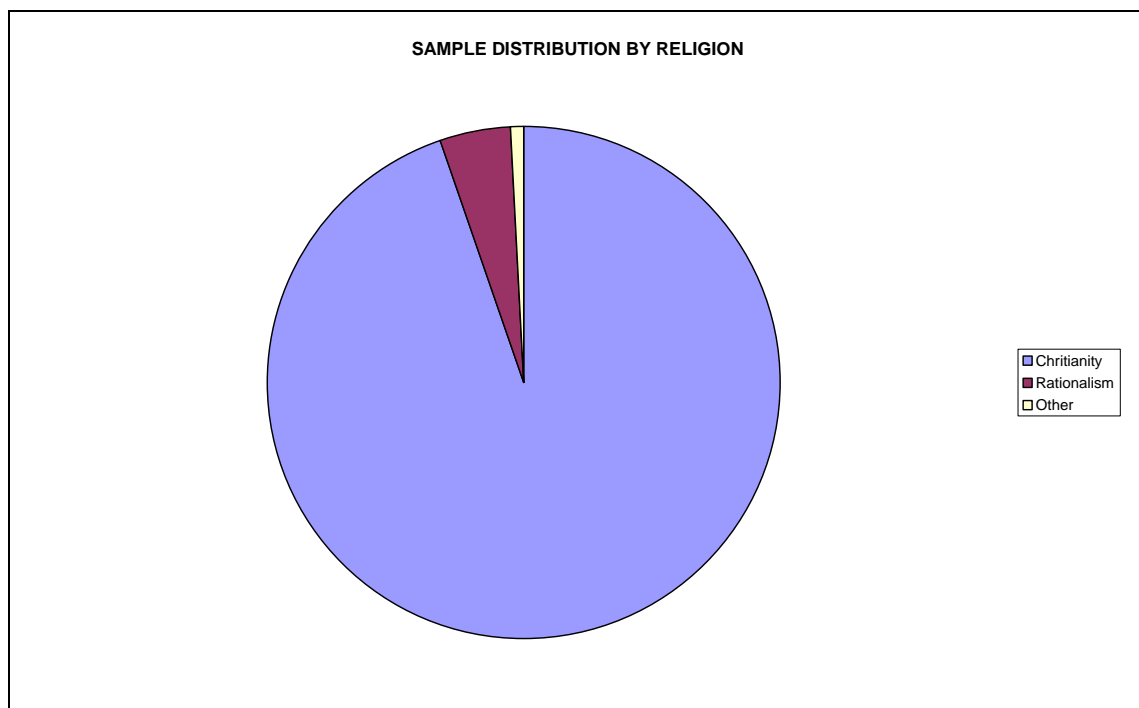
Figure 5.7   Sample distribution by religion

5.2.8 Distribution of the sample on the four cultural dimensions

Table 5.10 illustrates the distribution of respondents in terms of the four cultural dimensions on the INDCOL.

Table 5.10   Distribution of the sample on the four cultural dimensions

CULTURAL DIMENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Horizontal collectivism (HC)	40	34.78
Horizontal individualism (HI)	63	54.78
Vertical collectivism (VC)	7	6.09
Vertical individualism (VI)	5	4.35
Total	115	

As the above table indicates, the majority of respondents (54.78%) indicated that they are horizontal individualists (HI). Horizontal individualists support individual development, privacy and autonomy, which goes hand in hand with respect for and tolerance towards other people (Chikov et al., 2005). In this sample 34.78% of the respondents indicated that they are horizontal collectivists (HC). Horizontal collectivists value communal living, cultivating sharing, trust and strong collective identity combined with mutual respect and a feeling of equality towards ingroup members (Chikov et al., 2005). Only 6.09% of the respondents indicated that they are vertical collectivists (VC) while a mere 4.35% stated that they are vertical individualists (VI). Vertical collectivists require the subordination of the individual's striving and goals to the goals of their collective and to be ready to sacrifice individual interests to the interests of their group and its leaders. This emphasises the necessity of a well-structured hierarchy of power and the priority of the collective over the individual (Chikov et al., 2005). Vertical individualists value hierarchy and status, and encourage individual competition, striving for higher positions in the hierarchy, and also support the desire to be the best among other ingroup members (Chikov et al., 2005).

Figure 5.8 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution on the four cultural dimensions.
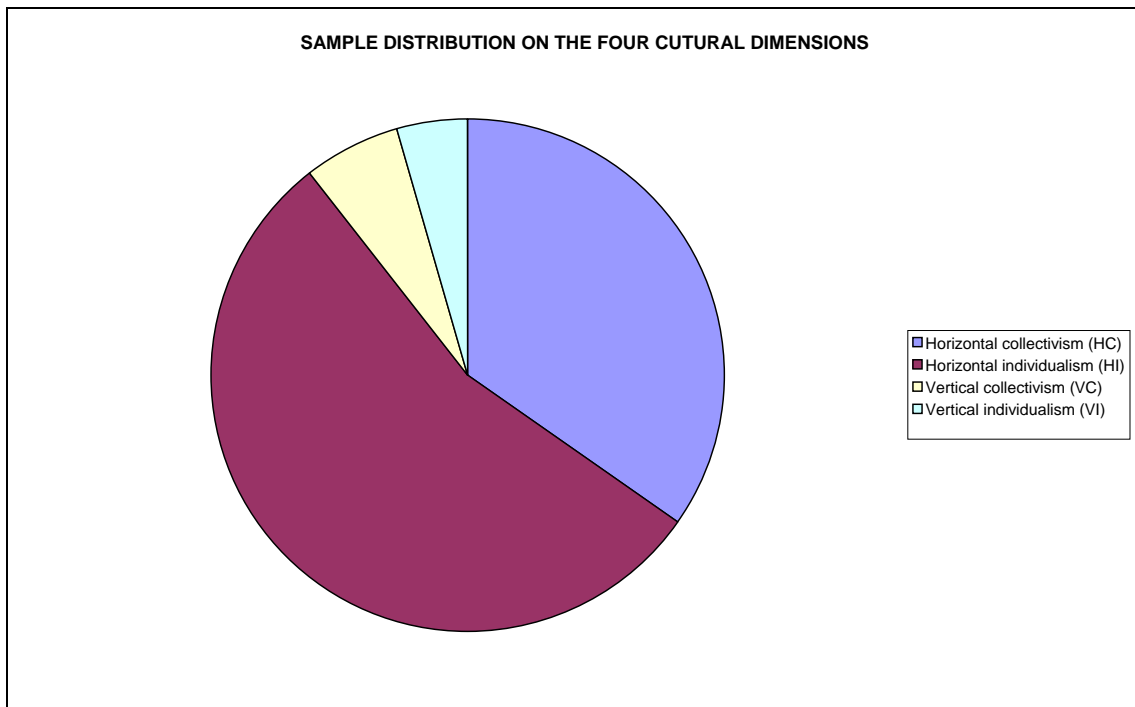
Figure 5.8   Sample distribution on the four cultural dimensions

Overall, 59.13% of the respondents indicated that they are individualists, while 40.86% indicated that they are collectivists. This is surprising, considering the racial composition of the sample group. Since 63% of the sample group were black, one would have expected the majority of the respondents to be more collectivistic than individualistic. These results could be ascribed to a number of factors, including the socioeconomic class of the respondents (the 47.83% who consider themselves to be from the upper middle socioeconomic class); the origin of the respondents (59.13% indicated they originate from urban areas, as opposed to 40.87% being from rural areas); and the level of education of respondents (all the respondents were from a tertiary institution). Also of interest, is the fact that the respondents rated low overall on the vertical scales of both individualism and collectivism. This implies that the respondents view others as being equal with regard to different attributes, ranging from the physical and psychological to the social and political.

5.2.9 Distribution of the sample on the CDS

Table 5.11 illustrates the distribution of respondents in terms of the two scales (certainty and indecision) on the CDS.

Table 5.11   Distribution of the sample on the CDS

SCALE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Certainty	59	51.30
Indecision	56	48.69
Total	115	

The results indicate that the difference between respondents who are career decided and those who are career undecided is relatively minor (2.61% difference). The results show, however, that the majority (51.30%) of the respondents are career decided while 48.69% are undecided.

Figure 5.9 is a graphical representation of the sample distribution on the certainty and indecision scales.

SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION ON THE CERTAINTY AND INDECISION SCALES
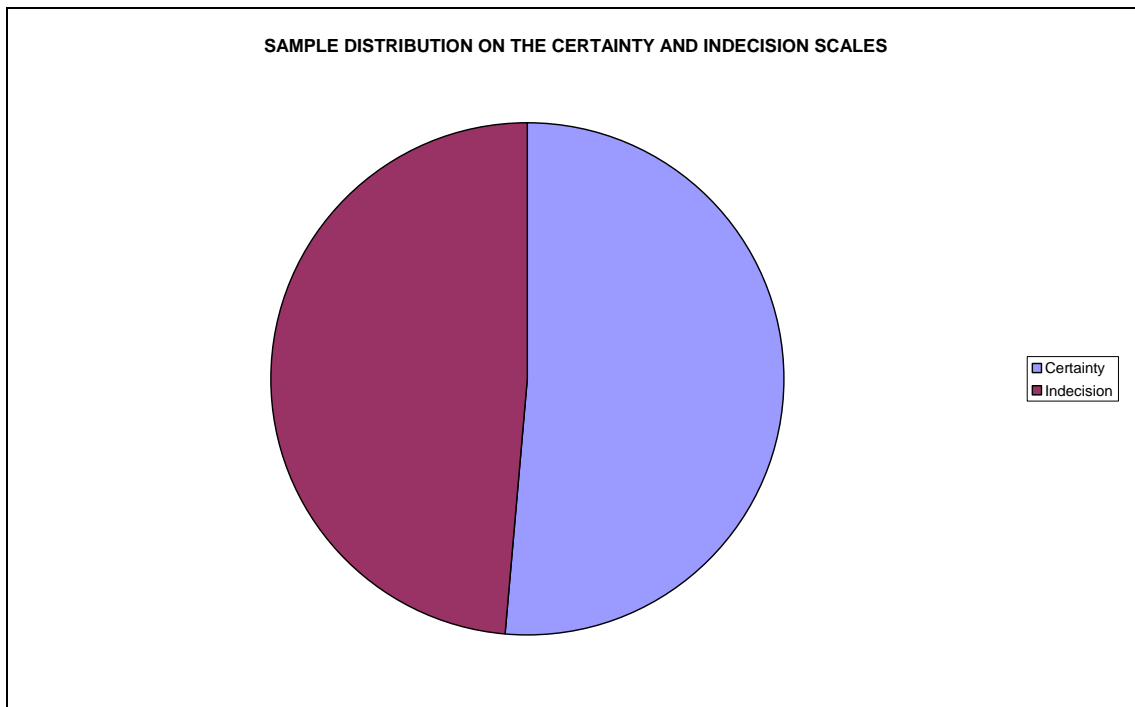
Figure 5.9   Sample distribution on the certainty and indecision scales

The results indicating that the majority (59.13%) of the respondents are individualists, corroborate with the fact that 51.30% of the respondents are career decided. In chapter 1 it was stated that young adults in individualistic cultures are raised to be relatively autonomous, self-oriented, competitive and achievement focused, and it was thus hypothesised that individualists would be more career decided.

5.3   TESTING OF THE STUDY HYPOTHESES

In this section, the results of the statistical techniques used to test the study's hypotheses are presented and interpreted.

5.3.1 Hypothesis relating to cultural value orientations and career indecision

H_{01}: There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Various statistical techniques were used to test this hypothesis, including the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's exact test.

The research results of the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between cultural value orientations and career indecision are presented in table 5.12, and discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{01}:   There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_1:   There is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Table 5.12   Pearson correlation coefficient between cultural value orientations and career indecision (N=115)

		Cultural value orientations			
		Horizontal collectivism (HC)	**Horizontal individualism (HI)**	**Vertical collectivism (VC)**	**Vertical individualism (VI)**
*Norm Certainty scale	R	.10300	.08017	.06943	.03928
	P	.2755	.3965	.4629	.6782
*Norm Indecision scale	R	-.10248	-.10382	.03561	.18398
	P	.2779	.02717	.07068	.0501

*   *Raw scores were converted to norm scores. Osipow's (1995) norm table for university students was used.*

The results indicate significant p values for horizontal individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p = .027$) as well as for vertical individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p = .05$). Thus horizontal individualism and vertical

individualism seem to relate significantly to career indecision. However, the low practical effect size of both these *r*-values (.01 and .035) respectively indicate that only a small portion of the variance (1% and 3.5%) in the norm indecision scale is explained by horizontal and vertical individualism. Hypothesis 1 (H_1) dealing with the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision is therefore partially rejected.

Table 5.13 summarises the descriptive statistics for the dependent variable: norm certainty score. An ANOVA between the sample norm certainty score and the four cultural value orientations is provided in table 5.14, and discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{01}: There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_1: There is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Table 5.13   Descriptive analysis of the data for the norm certainty score

CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATION	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	N
Horizontal collectivism (HC)	73.95	26.76	40
Horizontal individualism (HI)	70.92	30.42	62
Vertical collectivism (VC)	65.71	27.66	7
Vertical individualism (VI)	83.60	16.02	5
Total	72.22	28.406	114

Table 5.14   ANOVA between the sample norm certainty score and the four cultural value orientations (group)

	df	F	*P*	Effect size
Intercept	1	275.434	.000	.715
Group	3	.476	.700	.013
Error	110			
Total	114			

The results of the ANOVA between the sample norm certainty score and the four value orientations (group) indicate that there is no significant relationship between cultural value orientations and career certainty.

Table 5.15 summarises the descriptive statistics for the dependent variable: norm indecision score. An ANOVA between the sample norm indecision score and the four cultural value orientations is provided in table 5.16, and discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{01}:   There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

H_1:   There is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

Table 5.15   Descriptive analysis of data for the norm indecision score

CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATION	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	N
Horizontal collectivism (HC)	64.65	31.44	40
Horizontal individualism (HI)	69.27	28.32	62
Vertical collectivism (VC)	80.00	20.33	7
Vertical individualism (VI)	71.60	29.54	5
Total	68.41	29.00	114

Table 5.16   ANOVA between the sample norm indecision score and the four cultural value orientations (group)

	df	F	P	PARTIAL ETA SQUARED (EFFECT SIZE)
Intercept	1	249.828	.000	.694
Group	3	.629	.598	.017
Error	110			
Total	114			

The results of the ANOVA between the sample norm indecision score and the four value orientations (group) confirm that there are no significant differences between cultural value orientations and career indecision. This finding is further confirmed by the results of the Fisher's exact test in table 5.17. Note

that the career decision scale scores have been divided into two groups, namely certainty and indecision.

Table 5.17 Sample norm indecision grouping and cultural value orientations according to Fisher's exact test

CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATION	CAREER DECISION SCALE		TOTAL
	Certainty	**Indecision**	
Horizontal collectivism (HC)	21	19	40
	18.26	16.52	34.78
	52.50	47.50	
	35.59	33.93	
Horizontal individualism (HI)	32	31	63
	27.83	26.96	54.78
	50.79	49.21	
	54.24	55.36	
Vertical collectivism (VC)	3	4	7
	2.61	3.48	6.09
	42.86	57.14	
	5.08	7.14	
Vertical individualism (VI)	3	2	5
	2.61	1.74	4.35
	60.00	40.00	
	5.08	3.57	
Total	59	56	115
	51.30	48.70	100.00

Pr <= P   .9851

The probability value is .9851. This is not meaningful and thus confirms that there is no significant relationship between career indecision and cultural value orientations.

5.3.2 Hypothesis relating to biographical variables and the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision

H_{02}: Biographical variables have no statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.

During the initial formulation of the research hypotheses, it was anticipated that the biographical variables would have a statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision, which could have been determined by means of multiple regression analysis. However, since H_1, stating that there is a relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision, is partially rejected, it is nonsensical and impractical to perform a multiple regression analysis on career indecision as a dependent variable, because the correlations with the cultural dimensions are too low.

5.3.3 Hypothesis relating to biographical variables and cultural value orientations

H_{03}: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

5.3.3.1 Biographical variables and horizontal collectivism

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and one of the four cultural value orientations, namely horizontal collectivism, are provided in table 5.18, and then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{03}: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H_3: Biographical variables have a relationship with early cultural value orientations.

Table 5.18   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and horizontal collectivism

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	*P*	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	82493.517	1	82493.517	978.924	.000	.905
Gender	65.017	1	65.017	.772	.382	.007
Race	667.018	2	333.509	3.958	**.022**	.071
Age	.022	1	.022	.000	.987	.000
Year group	63.694	2	31.847	.378	.686	.007
Origin	158.053	1	158.053	1.876	.174	.018
Socio-economic class	207.525	3	69.175	.821	.485	.023
Error	8679.767	103	84.270			
Total	353443.000	114				

The results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between race and horizontal collectivism (p=.022). The hypothesis (H3) relating to the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations is thus accepted.

Descriptive statistics in the form of means, standard deviations and probability for race on horizontal collectivism are reported in table 5.19.

Table 5.19 Means, standard deviations and probability for race on horizontal collectivism

RACE	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	P
Black	72	56.17a	9.15	.006*
				1.000
White	19	48.37b	9.70	.006*
				.027*
Coloured	23	56.17a	8.64	1.000
				.027*

Means with different superscripts differ significantly at the .05 level

The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at the .05 level, when the mean difference for horizontal collectivism of the black respondents is compared with the mean difference for horizontal collectivism of the white respondents. The results also indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at the .05 level, when the mean difference for horizontal collectivism of the coloured respondents is compared with that of the horizontal collectivism of the white respondents.

The white respondents thus scored significantly lower on horizontal collectivism compared to the black and coloured respondents. These results are not surprising, because one would expected the Whites in the South African context to be more Westernised and thus more individualistic than collectivistic, and that blacks in the South African context tend to be more collectivistic. It is interesting to note, however, that the coloured respondents are also more collectivistic compared with the White respondents.

5.3.3.2   Biographical variables and horizontal individualism

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and horizontal individualism, are provided in table 5.20,

and then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{03}: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H_3: Biographical variables have a relationship with cultural value orientations.

Table 5.20   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and horizontal individualism

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	p	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	98283.444	1	98283.444	1624.013	.000	.940
Gender	131.381	1	131.381	2.171	.144	.021
Race	279.275	2	139.637	2.307	.105	.043
Age	.530	1	.530	.009	.926	.000
Year group	27.839	2	13.920	.230	.795	.004
Origin	.328	1	.328	.005	.941	.000
Socio-economic class	385.337	3	128.446	2.122	.102	.058
Error	6233.445	103	60.519			
Total	384214.000	114				

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant relationships between the biographical variables and horizontal individualism.

5.3.3.3   Biographical variables and vertical collectivism

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and vertical collectivism are provided in table 5.21, and

then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H03: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H3: Biographical variables have a relationship with cultural value orientations.

Table 5.21   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and vertical collectivism

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	*p*	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	61406.608	1	61406.608	629.216	.000	.870
Gender	7.002	1	7.002	.079	.779	.001
Race	305.687	2	152.843	1.723	.184	.032
Age	80.431	1	80.431	.907	.343	.009
Year group	172.024	2	86.012	.970	.383	.018
Origin	37.866	1	37.866	.427	.515	.004
Socio-economic class	29.030	3	9.677	.109	.955	.003
Error	9137.143	103	88.710			
Total	266233.000	114				

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant relationships between the biographical variables and vertical collectivism.

5.3.3.4   Biographical variables and vertical individualism

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and vertical individualism are provided in table 5.22,

and then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H03: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.

H3: Biographical variables have a relationship with cultural value orientations.

Table 5.22   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and vertical individualism

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	*p*	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	45418.252	1	45418.252	310.901	.000	.751
Gender	1190.557	1	1190.557	8.150	**.005**	.073
Race	251.909	2	125.954	.862	.425	.016
Age	13.701	1	13.701	.094	.760	.001
Year group	111.736	2	55.868	.382	.683	.007
Origin	70.903	1	70.903	.485	.488	.005
Socio-economic class	225.204	3	75.068	.514	.674	.015
Error	15046.825	103	146.086			
Total	210693.000	114				

The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between gender and vertical individualism (p=.005). The hypothesis (H3) on the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations is thus accepted.

Descriptive statistics in the form of means and standard deviations for gender on vertical individualism are reported in table 5.23.

Table 5.23   Means and standard deviations for gender on vertical individualism

GENDER	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Male	71	43.72*	11.26
Female	43	37.05*	12.99

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at the .05 level, when the mean difference for vertical individualism of the male respondents (md=43.72) is compared with the mean difference for vertical individualism of the female respondents (md=37.05).

These results corroborate the results obtained by Singelis et al. (1995). They computed point biserial correlations with male (n=109) and female (n=156) groups. The only significant correlation (r=-.25, p<.001) indicated that women scored lower than men on the vertical individualism measure.

In a nutshell, men are higher on vertical individualism than women, implying that men see themselves as independent of groups, but accept inequalities that sometimes occur in groups. Women, however, may be less comfortable with the authority ranking of vertical individualism.

To summarise, the only biographical variables that had statistically significant mean differences were race and horizontal collectivism (p=.002) and gender and vertical individualism (p=.005). The hypothesis (H_3) on the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations is thus accepted.

5.3.4 Hypothesis relating to biographical variables and career indecision

5.3.4.1   Biographical variables and career certainty

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and the career certainty scale, are provided in table 5.24, and then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{04}:   Biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision.

H_4:   Biographical variables have a relationship with early career indecision.

Table 5.24   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and career certainty

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	*p*	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	141770.113	1	141770.113	173.973	.000	.628
Gender	192.878	1	192.878	.237	.628	.002
Race	137.358	2	68.679	.084	.919	.002
Age	178.957	1	178.957	.220	.640	.002
Year group	3972.235	2	1986.117	2.437	.092	.045
Origin	.209	1	.209	.000	.987	.000
Socio-economic class	1925.548	3	641.849	.788	.503	.022
Error	83934.195	103	814.895			
Total	685761.000	114				

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant relationships between the biographical variables and career certainty.

5.3.4.2 Biographical variables and career indecision

The research results of the ANOVA investigating the relationship between the biographical variables and career indecision are provided in table 5.25, and then discussed according to the following hypothesis statements:

H_{04}:   Biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision.

H_4:   Biographical variables have a relationship with early career indecision.

Table 5.25   Analysis of variance: comparing biographical variables and career indecision

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARES	F	*p*	EFFECT SIZE
Intercept	95746.623	1	95746.623	111.836	.000	.521
Gender	2909.882	1	2909.882	3.399	.068	.032
Race	1616.298	2	808.149	.944	.392	.018
Age	2126.540	1	2126.540	2.484	.118	.024
Year group	318.940	2	159.470	.186	.830	.004
Origin	323.243	1	323.243	.378	.540	.004
Socio-economic class	167.052	3	55.684	.065	.978	.002
Error	88181.466	103	856.131			
Total	628631.000	114				

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant mean differences between the biographical variables and career indecision.

According to the results pertaining to the certainty and indecision scales on the CDS, hypothesis 4 (H_4) is therefore rejected.

5.4   SUMMARY AND INTEGRATION OF RESULTS

This chapter discussed the outcomes of the study. A reliability analysis of the measuring instruments indicated that the internal consistency for the indecision scale (alpha=.88) in the CDS can be considered high and the internal consistency for the vertical collectivism scale (alpha=.49) in the INDCOL can be regarded as low. Overall, the internal consistency of both the instruments used in this study can be considered acceptable (ranging from alpha = .49 – alpha = .75 for the INDCOL, and from alpha = .55 – alpha = .88 for the CDS).

Biographical data were provided, indicating that the majority of respondents were black (63%) males (63%), with the greatest proportion being between the ages of 17 and 25 years (87%), and first-year students (49%). The majority of respondents were Christian (95%) and originated from urban areas (59%) and 48% considered themselves to be from an upper-middle socioeconomic class.

On the four cultural dimensions, the respondents rated highest on horizontal individualism (54.78%) and the second highest on horizontal collectivism (43. 78%). On the vertical scales, the respondents rated 6.09% and 4.35% for collectivism and individualism, respectively. Overall, 59.13% of the respondents indicated that they were individualists, while 40.86% indicated that they were collectivists.

The results indicated that the majority of respondents were certain (51.30%) about their careers and 48.69% indicated they were undecided.

The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficients indicated significant p values for the horizontal individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p=.27$) as well as for the vertical individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p=.05$). Although horizontal and vertical individualism appear to relate significantly to career indecision, the low practical effect size of both these r–values indicate that only a small portion of the variance in the indecision scale can be explained by the two variables. Based purely on the correlation results, it could be stated that there are significant relationships between horizontal individualism and career indecision and between vertical individualism and career indecision. These findings were however not confirmed by means of the ANOVA between the sample norm certainty group and the four cultural value orientations and the ANOVA between the sample norm indecision group and the four cultural dimensions. All the ANOVA's indicated no significant statistical mean differences between the four cultural value orientations and the CDS scales. These findings were further emphasised by the Fisher's exact test.

The relationship between cultural value orientations and biographical variables were analysed by means of ANOVA. The results indicated a statistically significant difference between race and horizontal collectivism ($p=.022$). The white respondents (md=48.37) scored significantly lower on horizontal collectivism compared with the black (56.17) and coloured (56.17) respondents. The results also indicated a statistically significant difference between gender and vertical individualism ($p=.005$). The male respondents (md=43.72) scored significantly higher on vertical individualism than the female respondents (md=37.05).

The relationship between the career certainty and career indecision scales and biographical variables was analysed by means of ANOVA. The results indicated no statistically significant mean differences between the biographical variables and career indecision or career certainty.

Table 5.26 summarises the decisions about the hypotheses.

Table 5.26   Summary of decisions about the research hypotheses

HYPOTHESES	DECISION
H_{01}: There is no relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.	**Partially rejected**
H_{02}: Biographical variables have no statistical effect on the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision.	**Untested**
H_{03}: Biographical variables have no relationship with cultural value orientations.	**Rejected**
H_{04}: Biographical variables have no relationship with early career indecision.	**Accepted**

5.5   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reported on and interpreted the results of the study. It commenced with the descriptive statistics, providing an overview of the biographical data of the sample. Reliability data for the measuring instruments were discussed and the hypotheses of the study were tested. The chapter concluded with a summary and integration of results.

The empirical aims of the research have therefore been achieved.

Chapter 6 deals with the conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this chapter is to formulate conclusions, limitations and recommendations, as described in step 9 of the empirical investigation in chapter 1. The conclusions of this research will be formulated on the basis of the literature review and the results of the empirical research. The shortcomings will then be discussed in the context of the conclusions drawn, and recommendations will be made for further research.

6.1   CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions were drawn about the literature review and the empirical research in accordance with the aims of the research, as set out in chapter 1.

6.1.1   Conclusions relating to the literature review

The general aim of this research was to investigate, analyse and evaluate whether a relationship exists between cultural value orientations and career indecision. The general aim was achieved by addressing the specific aims of the research. Conclusions will be drawn about the specific aims relating to the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision with specific reference to the contextual framework of the research and the literature review.

6.1.1.1   The first aim: conceptualisation of career indecision

The first aim, namely to conceptualise career indecision and determine its key elements, was achieved in chapter 2 (career indecision). Career indecision has to do with uncertainty about a future career (Sepich, 1987). The conclusion can be drawn that although some level of uncertainty is normal, uncertainty becomes a problem when it interferes with an individual's ability to make sound career decisions (Chartrand & Robbins, 1997). The various

definitions of career indecision indicate that career indecision deals with a number of issues (such as uncertainty, inability/unwillingness to make a choice and commitment), which result from various antecedents (such as a lack of knowledge about occupations, lack of readiness to make decisions, etc.).

More specifically, the following conclusions can be drawn about career indecision:

- The construct of career indecision has evolved into a complex, multidimensional construct over the past 20 years.

- Deciding upon a career to pursue is a primary developmental task in late adolescence and early adulthood. The issue of career indecision, however, has grown over recent years to encompass a broad life spectrum owing to the increased frequency of events that require people to revise their career decisions over their life span. There is growing evidence that young adults are changing career paths and fields of study more frequently, having difficulty committing to specific career goals and taking longer to make even provisional commitments to initial career paths.

- The context within which individuals have to make career decisions has changed. The turbulent and dynamic 21st century world of work, in which career decisions have to be made, contributes to the fact that career indecision is now associated with both young adults entering the workforce as well as employed adults.

- In the South African context, employers and employees are governed by the Labour Law and the Employment equity Act, mechanisms introduced to attempt to eradicate the gender and race inequities caused by apartheid in the workplace. The South African labour force is currently affected by variables such as high rates of unemployment,

unskilled and illiterate workers and sick people affected by HIV/AIDS. Women, in particular African woman, are deemed to have pulled on the shortest straw in this regard. Hence, numerous young adult school leavers (as well as employed adults) are faced with these harsh realities and are often undecided, jostling for positions in the saturated South African job market. Some continue with tertiary education, often hopping from one major or career to another because of this uncertainty and indecision. Others brace the world of work armed with little direction or knowledge, only a hunger for independence and self-sustainability. Many of these new entrants to the workplace embark on a career blindly, their decisions based on necessity, accompanied, once again, by uncertainty, which more often than not results in career indecision.

- What makes a career choice difficult often relates to one's perceptions, values, personal preferences and gut emotional reaction. Various factors that may contribute to young adult's indecision include differences in personality, demographic status, vocational interests and abilities, early work experiences and family environments.

6.1.1.2   *The second aim: conceptualisation of cultural value orientations*

The second aim, namely to conceptualise cultural value orientations, was achieved in chapter 3 (cultural value orientations towards individualism and collectivism). The following specific conclusions are drawn:

- Values are fundamental in explaining and predicting human behaviour. Values can be distinguished at both cultural and individual level. For the purposes of this study, the focus fell on individual values at cultural level, hence individualism and collectivism.

- The main characteristic of individualism seems to be the "separateness" of oneself from others. The basic unit of survival is the

individual, rather than the group. Individuals in individualistic cultures are encouraged to become independent from others, and to discover and express their unique attributes.

- The main element of collectivism seems to be the perceived "oneness" with other people, fundamental connectedness with others or relational orientation.

- The definition of the self is interdependent on collectivism and independent from individualism. There are four kinds of self: independent or interdependent and same or different. The combination of these four types can be categorised as horizontal individualism (independent/same) and horizontal collectivism (interdependent/same), vertical individualism (independent/different) and vertical collectivism (interdependent/different).

- Several factors can increase a person's inclination towards either individualism or collectivism. These factors include age, social class, child rearing, travel, education, occupation and a situation-predisposition interaction.

- Various attributes indicate whether a specific individual is an individualist or a collectivist. These are culture specific, which, by implication, means that each species of collectivism is created by some combination of the collectivist attributes, while each individualist culture is characterised by a combination of the individualist attributes. These attributes include self-perception, attributions, identity and emotions, cognitions, motivation, attitudes, norms, values, social behaviour, attitudes towards privacy and communication.

*6.1.1.3   The third aim: theoretically integrate cultural value orientations
and career indecision*

The third aim, namely to conceptualise the theoretical relationship dynamics between cultural value orientations and career indecision was achieved in the theoretical integration in chapter 3. In particular, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Deciding on what a career to pursue is considered a main developmental task of late adolescence and early adulthood. This life-career stage typically involves some career exploration, and this changing of career paths and fields of study is natural among young adults as they explore the world of work and discover their strengths and weaknesses.

- It appears that career indecision is becoming increasingly prevalent among young adults. Career indecision pertains to uncertainty about the future. Although some level of uncertainty is normal, it becomes a problem when it interferes with an individual's ability to make sound career decisions.

- The problems of early career indecision among young adults stem from the nature of the situations these young people face as well as the nature of their own personal development. What makes a career choice difficult often relates to one's perceptions, values, personal preferences and gut emotional reactions.

- A number of research studies have suggested that values may be a vital factor in career choice. Researchers have found that workers select jobs (and are selected by employers in jobs) that tend to be consistent with their values.

- Although a great deal of research has been conducted suggesting that values influence the career choices of individuals, little is known empirically about the actual role of cultural value orientations (individualism/collectivism - which are factors that have been used to simplify the assessment of culture) in vocational processes. Research in the South African context has shone that this applies even more.

- Each society, because of different geographical, ecological and historical conditions, has developed its own pattern of cultural orientations, which reflects its idiosyncratic way of resolving the problem of attitudes towards authority, and the relationships between the individual and the group. Hence each culture may be described by a specific configuration of the four cultural orientations. These four cultural orientations are referred to as horizontal individualism, horizontal collectivism, vertical individualism and vertical collectivism. The norms and practices which constitute these cultural orientations are expected to guide people's behaviour in order to maintain the established way of resolving the two core problems of human social life. These four cultural orientations are long-lasting patterns of social life which are represented in various domains of society, that is, family, education, health care, job relations, political structure, etc.

- In the present research, the aim was to assess these cultural orientations in the domain of new entrants to the workplace and how these cultural orientations relate to career indecision in the South African context.

6.1.2 Conclusions relating to the empirical study

The study was designed to answer two main research questions and two supportive research questions. However, the second main research question could not be statistically analysed and could therefore not be answered. The premise tested throughout this study was that cultural value orientations relate

to career indecision. Overall, the hypotheses were supported at the probability level (*p 0.05*). The empirical findings supported null hypotheses H_{01} (partially) and H_{04} and failed to support null hypothesis H_{03}. Findings for each of the research aims and the hypotheses that merit discussion will be presented as conclusions.

6.1.2.1 The first aim: identify cultural value orientations

The first aim, namely to identify the cultural value orientations in the sample of new entrants to the workplace in a typical South African governmental organisation, was achieved in chapter 5. Triandis's (1995) INDCOL was used to gather information on the vertical and horizontal scales of the respondents' individualism and collectivism, and the resulting frequencies presented in chapter 5 (see sec. 5.8 and fig. 5.8). The results indicated that the majority of the respondents (54.78%) were horizontal individualists (HI) and that 34.78% of them were horizontal collectivists (HC). Only 6.09% of the respondents indicated that they were vertical collectivists (VC), while a mere 4.35% were vertical individualists (VI).

Overall, 59.13% of the respondents indicated that they were individualists, while 40.86% indicated that they were collectivists. This is surprising, considering the racial composition of the sample group. Since 63% of the sample group were Black, one would have expected the majority of the respondents to be more collectivistic than individualistic. Another interesting finding, was that the respondents rated low overall on the vertical scales of both individualism and collectivism. This implies that the respondents viewed others as being equal with regard to different attributes, ranging from the physical and psychological to the social and political.

6.1.2.2 The second aim: identify the level of career indecision

The second aim, namely to identify the level of career indecision in the sample of new entrants to the workplace in a typical South African governmental organisation, was achieved in chapter 5. Osipow's (1987) CDS

was used to gather information on the respondents' levels of career certainty and career indecision, and the resulting frequencies were presented in chapter 5 (see tab. 5.9 and fig. 5.9). The results indicated that the majority of respondents (51.30%) were career decided and 48.69% undecided.

The results indicating that the majority (59.13%) of the respondents were individualists, corroborates with the fact that 51.30% of them were career decided. In chapter 1 it was stated that young adults in individualistic cultures are raised to be relatively autonomous, self-oriented, competitive and achievement focused, hence the hypothesis that individualists tend to be more career decided.

6.1.2.3   *The third aim: investigate the relationship between cultural value orientations and early career indecision*

The third aim, namely to investigate the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision, was achieved in chapter 5. The INDCOL (Triandis, 1995) was used to gather information on the vertical and horizontal scales of the respondents' individualism and collectivism, and Osipow's (1987) CDS was used to gather information on the respondents' levels of career certainty and career indecision. The resulting correlation between scores on the INDCOL and the CDS discussed in chapter 5 (see tabs. 5.12, 5.13, 5.14, 5.16, and 5.17). The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficients indicated significant p values for the horizontal individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p=.27$) as well as for the vertical individualism and the norm indecision scale ($p=.05$). Although horizontal and vertical individualism appear to relate significantly to career indecision, the low practical effect size of both these r–values indicate that only a small portion of the variance in the indecision scale can be explained by the two variables. Based purely on the correlation results, it could be stated that there are significant relationships between horizontal individualism and career indecision and between vertical individualism and career indecision. The results of the ANOVA's however indicated no significant statistical mean differences between the four cultural value orientations and the CDS scales.

These findings were further emphasised by the Fisher's exact test. It was concluded that cultural value orientations (horizontal and vertical individualism) have a significant impact on whether an individual is career undecided in the South African work context.

6.1.2.4 The fourth aim: investigate the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations

The fourth aim, namely to investigate the relationship between biographical variables and cultural value orientations, was achieved in chapter 5. A biographical data form was used to collect sample data on the following: gender, race, age, year group, geographical data of origin, socioeconomic class, source of ethnic background and religion. The results of the ANOVA indicated two statistically significant differences based on race and gender.

The results indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between race and horizontal collectivism ($p=.022$) (see tabs. 5.18 and 5.19). The white respondents scored significantly lower on horizontal collectivism than the black and coloured respondents. These results are not surprising, since one would expect whites in the South African context to be more Westernised and thus more individualistic than collectivistic, and blacks in the South African context to be more collectivistic. It is interesting to note that the coloured respondents were also more collectivistic compared to their white counterparts.

The results indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between gender and vertical individualism ($p=.005$) (see tabs. 5.22 and 5.23). The results indicated that the male respondents scored significantly higher on vertical individualism than the female respondents.

It was concluded that the biographical variables of race and gender may have a significant impact on the cultural value orientations of individuals in the South African work context.

6.1.2.5   *The fifth aim: investigate the relationship between biographical variables and career indecision*

The fifth aim, namely to investigate the relationship between biographical variables and career indecision, was achieved in chapter 5. A biographical data form was used to collect sample data on the following: gender, race, age, year group, geographical data of origin, socioeconomic class, source of ethnic background and religion. The results of the ANOVA indicated no statistically significant differences between the biographical variables and career certainty (see tab. 5.24) and biographical variables and career indecision (see tab. 5.25).

It was concluded that biographical variables had no significant impact on whether an individual is career decided or undecided in the South African work context.

6.1.2.6   *The sixth aim: recommendations*

The sixth empirical aim was to formulate recommendations for the discipline of industrial and organisational psychology, specifically with regard to career development and counselling, and further research based on the findings in the research. This aim will be addressed in section 6.3 below.

6.1.3 Conclusions about the contributions to the field of industrial and organisational psychology

The findings of the literature survey and the empirical results contribute to the field of industrial and organisational psychology as follows:

The literature review has shed new light on the fact that career indecision is on the increase among young adults and that this phenomenon is becoming increasingly common among working adults.

The empirical results may contribute to a body of knowledge and empirical findings on career indecision and cultural value orientations in the multicultural

South African context. The empirical finding that black South Africans are becoming more individualistic is an indication of education and Westernisation, signs of postmodernism on the African continent.

This research study breaks new ground because, to date, there have been no study on the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision both in the South African context and internationally. Research on these variables in military organisations is also nonexistent.

Considering the organisational context of this sample group, it was interesting to note that the majority of respondents rated higher on the horizontal scales of the INDCOL than on the vertical scales. Such trends may contribute to power struggles in the bureaucratic domains of military and similar organisations.

A positive factor for organisations, such as the military, was the finding that the majority of new entrants in this sample group were career decided, which could result in lower turnover rates for the organisation and lead to the fulfilment of employee and organisational needs.

6.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The limitations of the literature study and the empirical investigation are outlined below.

6.2.1 Limitations of the literature review

Regarding the literature review, the following limitations were encountered:

- Although much research has been done suggesting that values influence the career choice of individuals, little is known empirically about the role of cultural value orientations in career vocational processes. This applies even more in the South African context.

- No literature was available referring specifically to individualism and collectivism and their impact on career indecision.

6.2.2 Limitations of the empirical investigation

The limitations encountered in the empirical investigation are outlined below.

6.2.2.1 Sample

Since the research was conducted in a single military organisation, the results cannot be generalised to the broader population of all South African organisations or all military organisations. In addition, a sample of convenience was used (voluntary participants), which reduced the sample size and also further minimised the generalisability of findings.

When considering the biographical make-up of the sample, the vast majority of the respondents were black males. Although this was representative of the demographics of the sample organisation, it has an impact on the generalisability of the results to the broader multicultural South African population.

6.2.2.2 Limitations of the psychometric battery

Both instruments (INDCOL and CDS) have been designed and validated in the US context. No data currently exist on the validation of the instruments in the South African context. A second limitation is that the norm group used for comparison purposes from the CDS was based on the results of US studies, with no South African organisations represented in the benchmark group. This could mean that the standards set for comparison purposes were inaccurate.

A third limitation of the INDCOL and the CDS is that both batteries are self-report assessment instruments. The scoring of responses is fixed and the manner in which the choice affects the score is also standardised. The meaning of this single response is not open to interpretation by the examiner

as in a projective test. Self-reports focus on a respondent's verbalisation of his or her feelings towards himself or herself or others, and individuals may be unable or unwilling to reveal aspects of themselves. Self-perceptions will only be accurate to the extent that a person is willing to be truthful in his or her expressions. Self-report measures are also subject to faking and unauthentic responses referred to as response set (Borg & Gall, 1989). The main concern in using self-report instruments is that the results may be biased because of the respondent's intention to be less than honest and his or her inability to respond to certain constructs.

The limitations of the sample group and the measuring instruments should be considered when interpreting the results stemming from the research findings.

6.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the background of the aforementioned conclusions and limitations, recommendations for industrial and organisational psychology and further research in the field are outlined below.

6.3.1   Recommendations for industrial and organisational psychologists working in the field of career development and counselling

The conclusions of the research tend to indicate that there seems to be relationships between cultural value orientations of horizontal and vertical individualism and career indecision in the context of this military organisation in South Africa. But no relationships exist between biographical variables and career indecision. The results do not imply, however, that cultural value orientations and biographical variables should be disregarded when counselling individuals in terms of career indecision. Such variables may impact on and explain career indecision in different organisations and contexts, and practitioners should therefore guard against dismissing such factors as insignificant.

In addition, practitioners should be mindful of the psychometric properties of the CDS before utilising it to provide career guidance. When vital individual outcomes depend on the results of assessment, the instrument that is used should be underscored by sufficient reliability and validity data to support its use, as well as normative data relevant to the societal context, in the South African context in particular. Also, practitioners should ensure that they are aware of the different aspects of a proposed instrument's psychometric properties and utility. In so doing, they will be able to gain an extensive amount of credibility and buy-in by clearly communicating the potential utility and shortcomings of a career guidance instrument before it is used in an intervention.

6.3.2 Recommendations for further research

The recommendations are based on the research findings of the empirical study, and are intended for populations working with individuals in organisational settings, such as industrial and organisational psychologists, human resource practitioners and career counsellors.

In an attempt to address the limitations of this research discussed in the previous section, it is recommended that a more in-depth study be conducted according to a randomised design to study the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision in other multicultural organisations in the South African context. In addition, it is recommended that in order to truly benefit from the research, the sample size and composition should be broadened. This study could be limited by the choice of the sample, and it is therefore recommended that the sample be expanded to represent a broader representation of all the races (including Indians) and genders. This would help to produce more generalisable findings.

The second recommendation relates to the previously limited use of both the INDCOL and CDS in the South Africa context. It is recommended that studies be conducted around aspects of the instruments' validity in South Africa. This

will help to provide evidence of the practical utility of the scales in the South African milieu.

Thirdly, it is recommended that further studies be conducted in the South African context relating to the findings on the sample distribution on the four cultural dimensions. The research results indicated that 59.13% of the respondents were individualists, and 40.86% collectivists. These results were surprising, considering the racial composition of the sample group. Since 63% of the sample group were black, one would have expected the majority of the respondents to be more collectivistic than individualistic.

6.4   INTEGRATION OF THE RESEARCH

This dissertation focused on the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision from a humanistic and career psychology perspective.

The research aim was to investigate the relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision in the South African context and to determine whether biographical variables impact on these constructs. The findings of the empirical research were presented in chapter 5 and the conclusions relating to each of the specific aims of both the literature and the empirical studies discussed in this chapter.

In conclusion, the research provides a number of modest, yet useful findings on the relationship between race and gender and cultural value orientations in the South African context. No evidence could be found to support any suggestions of a relationship between cultural value orientations and career indecision. The set of data was unfortunately too small to draw any significant conclusions to support all the research hypotheses, and there were several limitations in this study, including the sample size and nature and the psychometric battery. Recommendations were made for future research, and this should therefore be seen as the start of a stream of research that could

make a significant contribution to the measurement of career indecision and cultural value orientations in the South African context.

6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study, and integrated the research.

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