

***DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT:
A PHILOSOPHICAL DELIBERATION***

**By
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DECLARATION

I declare that "Diversity Management: A Philosophical Deliberation" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

The opinions contained therein are my own and not necessarily those of the Technikon, my supervisor or any other party.

This dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification.

Cesar da Silva Alexandre

February 2004

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Finally this study is dedicated to my son CA Alexandre, who I love so much.

At the age of 62 I want to show to my son, that we are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.

ABSTRACT

My central thesis is, that certain social systems and cultures have supported modern economic growth and human progress, whereas others have not.

Countries and, winning organizations that have been able to jump ahead out of the laggard have done so, because they developed a conquering culture of rigor and work, removed from the influences of invisible forces.

The world at the beginning of the twenty first century is still, divided between the few who are rich and powerful and the many who are poor and powerless, between the free and the oppressed.

Traditional explanations like imperialism, dependency, colonialism and racism are no longer adequate after so many decades.

Increasingly researchers are reasoning that the principal reason why some countries and ethnic groups are better off than others lies in cultural values and beliefs and attitudes, which powerfully shape political, economic and social performance, and share the view that value and attitude change is indispensable to progress for those who are lagging.

There is a methodological difference between myself and some people who are consistently uncritical of the values and attitudes of a culture, and think people ought to resign themselves to economic and social values that condemn them to poverty and subservience, in the name of cultural purity.

The power of cultural values, beliefs and attitudes to promote or resist progress has been largely ignored. Culture is a significant determinant of a nation's ability to prosper, because it shapes individual's thoughts and behaviours, and the way individuals think about progress.

There is substantial agreement among scholars, that prosperity, democracy, and social justice depends importantly on promoting positive values and on recognizing and building upon the best in each culture and history.

So, my methodological difference is that the focus should not be only on understanding it, but on wanting to change it. This means changing the underlying attitudes, belief, and assumptions that have informed the decisions made by leaders that result in poor economic performance and poor human progress.

The persistence and destructiveness of the economic and political crisis that have stricken Africa make it necessary for Africans to act without delay.

By fostering a morbid propensity to find fault with everyone but oneself, they promote economic impotence.

In the words of Etoung-Manguelle (2000: 65), a Cameroonian, Africans must go to the heart of their morals and customs and discard what is blocking progress, because Africans if they have capable leaders, are fully able to distance themselves from the blind submission to the irrational, the lethargy that have been their undoing.

Pre capitalist systems based on serfdom, slavery, inalienable landholdings, and so forth, or traditional societies that exalts the glorious past of ancestors through tales and fables, does nothing to prepare for the future.

On one side I reject the idea that the only or very best way to be dignified, decent, rational, and fully human is to live the life of a north American or a northern European, but on the other side Africans must eradicate the layer of mud that prevents their societies from moving into the new era embracing an approach which is encapsulated by the saying "African spirit, western things". That would allow Africans to remain themselves while being of their time.

This is the message that I want to bring about and we must heed, if there is a genuine concern about alleviating poverty and injustice in the poor countries and at home.

Leadership is about creating, day by day, an environment in which we, and those around us, continually deepen our understanding of reality and are able to participate in shaping and creating the future, a collective vision of what is wanting to emerge in the world and then having the courage to do what is required, with ethics, and valuing the differentness of people.

Leadership that does not understand Diversity will turn into dictatorship. You cannot know people if you avoid them, and no longer can you lead by assumption and presumption.

The real challenges are those we pose ourselves; our real foes are inside us. One of the great paradoxes of business is that an organization's people are its greatest assets, but they are alas potentially its greatest liability.

Lack of the necessary human qualities, emotional intelligence, and knowledge is the most common cause of business failure, in a world of diversity.

Future managers and leaders should be more concerned with creating new realities, in making the future happen. Organizations may say that focusing on Diversity is the right thing to do; however, shifting the subject from a moral platitude to a business imperative will be crucial to success in this changing world.

To succeed corporate diversity, efforts must be led by line executives – not endorsed or encouraged, but actively led by the same people who led the company to other successes.

Economies rise and fall. Technologies come and go. But companies that develop outstanding leadership within their ranks can weather any business storm.

Leadership “is the future’s only source of sustainable competitive advantage”.

Managing Diversity is a challenge. It seeks to create a sense of solidarity and community, rather than an organization of parts. The parts alone, separated, do not create a working whole. Developing common goals to create an environment where “we” is everyone and in which people feel no one is advantaged or disadvantaged, is one of the first steps towards a harmonious and productive working environment.

This type of management emphasizes the value of each individual’s contributions to work process. It also stresses that equal opportunity should be for “everyone”. It allows for individuals in the organization to reach their full potential – only enhancing the potential of the organization.

Managing diversity becomes much more attractive if you say: “I have to tap the full potential of everyone in the organization”. It is a process, not an intervention with a beginning and an end. It’s a new way of doing business, a new way of operating, a new way of thinking. The goal is to create an environment that does not have to be assisted to empower, to work for, individuals who are different, but “who are qualified”, regardless of how similar or how different they might be. This is aimed at all participants, not at a selected group or select groups. It relates to everyone.

Joseph Stiglitz (1998: 78) writes that development represents a transformation of society, a movement from traditional relations, traditional ways of thinking, traditional ways of dealing with health and education, traditional methods of production, to modern ways.

Economic progress depends on changing the way people think about wealth creation. Economic growth is indispensable because other forms of human progress depend on productive economic activity.

Our challenge is how to manage one set of insights with another, to begin to create a locally owned process for change, that is so thoughtfully integrated, well guided, that it begins to put peoples on the path to high and rising prosperity.

Imagining difference

Imagining difference is the first step in acceptance of others. They in turn have the same right to build their awareness in freedom as long as their actions do not prevent one from enjoying that same freedom. 'It is not that we must love one another or die ... It is that we must know one another and live with that knowledge ... We must learn to grasp what we cannot embrace. It is in this, strengthening the power of our imaginations to grasp what is in front of us that the uses of diversity and of the study of diversity lie.

CLIFFORD GEERTZ

I believe that a truly knowledge-rich world has to be a culturally diverse world. By preserving, promoting and managing Diversity, we can enable Culture in the twenty-first century to fulfill one of its most important functions: bringing a measure of harmony and progress into our lives and the lives of nations and organizations.

Cesar Alexandre, 2002

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

All organizations are becoming more demographically heterogeneous (diverse in terms of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, physical ability, language preference). Multiculturalism and diversity pose challenges to managerial leaders on all fronts because so many of the ideas that we think make up a good organization and a good management is in fact culture-bound. We are at the beginning of understanding what intercultural visioning may be like.

There is no recorded case in history where a society developed and prospered without a high degree of trust and social capital. *“Societies that are driven with barriers of distrust based on class, ethnicity, landship or other factors will face extra roadblocks in their adoption of new organisational forms”* (Fukuyama, 1995: 20).

The most singular unfortunate achievement of apartheid was the huge ethnic and racial distrust it created. It set people apart, so, the various ethnic groups still do not have a common agenda. This can undermine any development efforts and any endeavours to create competitive organisations.

The tragic reality of South Africa is that people tend not to have a sense of national identity and tend to be hooked up in narrow ethnic mind-sets. People think of themselves first as either black or whites. No country ever developed and became economically competitive without a sense of collective shared destiny and a shared national identity.

The collective task of South African leadership is to create ethnic and racial trust and overcome the historic tragedy of apartheid.

South African collective leadership needs to develop and negotiate an accord on national development. South African organizations need a positive collective cultural identity that will create the competitive edge.

South Africa should avoid multiculturalism and seek to develop genuine non-racialism to develop a single shared national cultural vision.

“Multiculturalism would create a neo-apartheid state in South Africa, where different races remain in their separate ethnic cocoons. Different races would continue to live separately, side by side. They would not live together as one nation. They would find it difficult to find a common agenda, a shared destiny, common vision and values” (Mbigi, 1999: 23).

People must live and work together in the spirit of harmony and brotherhood, and to be South Africans first and then to be blacks or whites.

One of the enduring aspects of apartheid is that it succeeded in separating us by emphasizing and exaggerating our differences so that they could be used as an unfair basis of distributing resources, status, life chances and privileges.

We therefore need to develop a sense of shared destiny, shared vision, and shared values.

South Africans fondly refer to themselves as the “rainbow nation” because of people of so many different races, tribes, languages, religions, and so on.

The author’s dissertation is that the rainbow may not be an appropriate symbol to capture our collective yearning for a unifying national vision.

It has the unfortunate tendency of promoting multiculturalism and not non-racialism and hence the reproduction of a neo-apartheid state.

People cannot remain forever separated in their racial fortress. It is crucial to find each other and live together as one, to develop and entrench a tradition of non-racialism so that we can celebrate the biological, social and spiritual unity of humanity (Mbigi, 1999: 23).

One of the major challenges facing South African organizations is its workforce diversity. Working with people whose values, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, languages, and customs are very different from one's own can make for costly misunderstanding, miscommunication, misperception, misinterpretation, and misevaluation.

South African society comprise practically every conceivable kind of human plurality, in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, language, sexual orientation, religion, conception of good and bad, and so on.

South Africa society is a radically pluralist society, with the potentially destructive conflicts that arise so easily in such diverse societies.

It is a nation in the midst of a profound transformation. Diversity in South Africa is extremely dynamic and complex as the result of a history of legislated race separation. South Africa collective leadership needs to develop a social capital fund by creating trust.

No one changes to be worse off. One reason why transitions in post-colonial Africa failed is that the new ranking elite was not sensitive to the fears of the resource – rich minorities, and they never resolved the paradox of having political winners who where economical losers, and economic winners who where political losers.

So, poverty, inefficiency, sorrow, and blaming the past as a reason for begging, characterise the African transitional communities.

A common misconception about Diversity Management is that it is the same as Affirmative Action (AA) or Employment Equity (EE). Affirmative action approaches mainly address employment practices i.e. "getting the numbers right".

AA and EE actions are legislative laws, which create a "them and us" polarization and an adversarial environment if not properly managed. Affirmative Action and

Employment Equity programmes should avoid creating victims, because if we create victims, we create aggressors. By contrast, Diversity Management entails an inclusive and positive attitude, which does not focus on the partition of difference, but celebrates the commonality of difference.

1.2 The challenges

When managing a diverse workforce we encounter challenges with regard to all the different dimensions of diversity. It is crucial to understand each other's "differentness" to be able to manage diversity effectively.

Cultural Diversity is, not a matter of encouraging people from different backgrounds to become assimilated into the prevailing corporate culture of organizations; but the existing corporate culture to change to accommodate the platinum rule of treating others, as they want to be treated, valuing the "differentness" of others, instead of treating people as "we" would like to be treated.

South African public and private organizations face immense challenges as they attempt to increase effectiveness and efficiency, and reduce costs, whilst at the same time improving quality and extending the benefits of public service to all (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service; 2001).

South Africa is known as the "Rainbow Nation" because of its diversity. To thrive and survive in the competitive global market, organizations need to draw on this diversity and create positive synergies.

If managers fail to create an environment grounded in the acceptance, understanding and managing of diversity, they risk being unable to compete effectively in a global economy. The judgment would be that 'too much diversity' contributed to their failure. The challenge is not 'too much diversity' but rather

that of building organizations reflecting the realities of diversity. Only then, if achieved, it will make it possible to say, South Africa is a rainbow nation.

1.3 The need for conciliation

"We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall without any fear in their inalienable right to human dignity ... a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world." President Mandela: Inaugural speech, May 1994.

Each generation has to fight the battle for tolerance and diversity again. In the absence of a shared memory, conciliation and harmony is almost impossible. So, in South Africa, without understanding our past, or, by dissociating ourselves from our own history it will surely bring about a collective future characterized by intolerance, frustration and, most pernicious of all, mistrust, were the diverse people of the country are unable to identify with one another's history or concerns.

Here I purposely mention the word conciliation and not reconciliation. The word reconciliation is composed by "re" – relative to original state and "conciliation" – meaning to be one, together, the same.

South Africa was never "one", so it is not possible to return to a place that never was.

If I never accepted you as equal to me, how can I do it again? Let's be one for the first time – conciliation.

When the Indians, the coloured, the black and the white man, agree that they are all MAN; now a nation can begin. Let's first all agree that we are MAN. If I never believed you are a complete MAN how can I reconcile?

The Creator designed your DNA and your chromosomes to call for a product that is complete, unique, original and irreplaceable.

It is why HE wants you to be yourself, not somebody else.

There are no 2 leaves or 2 flowers on the same tree alike, but all together they constitute the tree in its unity, not uniformity.

There are more than 6 billion people on earth, not one with the same fingerprints. Dressing alike is not unity, it is uniformity. Diversity is necessary for unity.

The danger comes in assuming uniformity, that each and every person possesses the same traits and conforms to generalizations. Every person is a unique personality, and we must take time to know each individual we encounter.

By discussing the fault lines that keep people separate in South Africa, and how to bring about greater understanding, and conciliation, there is a need to be mindful of the dangers of nationalistic discourse. But the desire to foster a more cohesive national identity also needs to be understood in terms of the consequences of not bringing about a more cohesive nation. Identity has to do with our sense of personal meaning.

While it is influenced by outside circumstances, our identity is something internalised, that we give ourselves, and that directs and orientates us in terms of what we perceive to be our own interests.

1.4 The unresolved debate on race

But the continuities in our racialised identities are still very strong; we still fit the world onto a template of “us” and “them”.

So, you must be prepared to answer the question that the two-way relationship poses to us. This question is not “How do I use my advantage position to entrench the privileges of the few that are similarly positioned to myself?” but “How can I, as a member of the globally advanced few, apply my creativity and

my inherited social and material assets to promote acceptance and understanding of all my fellow colleagues on the workplace and in society in general?"

So every issue can become as a dialogue of the deaf. Neither side seems willing to listen to their interlocutors.

Thus, unsurprisingly, despair and frustration levels rise, anger trumps tolerance and, more heat than light is generated.

The unresolved debate on race gives the example.

One side argues that a blind compliance with the requirements of Affirmative Actions and Employment Equity Acts, as well as the general demands for increased representivity of historically disadvantaged South Africans in every terrain of life, necessitates racial head counting and race labeling. Consequently, the reclassification of South Africans according to race and the deleterious consequence of racial mobilization as the different historically disadvantaged racial communities, only seek to attain their allotted quotas or published target levels of representivity, at the expense of merit and the real principles of justice and equality.

The other side ripostes that there can be no redress of past race discrimination without taking account of the reality of race and developing a programme to rectify the historical injustices suffered by black people generally and black indigeness specifically.

These two contrasting views have been at the heart of the debate on affirmative action in the US since its inception in the early 1960's and more recently in South Africa since the new government in 1994. Some proponents argue that these action programs are critical to achieve and maintain equality. They feel that Affirmative Action is the only way to break the barrier of discrimination and equal opportunity that is deserved.

However others see these policies as reverse discrimination and they affect the right of individuals to chosen according to their abilities.

In polls, Americans, including the white majority, have generally backed affirmative action so long as it does not involve numerical quotas, which have been outlawed recently by the US Supreme Court. The court outlawed quotas as an affirmative action tool and indicate that it should be phased out over the next quarter century. Affirmative Action has been found unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in 1995.

This type of anti discrimination policy is no longer allowed to be used in employment, educational, and other organizational practices. Even tough Affirmative Action has been banned from use in the USA; other methods have been and can be established to ensure diversity in the workplace and in all other institutions.

In South Africa, most whites realise the necessity of some form of compensation to the black underclass for the deprivations of the past.

What leads to psychological withdrawal is the visceral realisation that the process is without clearly demarcated termination point and policy.

In their perceptions, the “right the wrongs” approach that is followed, creates a backlash because “traditional employees feel that they will be overlooked so that a quota can be filled”. “We don’t have enough of the previously disadvantaged people, such as blacks and women – we’d better hire some to make up for all those years of negligence.” It creates the “us versus them” mentality, which is highly unproductive.

One of the main problems facing the government is administrative malfunctioning, produced in large measure by over-hasty promotion of historically disadvantaged but unqualified people and premature retirement or exclusion of experienced and qualified historically advantaged civil servants.

In October 1996, the then President Nelson Mandela made a speech, which has been a guide in the application of the affirmative action measures. He stated that South Africans are not asking for handouts for anyone, nor are they saying that just as a white skin was a passport to privileged past, so a black skin should be the basis for privilege in future, nor was their aim to do away with qualifications. The special measures envisaged to overcome the legacy of past discrimination are not intended to ensure the advancement of unqualified persons, but to see to it that those who have been denied access to qualifications in the past can become qualified now, and those who have been qualified all along but overlooked because of past discrimination, are at last given their due. The first point to be made was that affirmative action must be rooted in **principles of justice and equality**.

The author's opinion is that, discrimination and affirmative action measures are highly charged and emotional issues in South Africa's jobs market. The Constitution, The Employment Equity Act and the Promotion of Equality and Prohibition of Unfair Discrimination Act, all contain anti-discrimination measures designed to create equality.

However, if left unchecked, these measures would undermine the concept of equality, and the principle of justice. Achieving numerical balance "getting the numbers right" will not, alone achieve Cultural Diversity harmony, because Cultural Diversity goes beyond just numerical targets in terms of race, gender, and disability. Cultural Diversity goes beyond achieving and maintaining a representative workforce. It must be seen in the context that everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. It affirms the need of creating an environment in which no person receives or is denied opportunity because of race, gender, culture, national origin, or ethnicity.

1.5 The need for leadership

Cultural differences potentially explain a great deal about the less than fully satisfactory experiences of employees in diverse workgroups. In the increasingly global economy, the importance of cultural differences among people of different nationalities is becoming more obvious. However, most of us have only a cursory knowledge of what these differences are and how they may affect behaviour. Moreover, it is widely believed that cultural differences exist only between people of different nationalities, whereas the message is that there are significant culture group differences within societies. It should be noted that in many cases the behavioural norms discussed here will not be manifested in organizations because individuals have learned to suppress them in order to fit in and survive in an organizational (macro) culture that may be quite different from their preferred culture. In addition, members of an identity group vary in the extent to which they embrace, or are even aware of, the cultural nuances of the culture groups. Leaders and others in organisations must understand these cultural differences, not necessarily so that they may be eliminated, but so that interpersonal relations between co-workers can be based on mutual understanding and respect and therefore be more effective.

In view of the magnitude and importance of the challenge that cultural diversity poses to organizations, it is imperative for employers and for educational institutions seeking to prepare people for leadership, to understand the effects of this diversity on human behaviour in the workplace.

1.6 The aim of the dissertation

The aim of this dissertation is:

1. to consider employee perceptions of Diversity Management in the workplace, and to imprint upon them the need for the building of an active and participative workforce society, that reflects the world in which we live and do business. It should be based on the principles of equal opportunity, to create an environment of prosperity and harmony, which will maximize the contribution of all, for the benefit of all, without discrimination of any kind.
2. to empower employees, to develop an understanding of the issues of diversity and how to manage it in the workplace and, to create an environment in which no person receives or is denied opportunity because of race, gender, culture, or ethnicity.
3. To imprint upon managers, supervisors and staff in general that Management of Diversity is not all about Affirmative Action and Employment Equity. It is not about managing quotas and numbers. It is about managing people, for their own benefit, and the benefit of the organization and the country.

The White Paper on HRM in the Public Service (2001:11) states that:

“Turning the vision of a diverse, competent and well managed workforce, capable of and committed to delivering high quality services to the people of South Africa into reality will require something close to a managerial revolution within the Public Service.”

Central to this resolution will be a shift from administrating personnel, to managing people and organization□izing Diversity management by integrating it with the organization's overall management processes.

Basically, managing these changes in the decades ahead is a function of these factors: Vision, Readiness and Capability. This applies to both the organizational and individual level.

The skills needed in today's increasingly global marketplace can be developed only by exposure to widely diverse people, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints, living in harmony. It is a mistake to think that individuals achieve very much. When groups of people begin working together that's when the world starts moving.

In the purpose of better understanding some Diversity Management words, a Diversity Lexicon is included as Appendix 3.

Chapter 2 *THE WORLD OF DIVERSITY*

2.1 The changing world of today and tomorrow

In South Africa and throughout the world, all organizations are becoming more demographically heterogeneous and diverse in terms of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, physical disability, and language preference.

This multiculturalism and diversity create enormous challenges to managers and leaders.

The composition of the workforce today is much more untraditional. Within organizations in South Africa, there are differences in culture in work groups, departments, branches, regions, levels of hierarchy, etc.

Situations where people in a job are on the same cultural level or background, of the same sex, from the same community, of the same first language, employed in the same type of work for the whole of their working lives, are disappearing.

So the risks of not addressing these issues of diversity are increasing. Stereotyping is reinforced, increasing intolerance may build up, misunderstandings and mistrust increase, frustrations can become intolerable, leading to increased defensiveness, blocking, criticizing or attacking behaviours. It is becoming clear, that managers more and more will have to take diversity into account as they seek to ensure the, at least, survival of their organizations.

There are many factors that are increasing, and will continue to increase such people's diversity in organizations.

They include:

- More rapid organisational change. As industries and organizations change, fewer people are employed in the same organization – or even field of work – for their entire working lives.
- Increasing free movement of labour across countries.
- Changing demographic trends that force employers to extend their search to meet skill shortages.
- Relocation of organizations. As organizations move to cheaper or more attractive locations not all their employees relocate too. Organisations usually recruit some staff from the new location and keep some staff from the old location – an inevitable cause of culture.
- Changes in legislation. Laws relating to race discrimination, equal opportunities and movement of labour will all lead to increasing diversity of people employed.
- Technological changes such as improved transport. This means that people are more prepared to commute and have a wider choice of employment. Changing jobs becomes more feasible.

This means there is an increasing chance of differences in the beliefs, understanding, values and underlying assumptions that those people are bringing to the workplace.

For managers, whose fundamental challenge is the motivation of others to help achieve desired ends – that is, to behave in productive, co-operative ways, it is critical to recognize the importance of understanding value systems and differences, in an increasingly global environment and increasingly diverse work forces. Every person is a unique personality, and we must take time to know and respect each individual we encounter before drawing conclusions about that person's attitudes and motives.

Our new nation has inherited an ingrained legacy of racial prejudice that still lies buried in the hearts and minds of South Africa's people.

Market related economics throughout the world are characterized by conflicts of interest between management and labour.

In South Africa the conflict is intensified by the abiding racial tension – it is no longer management vs. labour but white management vs. black labour or merely, white vs. black.

Whites tend to view problems purely from business perspectives whilst their black counterparts often view the same problem as race related.

Fundamental to the concept of managing polarization, is the realization that our human resource problems extend far beyond the physical diversity of race, gender and culture. To understand our differences is not enough. We need to come to terms with the "great divide" and how it came to be.

Managing racial polarization is, therefore, an organizational concept that seeks to openly address the single most important cause of our human resource problems – South African racism!

When people of one culture compare themselves to another, they tend to see their own culture, values, attitudes and beliefs, as normal and superior and the other as aberrational and inferior. This tendency of judging people of other cultures according to the standards of one's own is called "ethnocentrism".

At the cause of the dilemma created by the major demographic change that is occurring worldwide is the reality of oppression. If people were simply moving around the globe in increasing numbers, and finding themselves equally welcome wherever they go, no one would need to learn to "manage diversity".

But of course such is not the case. Throughout history, in every time and place, some groups have dominated other groups. Differences that are in reality as inconsequential as the color of one's skin, or one's gender, or one's religion, have been used to justify the most brutal and inhumane treatment of one group of people by another. Wars, holocausts, ethnic cleansing, slavery, genocide, inquisitions, all have been the result of human beings need to define one's own group as "we" and another's group as "they".

It is painfully obvious that in South Africa there are significant areas of utter failure in interpersonal relationships. There is profound inequality, lack of respect, and even deep hatred among different groups of South Africans.

Despite the nation's increasing heterogeneity, diversity is encountering varying degrees of resistance among different sectors of South Africa. But like it or not, diversity is not going to disappear, and as always, the work place is the primary arena for social change.

Diversity management is a prominent issue in both the private and public sectors (e.g. Cox, 1993; Griggs & Louw, 1995). Theoretically, a diverse workforce should supply a rich array of different ideas to bear on organizational problems.

Such a work force should produce higher quality work because it brings a broader set of perspectives, approaches, and ideas to bear on problem solving (Cox, 1993). Moreover, a diverse work force should better understand and be able to deal with varied demands and expectations of a diversified customer base (Knowe & Chretien, 1996).

It should bring broader perspectives on the problem at hand, a greater pool of potential solutions to examine, more innovative ideas, and a greater variety of criteria with which to evaluate possible solutions (Cox, 1993; Knouse & Chretien, 1996; Miliken & Martins, 1996).

2.2 Ways in which cultures will differ

2.2.1 Dr Geert Hofstede research into national differences

Dr Geert Hofstede, has conducted extensive research into national differences in over 60 countries and with business applications on the “mapping” or “management conceptions” or “software” of national cultures.

In his books, “Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values and Cultures” (1980), and “Organisations: Software of the mind” (1991), Hofstede identifies four dimensions of national culture.

The four dimensions are:

- Power distance (high – lower power distance;
- Uncertainty avoidance;
- Individualism, Collectivism;
- Masculinity, femininity

2.2.1.1 The first, **power distance**, indicates the extent to which a society accepts that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally. It relates to the inequality that exists in life. There is inequality in many areas of life – differences in money, status, power, ownership of property and rights.

It exists within work organizations, in social organizations, in tribes and nations.

Inequality has been the subject of discussion and analysis for centuries and different groups has found different solutions.

In any business organization there are differences in the way power, wealth, status and rewards are distributed.

The basis for determining these inequalities are often set out in hierarchy charts, contracts, procedures and plans.

“Power distance” in an organization relates to the extent to which subordinates feel they can disagree with their manager, can influence decision made by their manager and can participate in the decision making process.

In Hofstede’s research, in “high power-distance” countries (that is, where there is a large distance or inequality between bosses and subordinates), subordinates are afraid of, or prefer not to get involved in, the decision making process. Subordinates expect their bosses to lead, make decisions and to direct without involving them. Where there is a high power distance culture we are more likely to see a preference for a directive and autocratic style of management.

We are more likely to see characteristics such as dependency by subordinates on more senior levels, lower levels blamed for mistakes and problems and little trust.

Those in a position of power are likely to try to appear as powerful as possible. Bosses and subordinates are more likely to regard each other as “different species”.

Where there is a “**lower power-distance**” we are most likely to see characteristics such as more interdependence between boss and subordinate, a preference for more equal rights, a greater willingness to trust each other and not to see each other as a threat.

People in a position of power will try to appear less powerful than they really are.

2.2.1.2 The second, **uncertainty avoidance**, indicates “the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain or ambiguous situations”.

It examines the extent to which we try to avoid uncertainty; the extent of an individual's ability to cope with different levels of uncertainty.

Some cultural groupings seem considerably more at ease coping with uncertainty than others.

Different cultures have developed different ways of coping with uncertainty, such as the use of laws, procedures, religion, research, statistical tools, strategic planning, rituals and rules.

In any given situation some individuals will have a greater need to deal with the uncertainty that they perceive. The tolerance level of a group of people to deal with perceived uncertainty or to avoid that uncertainty is called Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance Index.

Someone with a higher level of tolerance for uncertainty (or **low uncertainty avoidance** in Hofstede's terms) may do such things as:

- Break the rules if they feel the situation warrants it.
- Refuse to follow a procedure if they feel it is inappropriate in a particular case.
- Disagree with an established way of handling a situation if they feel it is no longer appropriate.
- Be more prepared to work in new situations or in new roles, or to break new ground in a field.
- Experiment freely and often.
- Take more risks, be less resistant to change.
- Fight for general guidelines within which they can use their own initiative rather than be restricted by tight rules and procedures.

They are also more like to cope better with ambiguous and poorly defined situations.

Someone with a lower level of tolerance for uncertainty (**high uncertainty avoidance** in Hofstede's terms) is likely to prefer:

- Rules and procedures for dealing with as many situations as possible.
- Established and approved guidelines for handling difficult situations.
- To avoid situations that are new and untested, such as a new job, a new role, working for a different organization, moving house.
- Group decision-making rather than making decisions themselves.
- Using tried and tested methods.
- Taking fewer risks.

2.2.1.3 **Individualism** is the third dimension and refers to a “loosely knit social framework in a society in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and of their immediate families only”.

Collectivism, the opposite, occurs when there is a “tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups; they expect their in-groups (relatives, class, organizations) to look after them, and in exchange for that owe absolute loyalty to it”.

Individualism/collectivism concerns the extent to which people think and act as individuals, based on their own self-determination, as opposed to conforming or adhering to the ways of a group of people (the collective view of an organization or a family, for example). A number of Western cultures are regarded as being more individualistic than many Eastern societies. Of course there are many variations.

In an individualistic culture great store is set in following your own convictions, taking your own needs into account as a priority, 'doing your own thing', being independent of others. In a collectivist culture the success and effectiveness of the group as a whole is regarded as being more important than any one individual's needs. This may involve individual members making personal sacrifices for the good of the group as a whole.

The extent to which the culture to which you subscribe is individualistic or collectivist will influence your relationships with others. It will influence the amount of emotional (and sometimes material) dependence that group members have on one another. It will influence the extent to which individual needs are balanced against group needs and whether rewards are allocated individually or to groups.

According to Hofstede's research, those who subscribe to an individualistic culture tend to:

- Be more independent of their employing organization.
- Defend their personal or leisure time more strongly.
- Demand more freedom and scope in their job.
- Want more autonomy.
- Prefer to make decisions individually rather than collectively.
- Pursue their own needs and ambitions with less regard for others' needs.
- Consider that they are responsible for looking after themselves.

Those who subscribe to a collectivist culture tend to:

- Prefer to work for large, more established organizations.

- Be more morally committed to and involved with their organization.
- Take others into account more often and to a larger extent
- Prefer group decision-making and consider what's best for the group.
- Believe that if they help the group, the group will look after them.

2.2.1.4 The fourth dimension is **masculinity** with its opposite pole, femininity. This dimension expresses “the extent to which the dominant values in society are assertiveness, money and things, not caring for others, quality of life and people.

Hofstede's fourth dimension categorizes culture, as either having predominantly 'masculine or feminine' perceived characteristics. When following Hofstede's work it is important to understand that he uses the term 'masculinity' to refer to characteristics such as assertiveness, and 'femininity' to describe nurturing behaviour. He does not mean that all men are assertive and all women nurturing!

Hofstede's analysis shows that a culture that is high in 'masculinity' tends to emphasise assertiveness, advancement, freedom, recognition, independence and technical or logical decision-making. A culture that is high in 'femininity' tends to emphasise working atmosphere and conditions, cooperation, concern for others, relationships and decision-making that includes the use of intuition.

2.2.2 Fons Trompenaars cultural research

Fons Trompenaars (1994) is another authority on cultural value dimensions. He discusses the following ways in which cultures will differ.

2.2.2.1 The Universal/The Particular – Absolute or Situational Ethics?

Is the same conduct always right or wrong? Are there absolute moral principles by which all must abide or must standards depend on the circumstances? More specifically, can my obligations to a particular person (or client?) supersede my general or universal duties to society at large? Particularist cultures are more accepting of this proposition. People with universalist values may not cross the street against a Walk signal, even if there is not a vehicle in sight. Trompenaars illustrates the difference with this comparison. The universalist would say of particularists that they cannot be trusted because they will always look out for their friends. The particularist would say of universalists that they couldn't be trusted because they cannot be counted on to always help a friend. Realistically, it would be unusual to find anyone who could not think of circumstances under which it would be justified to break a rule or who did not hold certain principles so dear that violating them would be unthinkable. The difference is in degree, not kind. Like Hofstede's "feminist", the particularist places great importance on relationships. Maintaining a relationship may be more important than getting the job done. Harmony may be more important than frankness. Being familiar with someone is more important than familiarity with their products. Trust in another person is more important than a contract; after all, circumstances may require a modification of a contract, but my supplier (and trusted friend) will not let me down. Each situation must be treated on its own merits.

Trompenaars's research found that the universalist view was strongest in the Protestant cultures, the Anglo, Scandinavian, and Germanic countries, and generally weak in Asian and Catholic and Orthodox Catholic cultures, that is, southern Europe and Latin America, and

eastern Europe. He attributed this difference to the more-literal teachings of Protestantism compared to Catholicism and Asian religions.

2.2.2.2 Specific/Diffuse – Are Work and Business Separate from the Rest of Life?

In diffuse cultures, everything is related. Business is just another form of social interaction. It is conducted within a larger context of friendship; inquiries' and concern about others' families; extensive discussion of extraneous (to those from specific cultures) topics such as politics, books and art, sports, and so on. It is expected that someone from another culture knows something about and appreciates the history and traditions of one's own. It is expected that educated and sophisticated people will have a broad range of interests and knowledge. Conversations and negotiations proceed from the general to the specific and will be very lengthy. General principles and intentions are of more importance and interest than details. Business relationships are seen as and expected to be enduring, like friendships, and therefore are not entered into lightly and without establishing a personal relationship. Contracts and management-by-objectives agreements are seen as relevant only to conditions in place at the time of agreement. Because the relationship is expected to endure, and conditions are certain to change during such prolonged periods, parties must be prepared to modify their agreements and arrangements. It is expected that managers take an interest in the personal lives of their subordinates. (In Japan, managers may get involved in arranging marriages, and weddings sometimes take place in the employer's offices.) Managers from specific cultures will prefer high-content communication, give more-precise instructions, and will

be more concerned with reaching goals with rewards attached; their diffuse counterparts will use high-context communication, give more open-ended instructions, and be more concerned with continuous improvement.

Although this distinction is less pronounced geographically than others, and therefore more difficult to attribute to historical or religious forces, diffuseness is predominant in many Asian and Islamic cultures, whereas specificity is strongest in Anglo cultures and predominates in Germanic, Scandinavian, and most other European cultures.

2.2.2.3 How Status is Attained – By Ascription or Performance?

We confer status upon people by ascription by virtue of some characteristic of their state of being, for example, their title or position, age, family ties, school ties, social connections, profession, and so on. In other words, we ascribe status to those who seem entitled to it by virtue of who they are. Alternatively, we may confer status upon someone because of what they have achieved, the results they have produced. Cultures that confer status by ascription expect those in authority to act in accordance with their roles; actual performance and results are less important. Unfavorable results are attributed to external and uncontrollable causes. Cultures that confer status by achievement expect those in authority to get things done; appearances are less important. The distinction between form and substance is not a far-fetched analogy. Ascriptive managers deem title and seniority very important and conduct themselves with appropriate ceremony and form, and expect the same from others. Proper respect and deference must be shown regardless of relative capabilities or achievements. Accomplished young managers from achievement

cultures find it difficult to wield authority in ascriptive cultures. Senior managers from ascriptive cultures may find it difficult to adjust to the informality and irreverence of achievement cultures. Trompenaars found ascription prevalent in Catholic, Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic cultures and achievement, like universalist ethics, more dominant in Protestant cultures. The Protestant work ethic and tradition of revolt against both Church and state are at work here.

2.3 The study of Organisational Culture and Cultural Diversity

The study of organizational culture become popular during the late 1970's and early 1980's (see, for example, Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Frost et al., 1985; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Schein, 1985/1987), because of their focus on culture as an anthropological concept.

Any discussion of Cultural Diversity in the workplace must begin with an understanding of the general concept of culture.

Culture guides our understanding and behavior: it shapes how we approach the world.

Ting – Toomey (1985: 75) offers a simple definition of culture, saying that it is the “patterned ways of thinking, acting, feeling, and interpreting” of particular groups.

Eva Hoffman (1989: 78) provides a vivid example of how culture informs our perceptions of the world around us and guides our actions.

Culture comprises four elements: Norms, values, beliefs, and expressive symbols (Peterson, 1979). The study of culture has historically focused on the norms, values, and beliefs of different cultures, but in recent years, consistent

with the general shift in the social sciences to symbolic perspectives, the new focus in the study of culture is on “expressive symbols as portraying fundamental beliefs” (Peterson, 1979: 137). Johnson (1989) rearranges the elements of culture to reflect more clearly this new focus on meaning. She says that culture includes “three interrelated and co-equal systems of meaning: (1) Language and communication; (2) artifacts; and (3) abstractions” (p. 305). The system of language and communication includes “the verbal and nonverbal patterns that characterize the expressions” (Johnson, 1989: 305) of a particular group. Artifacts are the “unique products” created by members of a cultural group that both reflect and create the experiences of the group, such as music, art, clothing, literature, and rituals. Abstractions guide behavior and shape both communication and artifacts; they include “values, morals, ethics, logic, philosophical orientations, laws, and religious beliefs held by a people” (Johnson, 1989: 308). These three systems provide “the publicly available symbolic forms through which people experience and express meaning” (Swidler, 1986).

These symbolic forms through which we communicate culture are not static; they change and adapt over time as the external environments in which particular cultures are enacted change. Thus culture itself is fluid and dynamic. One of the paradoxes of culture is that it is both enduring and changing. It gives its members a shared historical identity and a repertoire of symbolic forms that simultaneously recreate the historical identity and create a new identity as cultural forms are used “to meet the various contingencies of everyday living” (Carbaugh, 1990: 5).

The concept of repertoire is important in understanding how culture functions in people’s lives. Culture is not deterministic. My membership in a particular culture does not determine my response to a given situation. My culture, instead, gives me a tool kit that I can use in constructing my response (Swidler, 1986). People choose, however, how they will use those tool kits; “any person can

choose variously to reaffirm, to create with, to live by, or against such patterns” (Carbaugh, 1990: 153).

Rosamund Billington relates “culture” to the beliefs and values people have about societies, social change and the ideal society they seek (Billington et al 1999: 1).

Accordingly to Tylor only humankind possess culture, in the sense of the classical definition, i.e., “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits, acquired by man as a member of society (Tyler 1991: 18).

The Mexican anthropologist Kroeber, talked about culture as the super organic, stressing that there was nothing about the varied cultures of the world that was biologically inherited. He made the important point that culture is learned and transmitted through groups, and individuals in societies (Kroeber, 1952) and Beathie (1964).

The American anthropologist Clyde Kluckholm, adds to previous definitions of culture, saying that it consists of different components, it is dynamic, structured, and the means by which individuals adjust to social life and learn “creative expressions”. Kluckholm argues that cultures do not merely have content but also structure. They are cultural systems in that they are not random but have organized partners, independent of particular individuals. Cultures are “designs for living”, formed through historical processes (Kluckholm 1951 – 93).

Kluckholm stressed the shared and normative nature of culture, and its functions for integrating the individual into the group.

More recently Clifford Geertz has stressed the creativity of culture and the agency of human action in negotiating and manipulating culture, using an “action

frame of reference” derived from the sociology of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons (Austin – Broos, 1987).

Geertz also emphasized the particularity of cultures and the necessity for “thick description”, that is , an interpretative approach:

The concept of culture ... is essentially a semiotic one. Believing with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs and the analysis of it ... not an experimental science in search of law but in interpretative or in search of meaning (Gertz, 1973: 16).

“Culture is not a neutral concept; it is historical, specific and ideological” (Svenigewood, 1977: 26).

Since culture is seen to represent ultimate values, the best of which humanity is capable all the theories have some notion, however vague, that the determination and dissemination of “culture” must be associated with a particular class or elite, and that culture is something which over arches, reflects and ultimately has its own effect on the social.

Eliot points out that we need to distinguish between culture at the level of the individual, the group and society as a whole. The most contentious aspect of his theory is his argument concerning class and culture. In modern societies he states, there are levels of culture which correspond to the more differentiated functions of individuals and groups, that is, to social classes: ‘the class itself possesses a function, that of maintaining that part of the total culture of the society which pertains to that class’. He continues by arguing ‘that in a healthy society this maintenance of a particular level of culture is to the benefit, not merely of the class which maintains it, but of the society as a whole’ (Eliot, 1962: 35). Each specific class culture ‘nourishes’ the others: there is a necessary

interdependence between the culture of each class and culture is the creation of the society as a whole. The higher classes do not have more culture but a more conscious culture. However, Eliot conceptualizes culture specifically as differentiated rather than uniform and also, in large part, operating at an unconscious level.

2.3.1 Corporate and Organisational Culture

Michael Armstrong (1989) defines corporate culture as the pattern of shared attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and expectations that shape the way people act and interact in an organization and underpin the way things get done.

According to Michael Armstrong (1989: 33) *“Corporate culture encompasses the norms and core values of an enterprise and manifests itself in the form of organizational climates, management style or organization behaviour”*.

So, organizational culture is based on “the way in which things get done around here”.

The culture of any organisation is based on norms and core values. Norms are those unwritten rules about how to behave. Norms sometimes contravene the written rules. Core values are based on what is seen as right and wrong, as good and bad.

They govern the fundamental beliefs, attitudes, and an acceptable behavior that groups holds most deeply and widely, those that define its culture.

They are those values that most precisely identify and circumscribe a group.

Fons Trompenaars (1994) suggests that we think of a core value as lying at the mean of a normal distribution of the population of the culture in question.

Every group generates its own norms. Values and norms need to support each other for culture to be strong and harmonious.

The core values may be set by senior management but they may or may not be subscribed to by others in the organization. For example, senior management may assert that customer care is of paramount importance - that the customer is always right and should be treated with respect at all times. Yet you may find there are large areas of your organization where people, at all levels, treat the customers as just another order number.

Organisational culture changes over time. People's idea of what is good and bad change (their values change), and so they no longer like or agree with the norms (the rules which support what is good or bad).

Most people in South Africa now consider smoking to be bad (a value judgement) and this has led to a change in the rules and expectations about where and when people should and should not smoke (a norm). Of course education and training have effected this change.

2.3.2 A Culture of Diversity

A culture of diversity is an institutional environment built on the values of fairness, diversity, mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation; where shared goals, rewards, performance standards, operating norms, and a common vision of the future guide the efforts of every employee and manager (Loden and Resener 1991: 196).

"Cultural diversity" tends to be broadly defined in its current use in organizations to include a variety of races, genders, ages, ethnicities, classes, sexual preferences, physical abilities, and religions. People of different cultural

backgrounds share particular patterns of interpreting experience and interacting with others (Fine 1995: 1).

Many people identify cultural diversity issues as synonymous with racial tensions between blacks and whites. They are not.

Cultural diversity issues encompass numerous cultural groups that are or have been marginalized. Cultural diversity issues are not just between whites and non-whites, but also among the many groups that have been designated as disadvantaged.

The first challenge organizations face is to provide opportunities for previous disadvantaged people to move up the organizational ladder. Organisations will need to work diligently to ensure that they will be prepared and able to move beyond those positions.

The increasing representation of human in the workforce, especially those with children or of childbearing age, creates a second challenge for organizations. Employers need to develop "family friendly" policies and practices that ensure the health and well-being of children and aging parents.

As our population ages, more families will need help in caring for elderly parents and other relatives. And as our labour force ages, children will become an even more precious resource.

Many nations' failure to increase productivity over the last 20 years can be blamed, in some part, on our lack of attention to the health and education of our youth.

The major challenge created by the changing color, gender, and ethnicity of the workforce, however, will be transforming the white male culture of organizations into a multicultural culture that nurtures and sustains all of its workers.

2.4 The Management of Diversity

2.4.1 Management of Diversity is a critical competency

Taylor Cox, Jr identifies Managing Diversity with planning and implementing organizational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantages of diversity are maximized while its potential disadvantages are minimized.

Cox, views the goal of managing diversity as maximizing the ability of all employees to contribute to organizational goals and to achieve their full potential unhindered by group identities such as gender, race, nationality, age, and departmental affiliation (Cox 1993: 11).

He is of the opinion that Managing Diversity is at the Core of Leadership Today and it is crucial to the accomplishment of organizational goals and therefore should be of paramount concern to managers.

Managing diversity is a critical competency for leaders, and organizational capacity to manage diversity well has major implication for organizational performance.

2.4.2 Managing Diversity as a moral, legal and economic imperative

Cox identifies three types of organizational goals facilitated by managing diversity;

1. moral, ethical, and social responsibility goals;
2. legal obligations
3. economic performance goals.

2.4.2.1 Managing Diversity as a Moral Imperative

In most organizations, the representation of culture groups in the overall work population, and especially in the most senior positions, is highly skewed.

This fact and the pervasive tendency for in-group members to be favored over out-group members in human transactions combine to make dominance – subordination and other equal opportunity issues important aspects of diversity work in organizations.

So, for organizations that subscribe to a creed of equal opportunity, a major motive for investing in managing – diversity initiatives is that it is morally and ethically the right thing to do. The achievement of social responsibility goals enhances economic performance goals in the long term.

2.4.2.2 Managing Diversity as Legal Requirements

Certain aspects of managing diversity are necessary, or at least strongly achieved, as a matter of law.

Thus, in addition to the ethical and social conscience goals of managing – diversity initiatives, there are legal reasons for managers of organizations to pay attention to diversity issues.

In the United States, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended in 1972), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) collectively outlaw discrimination on the basis of sex,

color, race, religion, pregnancy, national origin, age, or physical ability. With regard to the ADA, the act provides that a physical disability cannot be an issue in an employment decision if the individual is qualified or could be made qualified to do the job by a "reasonable accommodation" on the employer's part. In addition to the above legislation, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 specifically outlaws pay discrimination on the basis of gender, and the Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 expressly outlaws employment discrimination against veterans of the Vietnam War. The vast number of workers covered by these laws suggests that employers are well advised to invest in such managing-diversity activities as worker training and organizational research to uncover evidence of unfair treatment of workers related to the various group memberships addressed in the legislation. Moreover, history has shown that the failure of organizations to manage diversity in this respect can lead to costly lawsuits. To mention just a few examples, in 1991 a jury awarded \$20.3 million to a single person in a sex discrimination suit involving denial of promotion ("Jury Awarded," 1991); In 1988, Honda Motor Company made a \$6 million settlement of a suit involving charges of discrimination by Blacks and women in its U.S. operations (Cole & Deskins, 1988); and in 1992, Shoney's agreed to set aside \$105 million to compensate victims of racial discrimination after a lawsuit was filed against the company (Pulley, 1992). Although the above examples deal with race and gender, age has been the subject of more litigation under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act than either gender or race in recent years. Thus it is clear that there are economic as well as good-citizenship implications of the legal obligations in this area of management.

2.4.2.3 **Managing Diversity for Economic Performance**

Managing diversity also affects organizational performance in ways that have little to do with the socio and legal rationales.

In addition to the world wide demographic trends, organizations are emphasizing the importance of cross-functional teams in creating a basis for competitive advantage (Bassin, 1988; Levine, 1987; Naudsepp, 1988). Since different work functions and departments in organisations can have different cultures, this trend adds a strong element of cultural diversity to today's workgroups in many organizations.

Another major factor emphasizing the relevance of diversity to organizations is the increasing emphasis on global marketing and operations. Understanding the effects of culture on human behaviour is crucial to the business success of multinational companies.

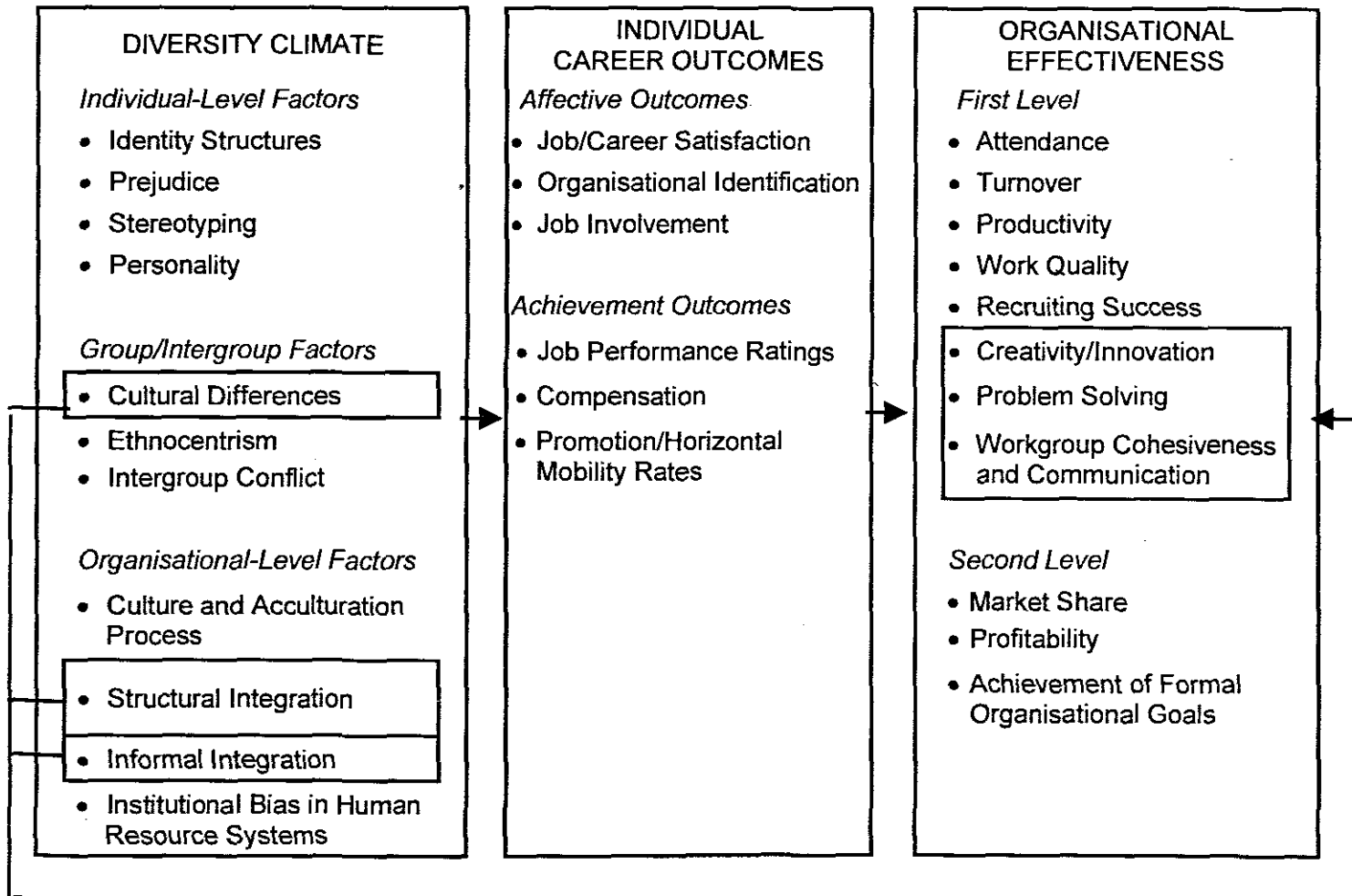
2.4.3 The impact of diversity

Cox (1994: 7), developed an International Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD), to explicate effects of diversity for many cultural configurations, including job function, religion, age and physical ability, ratio-ethnicity (racially and/or ethnically distinctive within the same nationality group) and gender.

This work builds on previous work on international research, (Mischel, 1977; Chatman, 1989; O'Reilly, Chapman & Coldwell, 1991) and on the concept of embedded groups (Rice, 1969; Alderfer & Smith, 1982). This work assumes that behavior in organizations is best understood by examining the interplay between the individual and the environmental situation.

**An Interactional Model of the Impact of Diversity on
Individual Career Outcomes and Organisational Effectiveness**

Figure 1



Cox (1994: 7)

The model in Figure 1 points that **four individual-level factors** (personal identity structures, prejudice, stereotyping, and personality type), **three intergroup factors** (cultural differences, ethnocentrism, and intergroup conflict), and **four organizational context factors** (organizational culture and acculturation process, structural integration, informal integration, and institutional bias)

collectively define the diversity climate of an organization. According to Cox (1997: 10) the “diversity climate” may influence career experiences and outcomes in organizations in two ways.

Cox (1997: 1) argues that affective outcomes refer to how people feel about their work and their employer. Thus in many organizations employee morale and satisfaction are related to identity groups such as gender, race/ethnicity, and so on. Second, the actual career achievement of individuals as measured by such things as job performance ratings may be related to group identities in some organizations. These individual outcomes, in turn, are expected to impact a series of first-order organizational effectiveness measures such as work quality, productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. For profit-making organizations, these first-order measures ultimately translate to second-order results such as profitability and market share. In nonprofit organizations, individual contribution is still crucial in determining the extent to which organizational goals will be achieved.

In addition to these indirect effects of group identity, certain aspects of the diversity climate are thought to impact directly on organizational performance. Specifically, the amount of diversity in both formal and informal structures of organizations will impact factors such as creativity, problem solving, and intraorganisational communications.

As suggested in Figure 1 two types of diversity effects on organizational effectiveness can be identified. One type addresses effects that derive from the impact of group identity on the experiences and work outcomes of individual members. The other type of effects relates to the impact of cultural diversity in itself. These effects of diversity on organizational outcomes address the question of how the performance of homogeneous workgroups compare to that of heterogeneous workgroups.

In emphasizing affective outcomes, the importance of employee perceptions about the workplace is duly recognized. It is well known that behavior is driven by perceptions of reality. Therefore, what people believe about their opportunities in the work environment is of vital importance regardless of whether or not these beliefs are consistent with the facts. In a recent study illustrating the relevance of individuals' perceptions to work outcomes, Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990) examined the impact of attitudes on various individual work outcomes with samples of police officers, brokerage clerks, and public school teachers. The authors found that employees' perceptions of being valued by an organization had a significant effect on their conscientiousness, job involvement, and innovativeness. A sense of being valued, in turn, may well be influenced by cultural differences. Because of such things as stereotyping, ethnocentrism, and prejudice, members of minority groups often feel less valued, and hence the dynamics of diversity as explained in this book have implications for organizational innovation.

In support of the premise that perceptions in the workplace are influenced by diversity dimensions such as gender and racioethnicity, both Jones (1986) and Fernandez (1981) report survey data indicating that many non-Whites perceive that their race has hindered their advancement. Likewise, Beehr, Tabor & Walsh (1980) found that Blacks were more likely than Whites to say race is a factor in promotion decisions.

Returning to the logic of the model, achievement outcomes refers to tangible measures that are, at least theoretically, indexes of the employee's contribution to the organization. These include performance ratings, promotion rates, and compensation.

2.4.4 Effects of Diversity and Organisational Effectiveness

Affective and achievement outcomes of individuals are thought to influence organizational effectiveness measures such as product/service quality, productivity/efficiency, and labor turnover. These first-level organisational outcomes, in turn, directly impact the profitability of profit-making firms and instrumental goal attainment of nonprofit firms.

Thus, according to the logic of the model, by understanding the diversity climate we can predict effects on individual outcomes and ultimately effects of diversity on organizational effectiveness.

In many organizations diversity dynamics such as ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and cultural differences interact with a highly imbalanced power structure (on a culture group basis) to produce work outcome disadvantages for members of out-groups. As suggested previously, the poorer work outcomes include affective and achievement outcomes, and these in turn are thought to adversely affect first-level organizational measures such as productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. In such circumstances, it is necessary for organizations to improve the diversity climate in order to fully tap the potential of all workers to contribute to organizational performance. These related effects of diversity follow the line of thought suggested by Roosevelt Thomas's (1990) definition of managing diversity: *"Managing in such a way as to get from a heterogeneous work force the same productivity, commitment, quality and profit that we got from the old homogeneous work force"* (p. 109).

The research suggests that these effects of diversity can be of great magnitude, and hence a major reason for organizations to manage diversity is to minimize barriers to performance that may occur due to diversity-related dynamics.

There is evidence, however, that the existence of diversity, in itself, may affect certain organizational processes such as communications, creativity, and problem solving, which are closely related to performance. One prominent perspective on diversity that follows this line of thought is the "value-in-diversity" philosophy (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991; Mandell & Kohler-Gray, 1990; Marmer-Solomon, 1989; Esty, 1988; Copeland, 1988). These writers are among those who argue that, when properly managed, diverse groups and organizations have performance advantages over homogeneous ones.

These potential direct effects of diversity on key organizational processes related to performance hold considerable importance for organisations. Enhancing creativity and problem-solving quality are prime concerns of organizational leaders. To the extent that the existence of group-identity diversity facilitates these, it adds an important motivation for actively seeking to maintain a diverse workforce rather than merely to manage one if it happens to present itself.

There is research evidence to support the idea that affective and achievement outcomes of individuals are influenced by dimensions of diversity such as gender, racioethnicity, and age.

Research demonstrates the link between diversity climate and individual work outcomes, and the possible implication of cultural differences among the different cultural groups represented in an organization. Organisations may be thought of as having their own distinctive cultures, and therefore the degree of congruence or fit between organization and individual culture is of potential importance to various career outcomes of individuals. In empirical tests of this proposition, O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell (1991) and Chatman (1991) have shown that value congruence between employees and their firms has a significant effect on organizational commitment, employment satisfaction, likelihood to quit, and actual turnover.

In another relevant study, the degree of agreement in values between production workers and their supervisors was assessed. The data strongly supported the conclusion that organizational commitment and job satisfaction are enhanced by value congruence but produced mixed results on the achievement outcomes. For example, employees who had more congruent values were late less often but did not have significantly fewer absences (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989).

The above review of research data has shown that organizational experiences of out-group members tend to be less positive than those of majority group members. The implications of such effects for the economic well being of organizations are easily demonstrated. For example, data from the U.S. workforce indicate that turnover and absenteeism are often higher among women and non-White men than they are for White males (Bergmann & Krause, 1968). Corning Glass recently reported that during the period 1980-1987 turnover among women in professional jobs was double that of men, and the rates for Blacks were 2.5 times those of Whites (Hymowitz, 1989). A two-to-one ratio in the turnover of women and men was also cited by Felice Schwartz in her much discussed article on multiple career tracks for women in management (Schwartz, 1989). Finally, a recent study of absence rates in the U.S. workforce shows that rates for women are 58 percent higher than for men (Meisenheimer, 1990).

Cox (1994: 73) considers the implications of these differences in turnover and absence rates for the cost structure of a hypothetical firm of 10,000 employees. Assume that half of the workforce is composed of women and non-Whites, that the turnover rate for White men is 5 percent, and that the turnover rate for women and non-Whites is double the rate for White men. Based on this scenario, the differential turnover rates would produce an additional 250 losses annually. Formulas for calculating the costs of turnover suggest that a conservative figure for replacement costs for each loss would be \$15,000

(Darmon, 1990; Mercer, 1988). Therefore, the annual cost of the turnover differential is estimated at \$3.8 million.

2.4.5 Can Managing Diversity Really Make a Difference?

The data reviewed above strongly suggest that the affective and achievement outcomes of individuals are influenced by group identities and that organizational outcomes like turnover rates and absenteeism are ultimately affected. The question remains, however, can focused attention on diversity issues in workgroups really impact these outcomes? In this regard, information from several sources on diversity in U.S. firms indicates that frustration over lack of career growth and cultural conflict with the dominant White-male culture are major factors behind the less favorable turnover, absenteeism, and satisfaction levels for women and non-White men. For example, two recent surveys of male and female managers of large American companies found that although women expressed a much higher probability of leaving their current employer than men, and had higher actual turnover rates than men, their major reason for quitting was lack of career growth opportunity or dissatisfaction with rates of progress. It is also instructive that one of the surveys found that women have higher actual turnover rates than men at all ages, and not just during the years when they are bearing children or raising young children (Trost, 1990).

Additional evidence supporting the conclusion that managing diversity has the potential to improve effectiveness measures like turnover can be found in reports of organizations that have changed benefits and work schedules as an adjustment to the greater career interests of women. In one study, companies were assigned an "accommodation score" on the basis of the adoption of four benefit-liberalisation changes associated with pregnant workers. Analysis revealed that the higher a company's accommodation score, the lower the

number of sick days taken by pregnant workers and the more willing they were to work overtime during pregnancy ("Helping Pregnant Workers," 1987).

In two other studies, the effect of company investment in day care on human resource costs was investigated. In one study, turnover and absenteeism rates of working mothers using a company-sponsored child development center were compared to those of women who either had no children or had no company assistance. Results indicated that the absenteeism rate for the day-care users was 38 percent lower than that of the other groups, and that they had a turnover rate of less than 2 percent compared to over 6 percent for the non-benefit groups. In a second study, a company that initiated an in-house child-care facility found that worker attitudes improved on six measures, including organizational commitment and job satisfaction, and that turnover declined by 63 percent (Youngblood & Chambers-Cook, 1984). Similarly encouraging results are reported by the SAS Institute, a computer software firm that absorbs most of the costs of an on-site day-care facility. According to company spokespersons, the company's support of childcare is a major reason for the company's employee turnover rate of just 7 percent, a figure, which they say, is less than a third of the industry average (Cusack, 1990).

It should be noted that organizational support for childcare and not on-site childcare per se seems to be the key factor in improving organisational outcomes. Not every company that has invested in on-site childcare has witnessed drastic improvements in absence or turnover rates. Goff, Mount & Jamison (1990) studied absenteeism effects of on-site childcare at a large midwestern electronics and communications firm. They did not find that on-site child care per se reduced absence, but they did find that support from supervisors regarding work-family conflict issues and satisfaction with child-care arrangements were related to lower absence rates among employees who were parents.

Another management response to increasing diversity in the workforce is greater use of flextime work scheduling. A recent field experiment assessing the impact of flextime use on absenteeism and worker performance found that both short-term and long-term absences declined significantly and that three of four worker-efficiency measures increased significantly under flextime (Kim & Campagna, 1981).

There is also evidence that work team productivity is improved by managing diversity. In a study of the productivity of culturally heterogeneous and culturally homogeneous work teams, findings indicated that some of the heterogeneous teams were more productive than the homogeneous teams and some were less productive than the homogeneous teams. This research was interpreted to show that if work teams manage the diversity well (for example, by ensuring that all members have ample opportunity to contribute and by dealing successfully with the potential communications, group cohesiveness, and interpersonal conflict issues presented by cultural diversity), they would be able to make diversity an asset to performance. Alternatively, if the diversity is ignored or mishandled, it may become a detractor from performance (Adler, 1986).

Although accurate dollar cost-savings figures from managing-diversity initiatives of specific companies are rarely published, a recent published report of the early savings of Ortho Pharmaceuticals stated savings of \$500,000, mainly from lower turnover among members of minority groups (Bailey, 1989).

From an economic viewpoint, the potential cost savings of organizational initiatives to effectively manage diversity must be judged against the investment necessary to implement them. Nevertheless, the limited available data strongly suggest that managing-diversity efforts undertaken by some leading

organizations have been somewhat successful in improving performance on absenteeism, turnover, and productivity.

The failure of organizations to manage non-majority-group members as successfully as White males translated into unnecessary costs. Since the diversity of workforces is growing throughout the world, the costs of not managing diversity well will escalate greatly in the coming years. Organizations that do not make appropriate changes to more successfully retain and utilize persons from different cultural backgrounds can expect to suffer a significant competitive disadvantage compared to those that do. Alternatively, organizations that are able to preempt competitors in creating a climate where all personnel have equal opportunity and motivation to contribute should gain a competitive cost advantage.

2.4.6 Direct Effects of Diversity

The discussion of the previous section makes it clear those organizations that already have diverse workforces need to become proficient at managing diversity. However, numerous authors have maintained that, when properly managed, cultural diversity is an asset to organizations that can be used to enhance organizational performance. There is also evidence that heterogeneity in workgroups has certain disadvantages compared to homogeneous workgroups. The discussion of these disadvantages is further advanced in paragraph 2.4.8, Potential Problems of Diversity.

2.4.7 Potential Performance Benefits of Diversity

The major arguments supporting the perspective on diversity and organizational performance revolve around five factors: (1) attracting and retaining the best available human talent, (2) enhanced marketing efforts, (3) higher creativity and

innovation, (4) better problem solving, and (5) more organizational flexibility (Cox & Blake, 1991).

2.4.7.1 Recruiting of Human Resources. A major competitive factor for organisations is attracting and retaining the best available human-resource talent in the context of the current workforce demographic trends. As women and non-White men increase in proportional representation in the available labor pools in the United States, Europe, and many other parts of the world, it becomes increasingly important for organizations to be successful in hiring and retaining workers from these culture groups. Furthermore, unless one believes that the most talented people all belong to one culture group, the ability to be equally successful in recruiting and retaining people from all culture groups should be views as a total quality issue (Cox 1994: 26).

2.4.7.2 Enhancing Marketing. Just as the workforces of organizations are becoming more culturally diverse, so are their markets. In the United States, for example, Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics now collectively represent nearly \$500 billion annually in consumer spending (Cox (1994: 28).

In view of the effects of culture on consumer behavior, selling goods and services in the increasingly diverse marketplace should be facilitated by a well-utilised, diverse workforce in several ways. First, there are the public relations value alluded to earlier of being identified as managing diversity well. Just as people, especially those who identify with a no majority culture, may prefer to work for an employer recognized for valuing diversity, they may also prefer to buy from such organizations.

Second, firms may gain competitive advantage from the insights of employees from various cultural backgrounds who can assist organizations in understanding culture effects on buying decisions and in mapping strategies to respond to them. A case example of this type of competitive advantage is the experience of Gannett News Media. According to then-president Nancy Woodhull, the early marketing success of the USA TODAY newspaper was largely attributable to the presence of people from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds in daily news meetings. Diversity in-group composition was deliberately planned and led to a natural representation of different points of view, because people of different cultural backgrounds have different experiences shaped by their group identities (Cox & Blake, 1991).

The trend toward cultural diversification of markets is not limited to U.S. companies. Globalisation is forcing major companies from many nations to give more attention to cultural-difference effects among consumers. Nations such as the United States that contain more culturally heterogeneous populations therefore possess a possible advantage in “national” competitiveness. However, just having diversity is not sufficient to produce benefits. Organisations must also manage it in such a way that this potential advantage is fully realised.

2.4.7.3 Creativity. Advocates of this perspective have also suggested that heterogeneity in work teams promotes creativity and innovation. There are several streams of research that tend to support this relationship. Kanter’s study of innovation in organizations (1983) revealed that the most innovative companies deliberately establish heterogeneous teams in order to “create a marketplace of ideas, recognizing that a multiplicity of points of view need to be brought to bear on a problem” (p.167). Kanter also specifically noted that companies high on

innovation had done a better job than most in eradicating racism, sexism, and classism in the work environment and also tended to employ more women and non-White men than less innovative companies. Other innovation gurus have also cited diversity as a key ingredient in creativity. For example, in his book on innovation and change, Gareth Morgan (1989) propounds a "law" that states that, to adapt successfully to its external environment, a system must incorporate all of the variety found in that environment. He further states "creativity thrives on diversity" (p. 76).

The conclusion that creativity is fostered by diversity is also supported by research on schools showing that the tolerance of diversity, defined as judging relatively few behaviors as deviant from norms, is a defining characteristic of innovative organizations (Siegel & Kaemmerer, 1978).

Research suggests that if persons from different sociocultural identity groups tend to hold different attitudes and perspectives on issues, then cultural diversity should increase team creativity and innovation. In this connection, recent reviews of research evidence indicate that attitudes, cognitive functioning, and beliefs are not randomly distributed in the population but rather tend to vary systematically with demographic variables such as age, race, and gender (Jackson, 1991; Jackson et al., 1991).

The limited amount of research comparing diverse to homogeneous groups on creative performance has rarely defined group diversity along the specific dimensions of gender, nationality, and racioethnic identity, which are points of emphasis in this book. However, in a recent study of ethnic diversity and creativity, the quantity and quality

of ideas generated during a brainstorming task by diverse groups of Asians, Blacks, Anglos, and Hispanics were compared to the ideas generated by homogeneous groups of Anglos. No significant differences were found in the quantity of ideas, but the ideas produced by the ethnically diverse groups were rated an average of 11 percent higher than those of the homogeneous groups on both feasibility and overall effectiveness (McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1993). Thus increased cultural diversity in organizations will often lead to higher levels of creativity and innovation.

2.4.7.4 Problem Solving. Managing diversity also has potential for competitive advantage through improved problem solving and decision-making. The rationale for this statement is similar to that for increased creativity through diversity. The idea is that diverse groups have a broader and richer base of experience from which to approach a problem, and that critical analysis in decision groups is enhanced by member diversity. A series of research studies conducted in the 1960s at the University of Michigan found that heterogeneous groups produced better-quality solutions to problems than did homogeneous groups. The dimensions of group diversity included personality measures and gender. In one of the studies, 65 percent of heterogeneous groups produced high-quality solutions (defined as solutions that provided either new, modified, or integrative approaches to the problem) compared to only 21 percent of the homogeneous groups. This difference was statistically significant. In commenting on the results, the authors note "mixing sexes and personalities appears to have freed these groups from the restraints of the solutions given in the problem" (Hoffman & Maier, 1961: 404).

These early findings have been confirmed in later studies on the effects of heterogeneity on group decision quality (Shaw, 1981; McGrath, 1984). In addition, the same conclusion is indirectly indicated by the research on the well-known "groupthink" phenomenon (Janis, 1982). This term refers to an absence of critical thinking in groups, caused partly by excessive preoccupation with maintaining cohesiveness. Most of the examples cited, such as the decision of the Kennedy administration to invade Cuba in 1961 and the Challenger space-shuttle disaster, portray decision processes that are affected by groupthink as producing disastrous results. Because group cohesiveness is directly related to degree of homogeneity, and because groupthink only occurs in highly cohesive groups, the presence of cultural diversity in groups should reduce the probability of groupthink.

Additional support for the argument that diverse workgroups are better problem solvers comes from the work of Nemeth (1985) and Nemeth and Wachter (1983). In a series of studies, they found that the level of critical analysis of decision issues and alternatives was higher in groups subjected to minority views than in those that were not. The presence of minority views improved the quality of the decision process regardless of whether the minority view ultimately prevailed. Among the specific differences in problem-solving processes they found were (1) a larger number of alternatives considered, and (2) a more thorough examination of assumptions and implications of alternative scenarios.

Some writers have noted that too much diversity in problem-solving groups can be dysfunctional (Shephard, 1964). When communication barriers, style conflict, and points of view lack even a core of

commonality, decision-making may become impossible. Thus another aspect of managing diversity is to balance the need for heterogeneity to promote problem solving and innovation with the need for organizational coherence and unit of action on some core dimensions of organizational culture.

In sum, culturally diverse workforces have the potential to solve problems better because of several factors: a greater variety of perspectives brought to bear on the issue, a higher level of critical analysis of alternatives, and a lower probability of groupthink. However, it is again important to emphasize that specific steps must be taken to realize these potential benefits of diversity in workgroups. This fact is reinforced by the research of Triandis et al. (1965) referenced above. They found that, in order to produce superior performance for the heterogeneous teams, it was necessary for members to have advance awareness of the attitudinal differences of other members. This finding indicates the importance of managing the diversity by informing workgroup members of the attitudinal differences of others. This type of information sharing is frequently a part of educational programs on diversity designed to increase awareness of cultural differences among organization members.

2.4.7.5 Organisational Flexibility. There are two primary bases for the assertion that managing diversity enhances organizational flexibility. First, there is some evidence that members of minority groups tend to have especially flexible cognitive structures. For example, research has shown that women tend to have a higher tolerance for ambiguity than men (Rotter & O'Connell, 1982). Tolerance for ambiguity, in turn, has been linked to a number of factors related to flexibility, such as cognitive complexity (Rotter & O'Connell, 1982) and the ability to excel

in performing ambiguous tasks (Shaffer, Hendrick, Regula, & Freconna, 1973). In addition, a series of studies on bilingual and monolingual subpopulations from several different nations of the world have shown that bilinguals have higher levels of divergent thinking and cognitive flexibility than monolinguals (Lambert, 1977). Since the incidence of bilingualism is much greater among minority culture groups (especially racioethnic or non-native nationality groups such as Hispanics and Asians in the United States) than among majority group members, this research strongly supports the notion that cognitive flexibility is increased by the inclusion of minority groups in workforces.

In addition to these individual-level factors, the process of managing diversity itself may also enhance organizational flexibility. The changes to organizational culture and management systems needed for managing diversity will impact other areas of management. For example, as policies and procedures governing how business is done are broadened and operating methods are made less standardized, the system should become more accommodating of uncertainty and more adaptable. Also, the tolerance for alternative points of view that is fostered by managing diversity should lead to more openness to new ideas in general. Perhaps most important of all, if organizations are successful in overcoming resistance to change in the especially difficult area of accepting diversity, they should be well positioned to deal with resistance to other types of organization change.

2.4.8 Potential Problems of Diversity

Although diversity in workgroups holds strong potential performance advantages, it is also clear that cultural diversity in workgroups presents some potential

problems for organizations. These problems largely revolve around the issues of group cohesiveness and communications.

2.4.8.1 Diversity and Group Cohesiveness. The conclusion that group cohesiveness is reduced by cultural diversity is largely based on the idea that people are more highly attracted to, and feel more comfortable and satisfied with, group members who are like themselves. Thus, in general, cohesiveness is easier to achieve in homogeneous groups. Ziller (1973) outlines three theoretical explanations of the effects of diversity on groups that are related to cohesiveness. One theory holds that members of groups emphasize status congruence among members. When members differ on many characteristics, as often occurs in heterogeneous groups, opportunities for status incongruence increase. For example, a woman who is a team leader may present status incongruity for some persons who are accustomed to being supervised by men. Thus, diversity in groups may lead to lower cohesiveness due to status incongruence.

A second theory is that perceived similarity increases attraction, which in turn enhances cohesiveness. Therefore, homogeneity reinforces the closeness of groups. In this regard, it should be noted that demographic similarity along dimensions such as gender and nationality does not necessarily indicate attitudinal or behavioral similarity. Nevertheless, research has shown that both demographic and attitudinal similarity influence attraction (Jackson et al., 1991).

A third theoretical perspective on the effects of heterogeneity on cohesiveness in groups noted by Ziller is social comparison theory. This theory holds that people tend to seek homogeneity in groups or to create it through pressures for conformity, in order to facilitate social

comparisons, which they rely on to conduct self-evaluations. Since such comparisons are more reliable when the comparison person is viewed as similar (that is, all other things are equal), diversity may be avoided because it makes valid social comparisons more difficult.

It should be noted that the importance of the relationship between diversity and cohesiveness rests on whether or not cohesiveness affects the performance of groups. In this regard, work on group dynamics has consistently indicated that highly cohesive groups have higher member morale and better communications than less cohesive groups (Lott & Lott, 1965; Randolph & Blackburn, 1989). Putting this together with the previous discussion of diversity and cohesiveness, we can conclude that diversity in workgroups potentially lowers member morale and makes communications more difficult. In addition, at least one empirical study has shown that heterogeneous groups experience higher member turnover than homogeneous groups (Jackson et al., 1991).

It should be emphasized, however, that research has not shown that cohesiveness improves the work performance of groups. The largest-scale study of the relationship between the cohesiveness and productivity of groups revealed that highly cohesive groups are just as likely to have lower productivity as they are to be more productive (Arnold & Feldman, 1986). There is also empirical evidence that tests the effects of diversity on group productivity more directly. The University of California, Los Angeles, study reported by Adler (1986) was mentioned earlier in this chapter. In addition, Fiedler (1966) studied the effects of cultural diversity on group performance using Dutch and Belgian participants. He found that heterogeneous groups performed equally well with the homogeneous groups on the assigned

tasks. It should be noted, however, that Fiedler's data do not address the possibility of performance declines due to communications and morale-related problems that persist over an extended period of time.

Finally, the well-known groupthink phenomenon referred to earlier in the chapter illustrates that excessive cohesiveness and preoccupation with preserving it can lead to highly ineffective task performance.

2.4.8.2 Diversity and Communications. Another potential obstacle to performance in diverse workgroups is less effective communications (Steiner, 1972). In the empirical study by Fiedler (1966) mentioned above, he found that culturally heterogeneous groups reported a less pleasant atmosphere and experienced greater communications difficulties than the homogeneous groups. Although the possibility for communication-related barriers to performance is most obvious in multi-national workforces, it is also clear that other forms of diversity in workgroups can hamper communications. For example, chapter Seven provides a discussion of numerous differences in communication styles based on gender and race/ethnicity. Moreover, in my consulting work on diversity, I have often been told that members of different departments of organizations "don't speak the same language." Indeed, in a recent organization development project, I found that only about half of the respondents to a questionnaire agreed that cross-functional communications in the firm were good. This compared to figures of 75-85 percent agreement for the same question concerning communications among people of different gender and race/ethnic groups. Interestingly, the finding that interdepartmental communications were perceived as more problematic than communications across race/ethnic and gender groups was consistent for respondents of all culture identities (that is, Asians, Hispanics,

Blacks, and Whites of both genders). Although this finding should not be generalized to all organizations, it does make the point that communication difficulties in organizations may be related to many forms of diversity.

There can be little question that communication differences related to culture may become the source of misunderstandings and ultimately lower workgroup effectiveness. Once the existence of these differences is acknowledged, an obvious action step is to educate members on cross-cultural differences so as to minimize their detrimental effects.

In summary, there is reason to believe that the presence of cultural diversity does make certain aspects of group functioning more problematic. Misunderstandings may increase, conflict and anxiety may rise, and members may feel less comfortable with membership in the group. These effects may combine to make decision making more difficult and time-consuming. In certain respects, then, culturally diverse workgroups are more difficult to manage effectively than culturally homogeneous workgroups. In view of this, the challenge for organizations, as suggested in my definition of managing diversity, is to manage in such a way as to maximize the potential benefits of diversity while minimizing the potential disadvantages.

2.5 Bias in personal attitudes and behaviors

2.5.1 Prejudice refers to attitudinal bias and means to prejudice something or someone on the basis of some characteristics. It may be manifested as either a positive or negative predisposition toward a person; however, most experts on

the subject define it in terms of negative attitudes towards certain groups and their members (Pettigrew 1982: 28). Prejudice may also curtail negative emotions or feelings towards a person or group (Bobo 1988).

2.5.2 Discrimination refers to behavioral bias toward a person based on the person's group identity.

2.5.3 Stereotyping is a perceptual and cognitive process in which specific behavioural traits are ascribed to individuals on the basis of their apparent membership in a group. It is a process by which individuals are viewed as members of groups and the information that we have stored in our minds about the group is ascribed to the individual.

Thus, according to Cox (1994: 88), while the emphasis in prejudice is on attitudes and emotional realities to people, the emphasis here is on processes of group identity categorization and on the assumed traits of these categories. One way in which the distinction becomes meaningful is that while prejudice does not necessarily decrease (and may even increase) with increased time of contact, the use of stereotypes is normally expected to decline as the duration or closeness of association lengthens (Eagly, 1993).

Stereotyping is widely practiced as a means of simplifying the world and making perceptual and cognitive processes more efficient (Allport, 1954). Research has demonstrated that stereotyping is a pervasive human tendency and that in socially diverse settings, people routinely process personal information through mental filters based on social categories (Taylor, Fiske, Etcoff, & Ruderman, 1978). Extensive research has shown that stereotyping impacts interpersonal relations based on gender (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990), age (Cleveland & Landy, 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1976), physical ability (Lester & Caudill, 1987), and racioethnicity and nationality (Allport, 1954; Lobel, 1988). There is even

evidence that stereotypes of overweight people exist and that such stereotypes do impact their career opportunities (Everett, 1990).

One example of an untested impression that is widely believed is that older workers have lower capacity to learn new methods and jobs than younger workers. In fact, the data indicate that learning capacity generally does not show any noticeable decline before the age of seventy (Kauffman, 1987).

As a second example, employers have traditionally resisted hiring persons with disabilities partly because of the belief that they pose safety risks, increase health-care costs, and have higher absence and lower productive capacity than nondisabled workers. However, an analysis of data shows that these stereotypical assumptions are unfounded (Stone, Stone, & Dipboye, in press). Specifically, an extensive review of ninety empirical studies has revealed that compared to other employees, disabled employees (1) do not have higher turnover and absence rates or less job-assignment flexibility, but (2) do have better safety records (Greenwood & Johnson, 1987). Moreover, a study by Dupont of their 1,452 workers with disabilities ranging from epilepsy to blindness revealed that 91 percent of the workers were rated as average or above average on overall job performance. As for health care costs, experts say that hiring disabled persons will not normally increase them and may, due to the better safety record and various forms of incentives for hiring, actually improve overall costs.

A second pitfall of stereotyping is the assumption that any particular member of a group will be characteristic of the group. Again, using the dog analogy, if the stereotype of collies is used in isolation, we may select a dog that does not meet our needs at all, or may overlook an even more ideal dog of another breed.

The preceding discussion highlights two crucial distinctions that should be made between stereotyping behavior and acknowledging group difference in a “valuing diversity” context. Unlike stereotyping, the latter (1) bases beliefs about characteristics of culture groups on systematic study of reliable sources of data, and (2) acknowledges that intragroup variation exists. A third equally important difference is that contrary to valuing diversity, stereotypes represent not merely an acknowledgement of differences but also an evaluation of them. Thus many common stereotypes are words or phrases with built-in negative connotations.

The point is that in most cases stereotyping means not only acknowledging differences of other groups but also judging them as somehow inferior or undesirable. One of the challenges for organization and individual change in diverse organizations is therefore to create the ability to acknowledge differences in positive or neutral terms.

Beyond the perceptual efficiency rationale, several other explanations for stereotyping have been offered. Jussin, Coleman, and Lerch (1987) discuss three alternative explanations for stereotyping: (1) complexity-extremity theory, (2) assumed characteristics theory, and (3) expectancy violation theory. Complexity-extremity theory holds that stereotypes result from the differences in levels of contact individuals have with members of their own in-group compared to members of various out-groups. Since contact with out-group members is low, there is a tendency to evaluate them along fewer dimensions (low-complexity evaluation), which in turn leads to more extreme evaluations of out-group members as either very favorable or very unfavorable. As evidence of this perspective, the authors cite research showing that White evaluations of Blacks involve fewer dimensions and are more extreme than their evaluations of individual Whites (Linville & Jones, 1980).

Assumed characteristics theory essentially states that stereotypes occur as a way to fill in information to the contrary, people generally assume that others of dissimilar group identities possess less favorable traits. Accordingly, the tendency to stereotype is correctable by providing information. Some research showing that bias against out-group members declines when a person believes they hold values and behavioral orientations similar to those of the in-group is offered in support of this theory. Implicit here is that stereotyping will only be reduced if the groups are culturally similar. In culturally dissimilar groups, which is the essence of cultural diversity, we would expect stereotyping to continue and perhaps even increase as more knowledge about other groups is gained.

Expectancy violation theory suggests that stereotyping occurs as an overreaction to behaviors that do not match our expectations. For example, when a member of an identity group performs at a higher level than we expect, we may react with a positive stereotype, whereas no stereotype would be applied if the same behavior came from members of a group expected to show the behavior. It is conceivable that this perspective might be applicable to the generally positive stereotypes that have been applied to Asian Americans (Sue & Kitano, 1973).

2.5.4 Ethnocentrism has been defined as a proclivity for viewing members of one's own group (in-group) as the center of the universe, for interpreting other social groups (out-groups) from the perspective of one's own group, and for evaluating beliefs, behaviors, and values of one's own group somewhat more positively than those of out-groups (Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

Previous research indicates that ethnocentric attitudes and behaviors are widespread in human society. For instance, some research on Caucasian Americans indicates that they tend to be highly ethnocentric about nationality in their thinking (Sigelman, 1982). Likewise, there is evidence that the Chinese are strongly ethnocentric on nationality (Fitz, 1985), and studies of Black college

students revealed evidence of racioethnic ethnocentrism among Black Americans (Chang & Ritter, 1976). Indeed, some writers characterize ethnocentrism as a universal tendency (e.g., Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

There is, however, some research in the business arena that suggests Anglo American managers are more ethnocentric than their counterparts in other parts of the world, such as mainland Europe, Australia, and Britain (Jenner, 1984; Edfelt, 1986).

Although ethnocentrism has traditionally been applied to cross-national diversity, it is clear from the research that people define group boundaries on the basis of numerous criteria and then tend to make distinctions between themselves and others on the basis of these boundaries. Thus ethnocentrism potentially explains why members or organizations often respond ethnocentrically based on group boundaries such as work function, organizational level, and academic discipline. These kinds of group boundaries are often the basis for stereotypes, status hierarchies, and other phenomena that are typically associated with physical-culture identities like gender.

We find assistance in understanding the basis of ethnocentric behavior in the literature on personality theory and attribution theory, just as we did when learning about prejudice. Personality theory indicates that authoritarianism and stage of moral development are two aspects of personality that are highly correlated with ethnocentrism (in the range of .5-.8). Persons who are high in authoritarian personality and low in moral development tend to be less tolerant toward, and hold less favorable attitudes toward, members of out-groups, especially minority group members (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Ijzendoorn, 1980).

The second stream of literature, attribution theory, takes a more cognitive-information processing approach to ethnocentrism in in-group/out-group behavior. Taylor and Jaggi (1974) developed the theory that causal attributions are biased by ethnocentric tendencies. Specifically, they hypothesized that when judging in-group members, internal attributions are made for positive outcomes and external attributions are made for negative outcomes. The opposite attribution pattern was hypothesized for judging members of out-groups. Thus, for example, obtaining a promotion is more likely to be attributed to merit and less likely to be attributed to organizational politics when the appointee is an in-group member. Taylor and Jaggi present empirical support for their theory. Subsequent work by Hewstone and Ward (1985) generally supported the ethnocentric attribution hypothesis, with the caveat that the tendency may not be a universal one but rather may be influenced by the cultural and sociopolitical context. They studied ethnocentricity in attributions by a sample of Chinese and Malays in Malaysia and Singapore. Ethnocentric behavior was much higher among the Malays and also was stronger in Malaysia than it was in Singapore. The authors reasoned that the differences were due to the more multicultural environment in Singapore, as well as to differences between Malays and Chinese in socioeconomic status and political power in the two countries.

One way in which ethnocentrism may affect the career experiences of organization members is that persons in authority positions may rate the performance and organizational contributions of in-group members more favorably than those of out-group members (Brewer, 1979) (Downing & Monaco, 1986).

Ethnocentrism may also manifest itself in how members of organizations relate to customers of a different culture group (Clark 1975: 433). For example, Clark (1975) found that White bank tellers in banks with strict check-cashing policies were more likely to bend the rules to cash out-of-town checks for White

customers than for Black customers. He concluded *"White individuals in institutionally defined roles behave differently toward members of their own race, particularly where their role behavior is clearly prescribed"* (p. 433).

2.6 What is Affirmative Action?

Affirmative Action and Diversity Management is not the same thing. Affirmative Action attempts to rectify the problems of the past discrimination and has been declared unconstitutional in the USA. However, valuing diversity seeks to embrace the uniqueness of people, and still given everyone an equal chance.

Many people think managing diversity is the same thing as affirmative action. In fact, they are completely different.

Affirmative Action attempts to atone for past discrimination against certain groups of people. Because it tries to even the playing field for these groups, it does not apply to all people equally.

Fox and Meyer (1995: 5) define **affirmative action** from a public sector perspective as *"a positive action taken by employers in hiring, upgrading jobs and in other service oriented actions to eliminate job discrimination and to ensure equal employment opportunities"*.

Equal employment opportunity is defined as the *"policy and principle underlying laws that are designed to provide equal treatment and employment opportunities as far as recruitment, service and advancement are concerned, and to prohibit any dissemination based on grounds such as religion, national origin, sex, or age"* (Fox & Meyer, 1995: 44).

Mecer (1986: 10) defines **equal opportunity** as “(i) respect for the individual as a distinct and unique human being; (ii) equal pay for equal work; (iii) equal benefits/prerequisites; (iv) equal application of recognition and (v) the absence of racial discrimination.

Valuing Differences, or Diversity, is the uniqueness of all individuals (different personal attributes, values, and organizational roles.)

Valuing of differences is defined as “a management philosophy that assumes that we will be more successful as individuals, work teams, organizations, and a society if we acknowledge, respect and work with the differences that we have” (Landen & Rosener, 1991: 26).

Diversity Management is the process of creating and maintaining a positive environment where the differences of all personnel are recognized, understood and valued, so that all can achieve their full potential. It fully includes the entire work force.

Diversity awareness: having knowledge of or being informed about differences among various groups in the workplace Thomas (1991: 25).

The following chart further compares affirmative action, valuing differences, and managing diversity.

2.6.1 Affirmative Action vs. Valuing Diversity & Managing Diversity

Affirmative Action	Valuing Differences	Managing Diversity
<p>Quantitative. Emphasis is on achieving equality of opportunity in the work environment by changing organizational demographics. Progress is monitored by statistical reports and analyses.</p>	<p>Qualitative. Emphasis is on appreciating differences and creating an environment in which everyone feels valued and accepted. Progress is monitored by organization surveys focused on attitudes and perceptions.</p>	<p>Behavioral. Emphasis is on building specific skills and creating policies that get the best from every employee. Efforts are monitored by progress toward achieving goals and objectives.</p>
<p>Legally driven. Written plans and statistical goals for specific groups are used. EEO laws and consent decrees mandate reports.</p>	<p>Ethically driven. Moral and ethical imperatives drive this culture change.</p>	<p>Strategically driven. Behaviors and policies are seen as contributing to organizational goals and objectives, such as profit and productivity, and a tied to rewards and results.</p>
<p>Remedial. Specific target groups benefit as past wrongs are remedied. Previously excluded groups have an advantage.</p>	<p>Idealistic. Everyone benefits because each person feels valued and accepted in an inclusive environment.</p>	<p>Pragmatic. The organization benefits: morale, profits and productivity increase.</p>
<p>Assimilation model. Model assumes that groups are brought to existing organizational norms.</p>	<p>Diversity model. Model assumes that groups will retain their own characteristics and shaped by it, creating a common set of values.</p>	<p>Synergy model. Model assumes that diverse groups will create new ways to work together effectively.</p>

Affirmative Action	Valuing Differences	Managing Diversity
<p>Opens doors. Efforts affect hiring and promotion decisions in the organization.</p>	<p>Opens attitudes, minds, and the culture. Efforts affect employees' attitudes.</p>	<p>Opens the system. Efforts affect managerial practices and policies.</p>
<p>Resistance. Resistance is due to perceived limits to autonomy in decision-making and fears of reverse discrimination.</p>	<p>Resistance. Resistance is due to a fear of change, discomfort with differences, and a desire to return to the "good old days".</p>	<p>Resistance. Resistance due to denial of demographic realities, the need for alternative approaches, and the benefits of change. It also arises from the difficulty learning new skills, altering existing systems, and finding the time to work toward synergistic solutions.</p>

Source: Training & Development, April 1993. Adapted from "Managing Diversity: A Complete Desk Reference and Planning Guide", by Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe, Business One Orwin, 1993.

Cox (1994: 248) argues that in the USA there are at least three common beliefs about what affirmative action is, that hinder its use. The first is that affirmative action requires the use of rigidly defined quotas for hiring specific members of minority group members.

While quotas may be used in affirmative action programs, they are by no means a required feature and many contemporary programs do not use them. It is also important to distinguish between goals/timetables, which may be applied to any objective related to diversity, and quotas which general refer to a "head-count" approach to equal opportunity.

The second belief is that affirmative action results in the selection of unqualified people and thus inevitably leads to a noticeable decline in the overall quality of human resources. While this result has occurred at times through misguided efforts, affirmative action was never intended to permit a lowering of minimum standards, and knowledgeable people on the subject stress that such actions actually undermine, rather than facilitate, equal opportunity.

The third, and perhaps most damaging, belief is that affirmative action is essentially reverse discrimination, so that opportunity for economic equality actually becomes lower for majority group members than for members of minority groups.

To a significant extent, the potential for affirmative action to become a major source of intergroup conflict in organisations hinges on how reverse discrimination is defined and on beliefs about the status of equal opportunity in contemporary organizations. There seems to be little question that if selection decisions are viewed as isolated events, apart from the societal and organizational context in which they take place, affirmative action does give employment advantages to members of minority groups. From this perspective, reverse discrimination may be an appropriate evaluation of the situation.

It is tempting to think of the removal of affirmative action as eliminating identity group discrimination rather than as preserving discrimination in favor of the non-designate group. Thus it is possible to view affirmative action as a method to address the disadvantages that members of out-groups have due to a combination of ethnocentrism and unequal power distribution. To this extent, its proper use might be supported as a way to compensate for the existing discrimination.

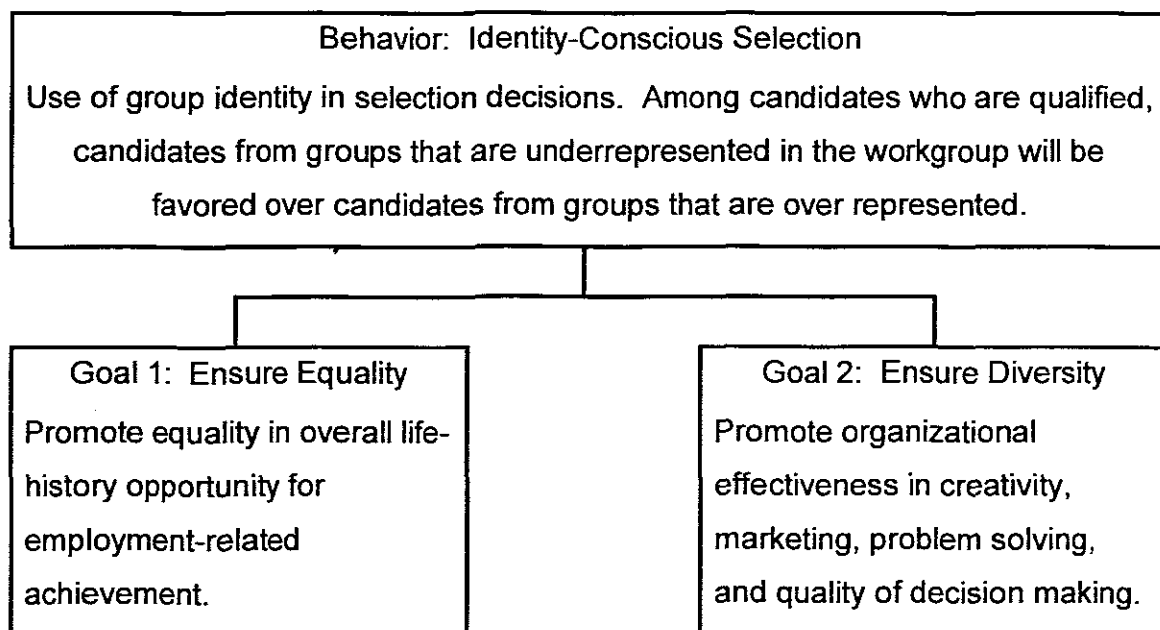
When viewed in the context of a valuing diversity philosophy, there are two distinctly different motives for the use of affirmative action. First, it addresses the equal opportunity goal, which is the traditional use of affirmative action. It is a tool for redressing past and present factors that tend to systematically advantage or disadvantage individuals based on group identities like gender and race/ethnicity.

Second, the advent of the managing diversity perspective has given rise to an additional motive for the use of affirmative action, namely to enhance organizational performance through improvements in decision-making, problem solving, marketing strategy, and creativity. Organisational leaders who believe there is direct positive value in diversity for the organisation's economic mission may consider the use of affirmative action as a way to foster diverse perspectives for finding high-quality, creative solutions to organizational challenges.

It has been argued here that the fundamental behavior of affirmative action – explicitly using a person's group identities in selection decisions – may derive from two types of organization goals. The advent of the value-in-diversity concept introduces a different way of viewing affirmative action, which organisations have only recently begun to consider. In views of the foregoing discussion, organizations might wish to approach affirmative action using the reconfiguration posed in Figure 2.

2.6.2 A Reconfiguration of Affirmative Action

Fig. 2



Cox (1994: 251)

The reconfiguration of Figure 2 suggests that in order for overall employment-related opportunity to be equal, fairness must prevail in the opportunities to obtain the requisite qualifications for employment as well as in the competition for a current job vacancy. In this regard, organizations might use their considerable influence to promote change beyond their own boundaries.

Organisations seeking to exploit the potential benefits of diversity will be conscious of group identities such as gender, nationality, and racioethnicity as selection criteria in creating decision-making and problem-solving groups in the same way that the need for diverse departmental representation in such groups is being recognized. This perspective is implicit in the concept of valuing diversity that has been so widely advocated by managers and organizational

consultants in recent years (Kleeb, 1989; Esty, 1988; Copeland, 1988; Cox & Blake, 1991).

Affirmative action has a downside for both majority and minority group members. Non-designated group members may have to sacrifice some opportunities due to the current imbalance of opportunity. Members of designated groups must overcome the assumption by many that they were selected only because of their identity and not because of their talent. All employees must endure the unfortunate necessity of using a somewhat artificial tool to balance representation that ideally would occur naturally. If the notion of the value of diversity actually takes hold in organizations, it may enable both majority and minority group members to rationally view identity group consciousness as it is used in selection as simply a more comprehensive definition of legitimate criteria.

The objective of creating an organization in which there is no correlation between culture identity group and job status implies that minority group members were well represented at all levels, in all functions, and in all workgroups. Achievement of this goal requires that skill and education levels be evenly distributed. Educational statistics indicate that the most serious problems occur with Blacks and Hispanics (Wilson, 1987).

In the USA during the 1980's and continuing to the present, increased evidence of resentment toward affirmative action among white males has begun to surface.

They argue that such policies, in effect, discriminate against white males and therefore perpetuate the practice of using group identities such as racioethnicity, or gender as a basis for making personnel decisions. In addition they argue that it is not fair that contemporary whites be disadvantaged to compensate for management laws made in the past. This backlash effect, coupled with the

increased number of woman and non-white men in the organization, often creates greater intergroup conflict in the “plural organisation” than was present in the monolithic organization (Cox 1994: 229).

Thus, organizations aspiring to maximize the potential benefits of diversity and minimize potential drawbacks – e.g., in terms of workgroup cohesiveness, interpersonal conflict, turnover, and coherent action on major organizational goals – must transform monolithic and plural organizations into multicultural ones (Cox 1994: 229).

Sales and Mirvis (1984) argue that an organisation, which simply contains many different culture groups, is a plural organization. They consider an organization to be multicultural only if it values their diversity. An understanding of the distinction between tolerating diversity and valuing it follows from recognition of the shortcomings of the plural organization.

It is my opinion that in fact an organization can only be considered multicultural only if it values and “manages” diversity.

It must go well beyond simply maintaining and valuing a representative workforce. Only when an organization contains diversity, values diversity and manages diversity to the benefit of both the organization and the employees concerned, the organization will over time become a well-integrated cultural identity.

2.7 From monolithic to multicultural organisations

Increased diversity presents challenges to organizations managers who must maximize the opportunities that it presents, while minimizing its costs. To

accomplish this, organizations must be transformed from monolithic or plural organizations to a multi cultural model.

The multicultural organization is characterized by a culture that values diversity, pluralism acculturation, full integration of previously disadvantaged members both formally and informally, an absence of bias in management systems, and a minimum of intergroup conflict. The organization that achieves these conditions will create an environment in which all members can contribute to their maximum potential.

The effects of cultural diversity on organizational behavior and performance are highly complex and vary powerful. Thus the understanding of these effects should be a high priority for managers and organisation's leaders, to do a better job of preparing for one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century.

When an existing operating model fails to explain observed realities, the solution is to reinvent the operating model, not to deny reality. People used to believe that the world was flat – until ships failed to fall off the edge.

Observed reality overwhelmed theory, and people's view of their world changed. The business equivalent of the "earth is flat" model asserts "the exclusive business of business is to earn profit for its shareholders". In this model, there is no mention of the role of the employee, no reference to the customer, no acknowledgment of the society within which the business functions – only economic results for the shareholders matter. Thus an entire industry exists simply to interpret the financial signals transmitted by businesses each quarter – from earnings per share and cash flow measures to sophisticated ratios that measure everything from revenue per delivery truck to economic value added per personal computer.

The chief flaw in the old model for business behavior is the failure to consider, acknowledge, or encourage the interrelationships between business and other powerful social institutions – for example, the government, the church, the public sector, and the populace at large. The old model insists on viewing business as a self-contained economic institution, accountable only to shareholders. While the old model is clean and simple, it is not intellectually tenable, let alone morally tenable.

The world around us is more complex than the 1950s industrial model. Yes, there is a demanding shareholder and a powerful consumer, each scrutinizing every move, but there is also an employee who demands more and a community that will not settle for benign indifference any longer. A model that focuses exclusively on the shareholder is not unlike the map of a flat earth – it is a model that lacks dimension, a model overwhelmed by reality.

I believe that organisations need a new business model, a model that allows them to simultaneously:

- Delight the shareholders
- Satisfy the customers
- Earn commitment from the employees, they work so hard to recruit, train and retain
- Invest in the communities they live and work in – not as philanthropists, but as entrepreneurial problem solvers.

By allowing business to view itself as a self-contained economic institution, it fails to demand the kind of value that can be created when business engages with society, value that will benefit not only the shareholders, but other stakeholders as well. The old view was, let business do business, government do government, public sector do public sector, and somehow, the whole will be

created, and social justice will be done. This kind of thinking is not sufficient for today's challenges. Ours is a marvelous world, with much to celebrate, much joy to acknowledge. At the same time, it is a world with too much injustice, too much ignorance, too much suffering – and the separate, compartmentalized view of social institutions has not created the solutions we need. So, we need a new model, one that redefines the role of business, and one that is mindful of the role of business in the larger society.

The earth is not flat – and there are some spectacular things to be discovered as we continue to explore.

2.8 Examples of cultural differences

2.8.1 Time and Space

Edward T Hall (1976, 1982) has contributed immensely to the understanding of cultural differences and the importance of culture as an influence on human behaviour.

For example he reports that the norms for physical distances between persons conversing in public places vary widely. In many Arab, Latino American and African countries, for example, the norm is for persons to stand much closer together than is typical in Western societies (Hall 1976: 23).

Standing or sitting close together and physical touching during conversation is characteristic of these cultures, and by contrast, most Anglo and French frown on touching except by the closest of friends or family. Violation of space norms creates psychological discomfort, and they often move away to create the distance that they are comfortable with.

Such movement may be interpreted as rude by persons from other cultures and set the stage for interpersonal misunderstanding.

Orientations toward time also vary across culture groups. One framework for characterizing time orientations that has proven useful in cross-cultural research, identifies three distinct time orientations: **linear-separable**, **circular**, and **procedural** (Graham, 1981). **Linear time orientation** is characterized by viewing time as consisting of past, present, and an infinite future, with emphasis on the future. It also views time as separable into quantifiable, discrete units with fixed beginnings and endings for events. People with a **circular time orientation** experience time as determined by repeated cycles of activities such as the planting, cultivating, and harvesting cycles of agriculture. The circular orientation does not see time as stretching into the future but rather focuses on the past and present. **Procedural time orientation** essentially treats time as irrelevant. Behavior is activity-driven and takes as much time as is needed for its completion.

2.8.1.1 Application to Organisations. Cultural differences in space orientations may manifest themselves in such things as different perceptions of comfortable office sizes and layout and the requirements for privacy in workstations. Indeed, Hall's book *The Hidden Dimension* (1982) deals almost exclusively with cross-cultural nuances related to space. One of his observations is that reactions to a workplace in which walls are torn down to create an open "bull-pen" effect will partly depend on culturally defined preferences about human density, privacy, and territorialism. Workplace architecture therefore needs to have an appreciation of cultural differences, especially in multinational companies.

Regarding time orientation, it has been noted that the Euro-Anglo culture that predominates in American organizations favors a linear orientation toward time (Cote & Tansuhaj, 1989; McGrath & Rotchford, 1983). In organizations, this orientation is manifested in such things as the great emphasis placed on scheduling appointments, the specification of starting and ending times for events, a preoccupation with promptness and deadlines, and the extensive use of long-range planning. By contrast, research indicates that many Americans of African, Mexican, Asian, and Arab descent have cultural traditions with circular or procedural time orientations. For example, in a study of students from three countries, Thais and Jordanians scored significantly lower than a sample of predominantly White Americans on a measure of linear time orientation (Cote & Tansuhaj, 1989).

Most Black Americans are descendants of tribes of West Africa. In his discussion of the philosophy of these tribes and its effects on the psychology of Black Americans, Nobles (1972) reports that the time orientation recognizes only the past and present dimensions, not the future. He states in regard to this: "What had no possibility of occurring immediately or had not taken place already is considered in the category of no time" (p.22).

Nobles also refers to "elastic time" as an expression of the fact that relatively little consideration is given to time considerations per se. These are activity-based cultures. As one evidence of this, he notes that in Swahili, a major language of West Africa, there is no clear distinction between past and present. A similar analysis is offered by Asante and Asante (1985), who add "there is always a concern about the feasibility of long-range planning" (p.129).

This description fits closely a blend of the circular and procedural orientations for time as defined above. That this African cultural heritage survives in the contemporary African American culture is indicated by such phenomena as the frequent absence of specific ending times for social events planned in the Black community and the existence of "CP (colored people)", a colloquialism meaning that scheduled starting times for events and appointments are treated with a great deal of flexibility. Indeed, at some events, such as social parties, arriving late is clearly the norm.

Scholars on Hispanic culture, in particular Mexican and Cuban American cultures, also report a more circular time orientation than is typical in the Euro-Anglo cultural tradition (Szapocznik, Scopetta, & King, 1978; Ramirez, 1988).

The fact that most racioethnic minorities, especially those who work for predominantly White American organizations, have adapted to the more rigid linear time orientation should not be taken as an indication that their time orientations are the same as that of white Americans. The continued differences in the use of time among racioethnic groups in social settings make the distinction in time orientation clear. This is but one of many examples of how members of a minority culture group have adapted their behavior in order to be accepted and successful in majority-dominated organizations.

2.8.2 Leadership Style Orientations

Another dimension of behavior along which distinctions among culture groups might be drawn is the preferred style of leadership. Styles of leadership have typically been categorized along dimensions such as task versus relationships orientation and democratic versus autocratic orientation. The task-orientated

person approaches the job in a very instrumental fashion, focusing foremost on completing assigned duties. The relationship-oriented person places primary emphasis on creating and maintaining strong interpersonal relationships (Bateman & Zeithaml, 1990). This does not mean that the relationship style is unconcerned with tasks, but rather that relationship building is considered of primary importance in task accomplishment. For the task-oriented person, relationship building is secondary and may not occur at all if it seems that goals can be accomplished without it.

One example of cross-cultural differences in leadership style orientations is provided by research on Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Anglo Americans in a predominantly Anglo-American bank by Zurchen, Meadow, and Zurcher (1965). In their assessment of the extent to which the employees emphasized friendship and relationships over institutional procedures, these writers found that both Mexican and Mexican American employees scored significantly higher than the Anglo Americans. This difference has also been cited by experts on international business relations, who have noted that when doing business in Mexico one must spend time to build a rapport before moving to a discussion of the business at hand (e.g., *Going International*).

Again, it is important to acknowledge that the cultural traditions of Mexico are still very much alive in the behavioral preferences of Americans of Mexican descent as indicated by the Zurcher et al. research. Therefore Mexican Americans may experience business transactions with Anglo Americans as too abrupt and lacking a personalization they would prefer. Alternatively, Anglo Americans may experience interactions with some Mexican Americans as unnecessarily drawn out or difficult to proceed to closure. Since the influence of culture on human transactions is mostly invisible (Hall, 1976), neither party is likely to understand the underlying reasons that the interaction is not more satisfying or easily consummated.

Some experts have also suggested that women are more relationship-oriented in their approach to work than men (Rosener, 1990; Helgesen, 1990; Henning & Jardim, 1976). In the book *Women's Ways of Knowing*, Belenky et al. (1986) offer a cogent explanation for why women might place more importance than men on building relationships at work. They conducted an in-depth study of the life histories and self-concept of 135 women using a seven-category structures interview method. One of the seven categories was "relationships". They compared their findings with in-depth studies of men that examined some similar categories. They concluded that women are motivated more by a "morality of responsibility" than a "morality of rights" (Male orientation), and that women more often than men define themselves in terms of their relationships and connections to others. Men, they argue, think of themselves in more autonomous terms. These research-based observations seem to fit with anecdotal evidence such as the idea that women are generally more sociable than men.

Empirical evidence on whether women are more relationship-oriented than men is somewhat inconsistent at least among management personnel of organizations. From his review of the available research, Powell (1990) concludes that women and men managers do not differ in task versus relationship orientations to leadership. However, along the dimensions of democratic versus autocratic orientations to leadership, the evidence on gender differences is clearer. Based on a review of data from 162 different studies, Eagly and Johnson (1990) concluded that women are significantly more likely than men to manage in a democratic way.

2.8.2.1 Application to Organisations. Aside from the obvious point that men and women may take different approaches to leading workgroups based on their cultural backgrounds, the above discussion suggests some possible difficulties for women in male-dominated organizations.

The preferred and expected styles of leadership will tend to be defined by men. Women therefore may be more likely to encounter pressures to change their natural style. In light of this, some writers have suggested that women managers often experience conflict between their gender role and their leader role (see Eagly & Johnson, 1990, for a summary). The situation is further complicated, however, by evidence (cited in Chapter Five) that women are more likely than men to receive negative reactions when they display more directive leadership styles.

As a final comment, it would seem that the current emphasis on employee empowerment and involvement would favor a democratic style of leadership. Therefore, to the extent that this style is more natural for women, they may be better positioned to lead in the future, and their presence and involvement in positions of leadership should facilitate cultural change toward a more relationship-oriented, democratic climate in organisations.

2.8.3 Individualism Versus Collectivism

Probably the most heavily researched dimension of cultural differences relevant to impact of diversity on organizations is that of individualism-collectivism. Compared to individualists, collectivists place greater emphasis on the needs and goals of the group, social norms and duty, and cooperation behaviors. Collectivists are also more likely than individualists to sacrifice personal interests for the attainment of group goals, to have a stronger family orientation, and to be more satisfied with team-based rewards (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991).

Self-reliance and autonomy are two of the dominant values of British business ideology in which the economic systems of much of the Western world are grounded (Jenner, 1984). It is therefore not surprising that cross-cultural researchers have found that value orientations among Anglo Americans tend to

be highly individualistic. In a widely cited series of studies on cross-national cultural differences, subjects from the United States scored the highest on individualism among respondents from fifty-three different countries (Hofstede, 1980, 1984). Hofstede's research also shows patterns of individualism among nations that are helpful in uncovering differences among culture groups represented in the United States. For example, his cultural maps show the United States grouped with countries like Britain, New Zealand, and Australia at the high end of the individualism scale, with more West African, Latino, and Asian countries much lower on the scale (Hofstede, 1984). This suggests that many U.S. racioethnic minority groups have historical roots in nations with more collectivist cultural traditions. Hofstede's conclusions are collaborated by a number of other scholars. For example, a primary distinction between Chinese and North American cultures is the collective orientation of the former and the individualistic orientation of the latter (Tse, Lee, Vertinsky, & Wehrung, 1988; Chan, 1986). Tung's analysis (1988a) of Chinese culture states emphatically that the "individualism so stressed in the United States is alien to the Chinese mentality" (p. 155).

Also, discussions of the impact of culture on counseling and mental health have highlighted the importance of group membership in the self-concept of African Americans (Babaron, Good, Pharr, & Suskind, 1981). Nobels (1972) states that a key aspect of the African worldview embraced by many African Americans is that the self comes into being only in the context of the group, "Thus I and we cannot be meaningfully separated." Others who confirm cultural differences in individualism-collectivism among Hispanic, Asian, and Black Americans include Kagan (1977), Marin and Triandis (1985), Triandis, McCusker, and Hui, (1990), and Foeman and Pressler (1987).

Finally, there is evidence that American Indians may also be more collectivist in orientation than Euro-Americans. For instance, Indians as a rule do not

acknowledge individual rights to land-ownership or to capital for investment. Such rights reside with the tribe, the collective body. Thus, contrary to Euro-American culture, in Indian culture, the primary unit of analysis is the tribe, not the individual (Cohen, 1988; Kallen, 1958).

2.8.3.1 Application to Organisations. The relevance of different values about individualism for organizational behavior is easily demonstrated. Organisations are increasingly extolling the virtues of teamwork, but organizational reward systems often are not aligned with this goal and continue to foster individualism. Although there are dissatisfaction about the failure of organizations to emphasize teamwork among workers of all identities, work organised in a way that emphasizes the individual contributor is likely to be least satisfying for members from Asian, African, Hispanic, or American Indian backgrounds.

Differences in individualism-collectivism orientation may also be manifested in how managers prefer to allocate organizational rewards or in how employees prefer to receive them. For example, Leung and Bond (1984) found differences in reward allocations between Chinese and a group of predominantly White Americans. The Chinese subjects favored an equality norm in which all members of a workgroup would participate equally in the rewards, whereas the White American subjects favored an equity norm in which rewards depended much more on the individual contribution of each member. Such differences suggest that employees may react differently to compensation plans and promotion criteria of organizations due partly to cultural differences.

2.8.4 Competitive Versus Cooperative Behavior

Individuals of different culture groups have also been found to differ in terms of the extent to which they have a competitive versus a cooperative orientation toward interactions and toward the performance of tasks. In particular, there is research evidence that while Anglo Americans, especially Anglo American men, tend to be highly competitive in social interaction and task performance, the micro cultures of Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Chinese Americans favor a more cooperative approach. For example, using a two-party prisoner's dilemma game, Cox, Lobel, & McLeod (1991) showed that Americans of African, Asian, and Latino descent responded more cooperatively in the game. We not only found that members of these three racioethnic minority groups were more cooperative individually but also that heterogeneous groups of Asians, Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics gave significantly more cooperative responses than homogeneous, all-Anglo groups. The magnitude of difference in cooperative behavior between the Anglos and the members of the other groups increased when the game was changed to create the expectation that the cooperative behavior would be reciprocated by the other party. The all-Anglo groups were the only groups whose members did not increase their cooperative responses when the game was changed so members would expect cooperation.

In another study involving the use of a cooperation-competition game with children from three culture groups, Kagan and Madsen (1971) found that Mexican children were the most cooperative, followed by Mexican American children. The Anglo American children responded most competitively among the three groups. The authors concluded that children in the United States are socialized to be competitive starting at a very early age. They interpreted the fact that the scores on competition of the Mexican American (who had attended Anglo schools from an early age) were intermediate between the scores for Mexicans and the scores for Anglos as evidence of this. They further concluded

from their research that if the norm to compete were strong, that people would often engage in competitive behavior even when the structure of the task makes it irrational to do so.

DeVos (1980) offers a theoretical explanation for the differing propensities to compete among Americans of Anglo, African, and Mexican descent. He argues that Anglo Americans tend to have a cognitive style that is "field-independent," a style that he says encourages autonomous decision making and individual competition in social interaction. By contrast, Mexican Americans and Black Americans tend to think and respond in a "field-dependent" manner, leading them to employ more interdependent and cooperative personal styles.

The theoretical argument of DeVos certainly fits the data cited earlier. In addition, although DeVos builds his arguments on the cognitive style and socialization literatures, his conclusions are very reminiscent of the work of Edward T. Hall on high- and low-context cultures (1976). As explained by Hall, in high-context cultures the meaning of events is heavily dependent on the circumstances, and thus attention to details of context is crucial in forming one's response to them. In low-context cultures, on the other hand, events are often considered in a more isolated decontextualised way, leading to, for instance, an embracing of universal principles. Hall compares the legal systems of several countries to illustrate his ideas, arguing that in many parts of the world, including Japan, nearly anything is admissible as evidence in a trial. Great attention is paid to the background against which an action was carried out. This he contrasts with the "just the facts, please" approach that is prevalent in the United States. The field-independent notion of DeVos appears to correspond very closely to what Hall calls low-context, while field-dependent aligns rather well with Hall's concept of high-context. Thus these two streams of work seem to have pursued divergent paths to reach very similar conclusions.

Another culture identity that has been found to exhibit differences in cooperation and competition is gender. Specifically, some research has shown women to be more prone to cooperative social value orientations while men are more prone to competitive orientations (McClintock & Allison, 1989). Individuals with a cooperative social value orientation approach tasks with the goal of maximizing the welfare of others jointly with their own. By contrast, individuals with a competitive orientation are prone to maximize the difference between their own outcomes and those of others (Messick & McClintock, 1968). One of the behavioral implications that have been found to be associated with these different social value orientations is the likelihood of engaging in helping behaviors. Not surprisingly, cooperatively oriented individuals engage in more helping behaviors than competitively oriented individuals.

2.8.4.1 Application to Organisations. One illustration of how cultural differences in competitive-cooperative orientations may affect organizational behavior is the use of ranking systems for promotion. In these systems, the suitability of individuals for leadership is judged by the extent to which they stand out from others. The individual contributions of one member are compared to those of other members in order to determine a hierarchy of contributions. The process generates major pressures toward individualized competition.

In U.S. companies such systems are disliked by a large percentage of employees of all culture groups. However, members from cultural backgrounds that are less competition-oriented are likely to be especially uncomfortable with ranking systems. As we have seen, there is evidence that this includes White women as well as many Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and African Americans.

2.8.5 Locus of Control

Locus of control (LOC) refers to beliefs about the causation of life events. Persons with an external LOC believe that the primary determinants of life events are external, often uncontrollable forces, whereas persons with an internal LOC tend to believe that they themselves are the primary cause of events in their lives (Rotter, 1966; Spector, 1982). There is some evidence that members of different culture groups differ in LOC orientations. Specifically, Anglo Americans tend to have internal LOC orientations, whereas Mexican Americans (Ramirez, 1988) and African Americans (Helms & Giorgis, 1980) tend to hold a more external LOC orientation. In addition, members of some Arab and Asian cultures have been found to have significantly more external LOC orientations than Anglo Americans (Cote & Tansuhaj, 1989).

Clues to the underlying reasons for these differences in LOC derive from an understanding of what is generally called fatalism. Fatalism may be used to label a variety of belief systems that embrace the predetermination of events and/or the control of events by God. Cross-cultural research has shown that fatalism is much stronger in the cultures of many Arab, Asian, African, and Latino cultures than it is in most European cultures (Tse, Lee, Vertinsky, & Wehrung, 1988; Delgado, 1981; Asante & Asante, 1985; Redding, 1982). The idea that an external LOC for African Americans is related to cultural traditions that stem from roots in African culture is further reinforced by research showing that Black Africans tend to have more external LOCs than White Africans (Orpen & Nkohande, 1977) and that Black Africans tend to have more external LOCs than Black Americans (Helms & Giorgis, 1980).

Finally, it seems logical that members of racioethnic minority groups may have a more external LOC than majority group members because they are much more sensitive to the influence of racioethnicity on life events. This same logic applies

to women and members of other low-power groups. Obviously, to the extent that career opportunity and success are influenced by identity factors such as gender, racioethnicity, physical ability, or professional discipline, they are not internally controlled.

It should be noted that the existence of affirmative action has led some White men, in organizations historically dominated by White men, to believe that they are disadvantaged by their group identity. Thus these group members may be more prone to have an external LOC under affirmative action. However, members of the traditional low-power groups believe that is more influence of racioethnicity and gender on work experiences even in organizations with active affirmative action programs. Table 1 gives a sample of data on which this conclusion is based on.

Table 1 Ratings of the Perceived Importance of Race and Gender to Promotion Opportunity for Executive Jobs (by percent).

	White Men (N = 123)	White Women (N = 76)	Non-White Men (N = 52)	Non-White Women (N = 17)
Race	26	62	75	76
Gender	31	87	71	82

Note: Table values are the percentages saying that race or gender was important or very important.

Source: 2 survey research of a group of 268 managerial/professional personnel from a Fortune 500 company by Taylor Cox, Jr.

2.8.5.1 Application to Organisations. As indicated by the Table 2 data, LOC differences between culture groups may be manifested in belief systems about the effects of group identity on advancement opportunity. Thus, members of out-groups may experience frustration

and disillusionment due to their belief that their accomplishments are influenced by factors other than their ability and effort. Motivation and reward systems of organizations tend to be built on assumptions of an internal LOC. That is, they are based on the premise that employees basically control their rewards by the level of performance they achieve. Indeed, research has shown that both the effort-performance (probability of meeting performance standards given a strong effort) and the performance outcome (belief that achieving prescribed performance levels will lead to desired outcomes) dimensions of expectancy theory are positively related to internal LOC scores (Broedling, 1975; Szilagyi & Sims, 1975). To the extent that members of minority groups in organizations hold more external LOC orientations, they may experience lower work motivation. It is also likely that reward systems designed using the internal-LOC assumptions of expectancy theory may not have the same impact for out-group members.

2.8.6 Communication Styles

In her book *You Just Don't Understand*, Deborah Tannen (1990) discusses differences between men and women in communication styles. Some of these differences are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Some Differences in Communication Styles Between Men and Women

<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
1. Conversations are negotiations in which people seek the upper hand in a hierarchical social order.	1. Conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people seek to share support and reach consensus.
2. Communication emphasizes independence.	2. Communication emphasizes intimacy.

<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
3. Inclined to resist doing what he is asked to do; perceives requests as orders.	3. Inclined to do what she is asked to do; does not perceive requests as orders.
4. Talk is for information.	4. Talk is for interaction.

Tannen argues that differences between men and women in communication styles are outgrowths of gender differences in childhood experiences and the use of language in those experiences. For example, she notes that young girls and boys spend most of their playtime in same-gender groups, with boys tending to play outside in large groups that have a definite status structure and acknowledged winners and losers. She also says that boys use talking as a means of gaining attention. Girls, on the other hand, play in small groups or in pairs, and often play games such as jumprope and house in which there are no winners or losers.

The differences in styles are also suggested to explain some common behavioral differences between men and women. One example Tannen uses that many people identify with is the reluctance of men to ask for directions when traveling. Men will often drive around for a considerable length of time and only stop to ask directions as a last resort. Alternatively, women drivers will ask for help right away if they are unsure of the right direction. Further, when women are traveling companions to male drivers, they often suggest stopping long before the man does so. Tannen's analysis offers two explanations for this. First, men, more so than women, may view asking directions as diminishing their independence and competency. The fact that the female companion suggests stopping to ask directions may make the man even less likely to do so, because he does not want to feel as though he is taking orders, especially from a woman. Second, asking for information concedes status to the informant as a possessor of knowledge. Tannen argues that men are more prone than women to treat transactions in terms of status effects and thus are more likely to resist asking for

help because they view it as conceding status to another at the expense of their own.

Another example of how gender differences in communication styles are manifested is the way in which women and men identify a problem. According to Tannen, women often acknowledge problems in an effort to solicit confirmation, support, and discussion of the issues. Men often respond with a strongly worded piece of advice on how to solve the problem. This asymmetry in conversation is traceable to items 1 and 4 of Table 1.

Differences in communication styles also occur between people of different nationalities and different racial/ethnic groups. For example, Tung's work (1988b) on cultural effects on business negotiations indicates that even when parties share a common language, information is often presented and interpreted differently by persons of different culture groups.

Another example is that, in cross-group interactions, Asians are often affected by "speech anxiety," or verbal inhibitions and reserve (Morishima, 1981). It is often manifested in such behaviors as reluctance to speak out at meetings or in classroom settings, a reluctance to complain about ill treatment, a reluctance to ask questions, and hesitancy to ask directly for improvements in conditions such as a raise in salary. Although these behaviors are frequently attributed to low ability, incompetence, or poor language skills, they are often the result of specific cultural differences between Anglo Americans and Asians. Specific cultural traits of Asian and Pacific Americans that underlie speech anxiety include shyness, deference to authority figures, and reserve (Morishima, 1981). Similar observations have been made about the Japanese cultural traditions of *enryo*, which requires, among other things modesty in the presence of one's superiors (Kitano, 1976).

It is important to understand that within the Asian cultures that subscribe to *enryo*, modesty, deference, and reserve are highly valued and appreciated. As a result, Asians often experience the communication styles of Anglo Americans, African Americans, and others in-group settings as rude and inhibiting. The following Asian American's reaction to a group meeting of MBA students working on a class project illustrates the point: "As someone who prefers to listen and provide input in an orderly manner, I found it difficult to contribute to the group discussion because some people would speak up right away without soliciting other people's opinions. One person realised this occurring and attempted to draw me into the discussion, but the discussion always seemed to degenerate into a free-for-all."

This Asian American viewed the form of discourse not only as different but also as inferior to the more polite style he would have preferred. Of course, I do not rule out the possibility that this student's reaction had little to do with Asian culture, since many Anglo Americans react similarly. The point, however, is that there are definite cultural reasons that may explain why this particular student would react differently from others to the group process.

Scholars have also noted distinct differences in preferred communication styles between African Americans and Anglo Americans. For example, style preferences of Blacks are characterized as highly assertive, even bold, by Anglo standards. Communication in Black communities is characterized by such things as forthrightness, high responsiveness from listeners, and the expression of emotion (Foeman & Pressley, 1987, Kochman, 1981).

In addition, African American culture, especially among men, is high on verbal bravado and attention-seeking behavior. Style, in the sense of behavioral distinctiveness, is highly prized as a form of self-expression and identity. Forthrightness is expressed in preference for direct confrontation as a method of

resolving conflicts, and a high value is placed on the integrity of communication. By integrity Tannen (1990: 27) means that actions and words align perfectly with beliefs. Relating to this point, Nobles (1972) has noted that in traditional West African culture and language, no distinction was made between actions and beliefs. Actions were assumed to accurately reflect beliefs. This fact is potentially helpful in explaining the disdain of many Blacks for rhetorical communications and verbal expressions that are not followed through with actions. The saying "actions speak louder than words" is often heard in the Black American community and is one expression of this emphasis on the alignment of communication with one's innermost beliefs.

Responsiveness refers to a propensity to react extensively to the communications of others. Foeman and Pressley (1987) report that Blacks are more likely than Whites to make confirming responses as listeners, whereas the Anglo norm is one of verbalizing response only when there is disagreement.

Differences among culture groups have also been observed in nonverbal communication. For example, the use of eye contact varies from culture to culture. In some Asian cultures (e.g., Japan), direct eye contact in discourse among people of unequal status is considered rude. These contrasts sharply with the American tradition of "look me in the eye". Some studies of African American communication styles suggest that high eye contact is preferred of speakers but less is preferred of listeners (Foeman & Pressley, 1987). Ignorance of cultural differences such as these in communication styles creates a high potential for misunderstanding and dissatisfaction with interactions in the workplace. In the next section, a few specific applications to the organization setting will be considered.

2.8.6.1 Application to Organisations. The implications of cultural differences in communication styles for behavior in the workplace are

numerous. Several examples will be given here that illustrate great potential for miscommunication among individuals of different culture groups. As mentioned earlier, a classic asymmetry in communication between women and men is that women often communicate problems in an effort to obtain support and a sharing of ideas, while men often interpret the mention of a problem as a request for them to solve it (Tannen, 1990). In organizations, this difference may manifest itself when a woman shares a problem with a male colleague and he responds with what she interprets as telling her what to do. The woman goes away frustrated and a little angry at being misinterpreted while the male colleague feels satisfied that he has been helpful. He may even wonder if the woman lacks the confidence and competence to solve problems on her own. The career implications of this scenario will be exacerbated when the man is the woman's boss. Since the vast majority of managerial and professional women in organizations have male bosses, the high potential for career damage from such misunderstandings is quite clear. The purpose here is not to place blame on men for poor communication but rather to point out that unacknowledged cultural differences may detract from working relationships.

It is important for both parties to understand the differences, in order to achieve maximum effectiveness of interaction at work.

In another example of how miscommunication can sometimes be traced to cultural differences in communication styles, a white woman stated that she became upset when an Asian colleague refused to look at her when he talked to her. She took the lack of eye contact as an insult. As we have seen, it may well have been just the opposite, a show of respect. These kinds of misunderstandings are potentially

numerous in groups with diverse cultures and underscore the need for knowledge of cultural differences.

A second example of how cultural differences in communication styles can affect workplace interaction concerns the effects of speech anxiety. Although a common phenomenon in some Asian cultures, several features of American business practice tend to place persons with the cultural characteristics that underlie speech anxiety at a disadvantage. These include the great importance placed on verbal glibness and polished oral presentations, the relevance of self-promotional activities to achieving success, the use of brainstorming, and the norm of aggressive competition for "airtime" in meetings.

In such cases, other persons are denied an important opportunity to give visibility to their ideas. In addition, when verbal skill is emphasized, nonnative speakers often feel intimidated by native speakers, who tend to dominate the discussion regardless of the comparative quality of their ideas.

In the context of diverse workgroups, greater patience and acceptance of different standards of oral communication efficiency may pay dividends in the quality of problem solving and innovation. Since immigration continues to supply roughly one fifth of the annual labor force growth in the United States and cultural differences between Asians and Anglos have been found to persist even after several generations (Kitano, 1976), the research on cross-national differences in communication styles has implications for workforce diversity in domestic operations of U.S. firms as well as international ones.

Before leaving the topic of speech anxiety, something more should be said about norms of obtaining airtime in meetings. In the United

States, norms of participation in meetings often favor those who are very forceful about getting their points heard. Typically, one obtains airtime by jumping in as soon as the current speaker pauses. Since a pause may or may not signal the completion of a person's intended contribution to the discussion, people are routinely cut off prematurely. This type of communication is difficult for many people, but it is especially difficult for those from cultural backgrounds where speech anxiety resulting from modesty or reserved behavior is operative. There may also be a gender effect here in that men, more so than women, are culturally conditioned to use communication to gather and hold attention in groups (Tannen, 1990) and are more prone to dominance behavior in groups (Adams & Landers, 1978).

In addition to Asians and White women, members of any minority culture group will have more difficulty participating under conditions of open competition for airtime. The higher visibility that accompanies minority identity, especially when an individual is the only person of a particular identity group in the meeting, increases the barriers to participation. Members of minority groups are therefore more likely to feel that they must think ideas through fully and be sure before they speak. Under norms of highly competitive airtime, the extra time that many members of minority groups take before speaking severely limits their participation. Often the result is that they are assumed to have little to contribute and the potential benefit of their ideas is lost.

As a final example, let us consider the implications of forthrightness, discussed above in reference to African Americans. It was explained that this cultural trait reflects in part a preference by Blacks for direct confrontation to resolve conflict. However, Anglos (Foeman & Pressley, 1987), many Asians (Kitano, 1976), and many Hispanics

(Hall, 1976) prefer more indirect methods for resolving conflict. For example, Hall states that a key feature of Spanish American culture is "avoidance at all costs of face-to-face confrontation or unpleasantness with anyone with whom you are working or with whom you have a relationship" (1976, p. 158). The result is that the direct approach of African Americans may be perceived by others as inappropriately hostile or militant behavior, a perception that is reinforced by stereotypes of Blacks as being prone to violence.

A related point is that communication differences can hamper the building of interpersonal trust. One of the perceptions that are widely held among Blacks is that Anglo culture does not place a high value on forthrightness. A prominent historical source of this perception is the perpetuation for centuries of a formal creed that espoused human equality but coexisted with slavery and with legally enforced racial inequality in the post slavery period. In the organizational context, some observer has argued that an absence of forthrightness is manifested by managers (most of whom are White) when they talk around a problem or discuss it with a worker's manager or colleague rather than with the worker (Dickens & Dickens, 1982).

One result of all this is that Blacks are often distrustful of communications that come from Whites and sometimes withhold information or deliberately alter their viewpoints as an expression of this distrust. Stanbeck and Pearce offer an extensive discussion of these dynamics in their article "Talking to the Man" (1981). Kochman (1981) also offers an analysis of this.

2.8.7 Inter-Cultural Non Verbal Cues

For a more detailed study of the cultural differences and its inter-cultural non-verbal cues, among people of different dominant cultures, I again refer to the work of Eduard T. Hall (1976, 1982) which offers the following observations in terms of Sense of Self and Space, Communication and Language, Dress and Appearance, Food and Eating Habits, Time and Time Consciousness, Relationships, Values and Norms, Beliefs and Attitudes, Mental Processes and Learning and Work Habits and Practices.

2.8.7.1 Sense of Self and Space

Have you ever felt uncomfortable because someone stood too close when talking with you? Have you ever felt put off when your warm hug was received with a stiff, statue like response? Or have you reacted to what you consider the pretension of someone addressing others by their titles instead of their first names? Chances are these rubs have their roots in cultural norms.

“Too close for comfort” and “Get out of my space” are common expressions that deal with the issue of space. The dominant American culture teaches us to stay about 1½ to 3 feet, or an arm’s length, from people with whom we are talking in a business or friendship relationship. Any closer is reserved for more intimate contact with family, romantic relationships, or very close friends. Maintaining greater distance signifies a desire to stay aloof or protect oneself. When someone steps into your space, you’ll probably move back to maintain a comfortable distance. Other cultures have different norms. In the Middle East, people stand close enough to be above to feel your breath on their face and to be able to catch your scent. On the other hand, people in Japan maintain an even greater

distance than those in the United States. As for greeting, in Japan it's a bow; in North America a hearty handshake; in Mexico and South America a warmer, softer handshake sometimes accompanied by a hug; and in the Middle East a hug and a ritualistic kiss on each cheek.

These physical aspects of the way we respect an individual's sense of self and space also have a less tangible counterpart in the degree of formality we expect in relationships. Many languages (Spanish, German, Tagalog, etc.) have two forms of the word *you* – the formal and the familiar. In these cultures, the familiar form is reserved for children, family members, close friends, and those below you in the social hierarchy, such as servants. English long ago dropped the familiar *thee* and *thou*, so we are left with one pronoun, *you*, for all relationships, whether we are talking with the president, a boss, or a spouse.

"Let's not stand on ceremony" is the dominant American culture's response to what most Americans consider stuffy formality. New acquaintances, bosses, and older individuals are commonly called by their first names. In other cultures, formal introductions using Mr., Mrs., and titles are expected as a sign of respect for both parties.

Since most other cultures are more formal than the dominant American culture, you are safest if you err on the side of formality. Trying to be buddy-buddy with a staff of people from other cultures that expect more formal behavior from a boss is apt to make workers uncomfortable and embarrassed. In business relationships and discussions, keeping a more reserved tone also tends to send the message that you respect the individuals with whom you are meeting.

An American employee of a Japanese company doing business in the United States learned the hard way. Well schooled in both the Japanese language and culture, she made a presentation at a meeting. Because the company had succeeded in achieving its goal, she couldn't contain her excitement and she ended her recounting of the success statistics with a "Yeah!" her Japanese boss told her later that her show of emotion was inappropriate for a formal business presentation.

2.8.7.2 Communication and Language

It is clear that language differences often accompany cultural differences.

However, more is involved than just the specific language an individual speaks.

It is estimated that over half of our communication is nonverbal, indicating the significance of gestures, facial expression, tone of voice, and intonation patterns.

The most obvious of the nonverbal signals is eye contact.

All cultures use it to send signals.

The difficulty comes when the signals are misinterpreted.

"Look at me when I'm talking to you!" we were told by our parents when being reprimanded as children.

We break eye contact when we want to end the conversation with the bore that has cornered us at a party.

We catch the eye of the waiter to let him know we want the check in a restaurant.

Not making eye contact in our culture is taken as a sign of deceitfulness, no assertion, or disinterest.

However, in Asian and Latin cultures, averting one's eyes are a sign of respect and the proper behavior when in the presence of an older person or authority figure.

Gestures are another nonverbal communicator, one we often depend on when there is a language barrier.

Yet gestures can get us into trouble in multicultural groups.

The okay sign, for example, made with the thumb and forefinger, is an obscene gesture in Greece and some parts of South America.

Smiling, often considered an international gesture, is another nonverbal cue that can be misinterpreted.

The following examples are cases in point:

- A bank's customer service representative assists a limited-English-speaking customer in filling out a form.
In an attempt to put the customer at ease, he smiles and speaks in a lighthearted manner.
He is shocked when the customer calls from home a few minutes later to complain about being laughed at and treated disrespectfully.
- An engineering manager asks why the Asian engineers whom he supervises smile so much.
"I feel like they are snickering and laughing at me," he says.
- A visiting professional from Germany being taken around by his host, an outgoing Texan, is quite impressed.

He notices that each time they pass through a tollbooth on the Texas highways, they are greeted by a smiling toll taker who says, "Hi. How y'all doin' today?"

At the end of the day, the German says, "I'm amazed at how many friends you have."

A smile is seen as a welcoming, friendly gesture in this culture.

In Asian cultures, it may be a sign of embarrassment, confusion, or discomfort.

In the Middle East, a smile from a woman to a man can be construed as a sexual come-on.

In Germany, smiling is reserved for friends and family.

Nodding the head is yet another nonverbal cue that causes problems.

Saying no is considered rude, impudent behavior in many cultures because it upsets the harmony of relationships.

A nod often means "Yes, I hear you," not "Yes, I understand" or "Yes, I agree."

Perhaps the difference that causes the most difficulty in communication is the subtlest.

It has to do with the degree of directness or indirectness, or the amount of information that is stated rather than implied.

In Japanese culture, for example, communication is very indirect, depending on subtle contextual cues.

An individual would not tell someone to turn the heat on but would instead hug herself.

If that did not get a response, she might mention that it was a bit chilly.

The other party would immediately pick up the cue and turn the heat on.

Japanese employees are not told they must stay at work until the boss leaves, yet only after he has gone through the office saying good night do workers, in order of rank, begin to leave.

A manager wanting to tell an employee about some errors on a report might suggest the employee look it over again.

If both manager and employee are Japanese, the employee would understand that this subtle suggestion meant something was wrong with the report.

This implied direction would be missed by most American employees, who would probably be perplexed by the suggestion.

Contrast this approach with the "Don't beat around the bush" dictum of American culture, which favors a very explicitly stated message.

When these two approaches collide, problems can result.

The Japanese, for example, are often exasperated at what they see as Americans' "irresponsibility" when they interpret literally an offhand comment such as "I'll give you a call" or "I'll get on that right away."

On the other hand, Americans are just as frustrated when they miss the unstated clues that their Japanese counterparts automatically pick up.

"How was I supposed to know I had to wait until the boss left? Why don't they just tell me?"

2.8.7.3 Dress and Appearance

Though we may be taught not to judge a book by its cover, in this culture we do.

The problem is that each culture has different rules about what is appropriate.

Not only does “dressing for success” mean different rules about what is appropriate.

Not only does “dressing for success” mean different things in different cultures, but also within a society rules differ.

Pinstripe-suited Wall Street executives dress very differently from their Honolulu counterparts, who wear Hawaiian shirts and muumuus on Fridays, known as Aloha Days in the islands.

A dashiki or a shirt and tie? A bright silk dress or a dark gabardine suit?

Which is the best choice for a job interview?

It depends on which group you ask.

In some cultures clothing is a sign of social class; hence, much money and attention are spent on dressing expensively.

In others, clothing offers a chance to express one’s personality and creativity, so the brighter and more decorative, the better.

In still others, clothing is just a necessity of life, neither a status symbol nor an individual statement.

Take a look at the different workplace implications of dress.

One client almost discounted a qualified job applicant because of these differences.

The selection committee was interviewing applicants for a community outreach position in which the individual would be developing business with minority-owned firms.

When this interviewee arrived dressed in a bright silk dress, lots of jewelry, and long painted nails, the committee collectively gulped.

However, they thought about what they had learned in cultural diversity training and realized she was dressing very appropriately for her culture.

More important, her appearance might be right in sync with the community members with whom she would be working.

In another example, one government agency dealing with the management of state vehicles found that the rift between male and female mechanics was made less of a problem when all wore unisex uniforms that minimized the differences between the sexes and became a badge of their profession.

In still another situation, a draftsman was transferred from the San Francisco office to the Los Angeles office of a large engineering consulting firm.

As an immigrant from Europe, used to more formal dress, he had noticed that shirts and ties were the "uniform" for all engineers and draftsmen in this company.

He continued to wear what he considered appropriate dress in this new location.

It was only when the draftsman was teased about trying to look like an engineer that he realized the rules were different in Los Angeles, where only engineers wore ties while draftsmen wore sport shirts without ties.

Hair can also be an appearance hot spot.

Turbans, dreadlocks, Afros, ponytails on men and Mohawks are just a few of the different hairstyles that raise eyebrows cross-culturally.

Since the days of Samson and Delilah, hair has been a bone of contention.

While in many mainstream American companies and in the military hair for men must be above the collar, in other cultures the rules are different.

Hindus believe that the hair should never be cut, and the men wrap their heads in turbans.

Orthodox Jewish men wear forelocks, while their wives cover their hair in public.

Sometimes, hair makes a statement, as in the 1960s when wearing an Afro sent the "Black is beautiful" message or, more recently, when Sinead O'Connor shaved her head to draw attention to her political protests.

In many cultures, hair is a symbol of virility for men, femininity for women, and individual dignity for all.

Prisoners, for example, are often shorn, thereby stripping them of their individuality and humanness.

Probably one of the most uncomfortable areas to deal with regarding grooming is body odor.

The dominant American culture has a near fetish on the topic.

We have a deodorant for almost every part of the body.

In polite society, we react negatively to the smell of another human being.

Not so in other parts of the world.

According to Edward T. Hall, in the Middle East, marriage go-betweens often ask to smell the girl before they recommend her as a prospective bride.

Also, as mentioned, it is considered a normal part of communication to be able to feel and smell another's breath when talking.

In still another cultural norm, Iranians bathe after sexual intercourse so as to be clean and pure for prayers.

Body odor, whether from a lack of deodorant use or from diet (as in the garlic-laden kimchi eaten by Koreans), can cause real problems in work teams when people find each other's odors offensive.

2.8.7.4 Food and Eating Habits

While you may know that what we eat, when we eat, and how we eat it are culturally directed, you may ask what food and eating habits have to do with work. When asked about the benefits of living and working in a multicultural environment, food is almost always mentioned high on the list. Most of us enjoy the potlucks with exotic and enticing dishes that result from having a diverse staff. Yet in the workplace, differences can cause conflict, as in the following examples:

- At a catered lunch at a management meeting, the entrée is quiche lorraine made with ham. Two managers never touch their plates.
- Employees at a manufacturing plant complain about the smell of the fish lunches being heated and eaten by their Vietnamese co-workers.

- An elderly couple being cared for by a Filipino home health aide nearly starves to death. While their nurse cooks gourmet meals for them, they are unfamiliar with and do not like Filipino cuisine. It is finally discovered that because they really like their nurse they are throwing the food away after she leaves.

Understanding food restrictions and taboos is a starting point. Prohibitions against certain foods are often associated with religious rules. Among the Kosher food laws adhered to by some Jews is the prohibition against eating pork and shellfish. Devout Muslims also refuse pork and alcoholic beverages. Hindu religious beliefs prohibit the eating of meat of any kind. In addition, many individuals choose to eat a vegetarian diet because of ethical considerations, medical reasons, or personal preferences.

Beyond restrictions, cultural norms influence our food preferences. Animals that are pets in one culture may be a food source in another. The American repugnance and outrage at the eating of dog, horse, or cat meat are probably akin to a devout Hindu's feelings about Americans eating beef.

Do you eat with chopsticks or a fork and knife? In which hand do you hold your fork and knife? What do you think about eating with your hands? Chopsticks are the utensils of choice in most of Asia, while holding the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left is proper for Europeans. In parts of the Middle East, eating with the right hand from a communal bowl is the accepted practice.

Smacking one's lips, burping, and picking one's teeth at the table are considered breaches of etiquette in America, yet these behaviors may be entirely acceptable elsewhere. In fact, belching is seen as a

compliment to the cook in Asia, Europeans eat with both hands on the table, while Americans are admonished to keep the left hand in the lap unless cutting food. Before you judge others' table manners, stop and think about what might be proper by their standards. Also consider that others may be just as appalled by your table manners.

2.8.7.5 Time and Time Consciousness

When asked about the hardest adjustments they've had to make, Americans who work abroad invariably talk about the differences in time consciousness.

The so-called *manana* attitude in Mexico and the *Inshallah* of the Arab world clash with the "Time is money" and "The early bird gets the worm" American views of time.

In this culture, time is seen as a commodity to be used, divided, spent, and saved.

It is linear and finite.

However, in other parts of the world, such as Latin America and the Middle East, time is considered more elastic and more relative.

Time is used not just to accomplish tasks but also to develop relationships and enjoy oneself.

When things happen depends on not just a schedule, but also on other events, priorities, and the will of God.

So, *manana* does not necessarily mean "tomorrow," but sometime in the future.

Inshallah may mean “whenever it comes to pass.”

An American concerned with deadlines is understandably frustrated by what may appear to be a lack of motivation, efficiency, or honesty when encountering such a response.

The American, on the other hand, may be seen as always in a hurry and more concerned with tasks than with people.

2.8.7.6 Relationships

In the dominant American culture, hiring relatives is considered nepotism and is, in fact, prohibited in many organizations.

Yet in most other parts of the world, hiring kin is not only common but also expected.

Not to do so would be considered abdicating one’s responsibility to one’s family.

Furthermore, while family in America usually means the nuclear group of one’s parents and siblings, in other cultures it involves a large network of extended family members – cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and in-laws.

Loyalty is expected toward one’s kin, and obedience and respect are paid to older family members.

Organisational rules or directions that require employees to go against these norms will be circumvented or disobeyed.

You might experience an employee who hides the fact that his “friend” is really a relative, for example, or an employee who takes extended leaves to go back to his home village during the holidays.

In most other cultures, families are not egalitarian democracies.

There is a definite hierarchy of status, with age being the determiner of power and respect.

A definite pecking order exists, for example, with an older brother having authority over a younger one or a grandmother having matriarch status.

An employee from such a family would not think of making a work-related decision such as seeking a promotion or accepting a transfer without talking it over with the "head of the family."

This same sense of respect may transfer to the work unit, where employees apply a similar hierarchy within the group.

A seminar participant related how she learned about this kinship hierarchy on the job.

As a nursing manager, she was in charge of running her unit, which included dealing with patients' family members and visitors.

A problem arose one evening when one of her patients, a Gypsy, had the entire extended family, of more than 20 people, visiting.

There were complaints from staff and other patients, so the manager went in to deal with the problem.

Luckily, a security guard accompanied her.

Before she could say anything, the guard formally introduced her to the head of the family, explaining that she was the manager in charge.

She then explained the situation to the head of the family and asked for his cooperation.

She got it.

However, she was certain that without the cultural sensitivity and savvy of the security guard, she would not have paid attention to the family

hierarchy and probably would not have gotten the quick cooperation she did by respecting the group's cultural norms.

2.8.7.7 Values and Norms

One of the cornerstones of American society is the doctrine of individual freedom.

We fought a revolution to attain independence and the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. The Bill of Rights goes further in specifying the extent of our individual freedoms. The promise of freedom has attracted immigrants to these shores for centuries. In recent times, the idea of personal entitlement has pushed the ideas of individual freedom even further. Not so in most other cultures, where conformity to the group, family, and larger society is the norm. To most Americans, the need to conform – to subjugate one's individual needs to the those of the group – would feel confining and stifling. To many Asians, on the other hand, the dominance of the group over the individual assures harmony and order, and brings a feeling of stability to life.

In an interesting experiment, a group of bilingual Japanese women were given a series of open-ended statements to complete in both Japanese and English.

When asked in English to complete the statement "When my wishes conflict with my family's, ...," one woman responded, "I do what I want." When asked to complete the same statement in Japanese, the response was "It is a time of great unhappiness."

In the workplace this difference may show itself in employees' discomfort with individual praise, especially in public; with staff members' reluctance to break rank and blow the whistle; or with workers' difficulty in openly seeking advancement.

Related to this group orientation is another difference: the competition versus cooperation dichotomy. The competitive spirit is an underpinning of American life and the capitalist economic system. However, competition upsets the balance and harmony valued by cultures that prefer cooperation and collaboration. A Japanese high-tech firm doing business in America discovered this difference in attempting to correct a problem.

Dismayed to learn of the theft of some expensive equipment, top management assembled a group of middle managers to come up with a solution.

The American managers concluded that offering a reward to the individual who reported the thief was the best solution. The lone dissenting voice came from a Japanese manager, whose suggestion that the team that did not whistle-blow and that did not have any theft problem be rewarded was laughed at. Each solution, however, was culturally appropriate.

Another cultural difference that emerges in the workplace regards privacy.

To many newcomers, Americans seem naively open.

Discussing personal matters outside the family is seen as embarrassing, and opening up to someone outside of one's own cultural group is rare.

Thoughts, feelings, and problems are kept to oneself in most groups outside the dominant American culture.

Off-the-cuff thinking, shooting from the hip, and giving an immediate response to a question from the boss would be difficult for someone raised with this cultural norm.

On the other hand, when it comes to privacy in space as opposed to thoughts and feelings, Americans are not so open. Perhaps because the United States has had the luxury of vast open spaces, we have a culture that fences off each person's area – children have their own rooms (sometimes with a Keep Out or Knock First sign on the door), backyards are fenced, and office spaces are partitioned into cubicles. In much of the rest of the world, such fencing off is not the case.

Families may sleep in the same room, and on the job the workspaces are communal.

In Japanese offices, the boss generally does not have a separate office but rather shares a portion of the workspace with employees. Likewise, in public areas, a new passenger on a bus or train would generally take a seat next to someone rather than sit in an unoccupied section.

That would be considered odd behavior at best, and dangerously threatening at worst, in this country.

Loyalty is still another value that is differently displayed from culture to culture.

Most Americans are taught loyalty to such abstract principles as "truth, justice, and the American way" and believe no one is above the law.

Mexicans, Filipinos, and Middle Easterners, on the other hand, are loyal to individuals rather than to abstractions.

That personal allegiance might mean breaking a rule to help a friend or covering up for a relative's infraction. Employees feeling this personal attachment also tend to give their allegiance to the boss rather than to the organization.

Finally, we get to an issue critical to all human beings – respect. While all of us want to be treated with dignity and respect, we define and demonstrate respect differently.

Loss of face is important to avoid in all cultures. In Asia, in the Middle East, and to some extent in Latin America, one's face is to be preserved at all costs.

In fact, death is preferred to loss of face in traditional Japanese culture, hence the ritualized suicide, *hara-kiri*, as a final way to restore honor.

Any embarrassment can lead to loss of face, even in the dominant American culture.

To be criticized in front of others, to be publicly snubbed, or to be fired would be hard to swallow in any culture. However, inadvertent slights or unconscious *faux pas* can cause serious repercussions in intercultural relationships.

In Mexico, the Middle East, and parts of Asia, for example, the separation of the individual from the behavior is not so clear. "I am my behavior and my behavior is me" might be the motto. Criticism of performance may be taken as a personal insult, hence the case of the Indonesian worker who quit because of the loss of face he experienced in being corrected by his boss. In another example, the owner of a large travel agency had decided to reorganize her company, streamlining in the face of an economic slump during the Persian Gulf crisis. In doing her assessing, she noticed that one supervisor's group had slowly dwindled so that there was no one left for the supervisor to manage.

The owner, an immigrant from the Philippines herself, called in her Chinese-born supervisor to discuss reorganization plans. While the employee understood the need for the changes, she begged the boss

not to take away her title of supervisor and demote her. "I would lose face in my community if I lost my title," she said.

The boss, understanding that "face" in this case took priority over a logical organization chart, complied. "What difference does it make to me what her title is?

I just care that she is a satisfied and committed employee. If letting her be called supervisor accomplishes that, why not?" she thought.

2.8.7.8 Beliefs and Attitudes

Religion probably comes to mind when you think of beliefs and attitudes with regard to cultural programming.

Whether we practice them or not, religions are powerful influencers of our beliefs and attitudes.

While the doctrine of separation of church and state is set down in the U.S. Constitution, there is a strong Judeo-Christian foundation in this country, with an emphasis on the Christian part.

If you don't think so, look at legal holidays and school vacations.

Given today's pluralistic work force, it is important to realize that everyone does not practice the same religions, celebrate the same holidays, or want the same days off.

An observant Orthodox Jew, for example, cannot work during the Sabbath, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, so holding important staff meetings on Friday afternoons or scheduling a team-building retreat on a Saturday would exclude this person, as it would a Seventh-Day Adventist.

Among Muslim religious observances is the month of Ramadan, during which devout Muslims can have nothing to eat or drink each day from sunup to sundown.

This might be a month to avoid holding heavy-duty negotiations or employee recognition luncheons if you have Muslims on your staff.

One manager reported that since one of his employees reserved the noon hour for midday prayers, the manager made sure he never scheduled meetings during lunch.

Holiday celebrations are often times when religious differences are inadvertently ignored.

In one client organization, management was surprised to find that not all employees appreciated the red poinsettia plants that were purchased to decorate all office cubicles at Christmastime.

Many of the staff were not Christians and so did not celebrate Christmas.

In addition to religious views, beliefs about the position of women in society differ among cultures.

In some groups, it is accepted that women work outside the home.

In other groups, it is seen as a deficiency on the part of the male head of the house if any of the women from his family work.

In other cases, while women may work outside the home, they cannot be in a position of authority over men.

For a man to take orders from a woman would cause loss of face.

This difference may cause problems between bosses and subordinates or between female staff and male clients/customers.

In one local city with a large group of residents newly arrived from the Middle East, this problem became acute.

Many of the Armenian immigrant men who came to do business with the city utility department were unaccustomed to dealing with women in business and demanded to talk with a man.

However, there were no male employees in the customer service department.

This culture clash caused much stress for the female city employees.

Another situation that highlights the differences in attitudes about the role of women arose in a manufacturing company.

The supervisor of one of the shifts was a Latino.

Many of the male assembly-line workers refused to work for a woman.

The only way the owner could keep her employees was to have segregated male and female work teams.

Beyond ethical principles, with today's laws regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action, organizations need to educate employees about the legal risks involved in discriminating because of gender.

Still another area of cultural programming regards attitudes about social order and authority.

In Asia, students don't question teachers, employees don't confront bosses, and children don't talk back to parents.

Not so in America, where the culture tends to be more egalitarian than in cultures that have more traditional and hierarchical attitudes about authority.

While no society is truly classless, there is a wide range in views about social class, from the social mobility suggested in the "It's not who you are but what you are that counts" motto and Horatio Alger stories popular in America to India's more rigid caste system.

Once you understand this difference, you can interpret others' behavior more accurately.

You will see differently the housekeeper who calls you Miss/Mr./Mrs. before your first name, the employee who will not participate in group decision-making at meetings, or the staff member who will not take direction from a countryman who is younger or on a lower social scale than he.

2.8.7.9 Mental Processes and Learning

Do you prefer getting directions in words or with a map?

Do you learn best by listening and taking notes; by being involved in experiential activities; by seeing models, diagrams, and graphs; or by taking part in lively discussions?

Do you attribute your successes to your hard work and tenacity, or to luck and fate?

We all have preferences in learning and thinking styles, and some of these preferences are cultural.

A few years ago, George Will quipped, in contrasting the United States and the then USSR, that the game that represents the thinking style of the United States is poker, while that of the USSR is chess.

These two games represent very different styles of problem solving and thinking.

Such different approaches may show up on your staff.

Perhaps the most obvious difference in problem solving has to do with the perception of human control.

The dominant American culture professes a “fix-it” approach to problems, one that assumes that we have the power to control our world.

Problems are seen as obstacles to be overcome, and success in doing so depends on our actions.

Progress and change are often seen as ends in themselves.

In most of the rest of the world, the view is different.

Problems are viewed as situations to which one must adapt and the changes required by problem solving are seen as a threat to order and harmony.

In addition, fate and luck play a great part in determining the outcome of ventures.

Cause-and-effect relationships are less emphasized in this kind of thinking.

American culture also has a preference for logical analysis, while other cultures may bring more intuition and holistic thinking to a problem.

Another difference is in learning style.

Teaching and learning are generally much more didactic, formal, and one-way, from teacher to student, in most of the rest of the world.

There is also more dependence on written information.

Therefore, staff from other cultures might feel lost in a typical American training seminar that emphasizes experiential activities and role playing, which require the learner to draw his/her own conclusions.

Participants might also want copies of all information charted at the board or easel, or they may ask for lecture notes or outlines.

2.8.7.10 Work Habits and Practices

“The devil makes work for idle hands” exemplifies the Protestant work ethic, a cornerstone of American society.

In this view, work is seen as more than a means to survival. It is a divine calling, a “vocation.”

In today’s vernacular we talk about job satisfaction, finding one’s magnificent obsession, and creating a career that brings joy, esteem, and achievement.

Work is not always held in such high regard in other cultures.

In fact, it may be seen as a necessary evil.

The type of work one does may also be seen as a sign of status.

In this culture, we make distinctions between blue-collar and white-collar work, manual labor and professional work, and exempt and nonexempt employees.

In other cultures, such as in India and the Arab world, for example, working with one’s hands has lower status than doing professional work.

This may explain why workers balk at certain tasks or prefer one kind of work to another.

A physicist who manages an international staff at a premier space and technology research organization related the differences he has seen among members of his multinational staff.

From his observation, the Swedish and German scientists love to tinker, work with their hands, and build models.

The Indian scientist, on the other hand, disdains working with his hands and finds it beneath his dignity to have to input his own data into the computer.

An area critical to understanding if you are trying to get motivation and commitment from staff is the reward structure. What an employee considers rewarding is in the eye of the beholder, and that eye is cultural.

A promotion to management might be considered a reward to one individual and a punishment to another; a bonus for a job well done might feel like a pat on the back to one employee and an insult to another.

Paying attention to what individuals consider rewarding is important in any work group, but in a diverse group it may be more difficult to figure out.

If you know that an employee has family responsibilities outside of work, allowing a more flexible schedule with staggered hours might be more of a motivator than a promotion would be.

If an employee is trying to save money to bring other family members to this country, giving overtime assignments as tangible reinforcers might be appreciated.

Taking initiative and being self-directed are other work habits not universally taught.

In most other cultures, workers are not expected to exercise independent judgment, make decisions, or initiate tasks without being directed to do so.

When you notice employees waiting for direction, do not immediately assume these employees are unmotivated or lazy. They may be waiting for you to exercise your leadership role.

2.9 Culture in relation to Productivity and Economic Progress

My central thesis here is, that certain social systems and cultures, have supported modern economic growth and human progress, whereas others have not.

Pre capitalist systems based on serfdom, slavery, inalienable landholdings, and so forth, or traditional societies that exalts the glorious past of ancestors through tales and fables, does nothing to prepare for the future.

Without a dynamic perception of the future, there is no planning, no foresight, no scenario building; in other words, no policy to affect the course of events.

Countries and, winning organizations that have been able to jump ahead out of the laggard have done so, because they developed a conquering culture of rigor and work, removed from the influence of invisible forces.

The world at the beginning of the twenty-first century is still divided between the few who are rich and the many who are poor, between the free and the oppressed. Traditional explanations like imperialism, dependency, colonialism and racism are no longer adequate after so many decades, and increasingly researchers are reasoning that the principal reason why some countries and ethnic groups are better off than others lies in cultural values that powerfully shape political, economic and social performance. Many distinguished figures share this view and believe that value and attitude change is indispensable to progress for those who are lagging.

The power of cultural values and attitudes to promote or resist progress has been largely ignored. Culture is a significant determinant of a nation's ability to prosper, because culture shape individual's thoughts about risk, reward, and

opportunity. Cultural values do matter in the process of human progress because they shape the way individuals think about progress. They form the principles around which economic activity is organized – and without economic activity, progress is not possible.

There is substantial agreement among scholars and other prominent persons that, prosperity, democracy, and social justice depends importantly on promoting positive values and on recognizing and building upon the best in each culture and history.

This is the message that I want to bring about and we must heed, if there are a genuine concern about alleviating poverty and injustice in the poor countries and at home.

The message is that: of course culture matters.

People are ruled by passions, ideologies and their values, and even when economic interests prevail, they need to be justified by values. In a world driven by economics and technology, the differences between nations, especially in the levels of development, are mainly due to education and culture.

There is a methodological difference between myself and some people who are consistently uncritical of the values and attitudes of a culture and think people ought to resign themselves to authoritarian governments and economic and social values that condemn half of the people to misery in the name of; “we are Africans, and our identity matter above all!”

So my methodological difference is that the focus should not be only on understanding it, but on wanting to **change it**.

The question is: Will individuals in developing countries have to change their cultural heritage in order to participate more meaningfully in the global economy?

It is possible for a country to preserve its history and integrity – and to honor its local cultures – and still be globally competitive?

Economic progress depends on changing, the way people think about wealth creation. This means changing the underlying attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions that have informed the decisions made by leaders that result in poor economic performance.

Nathan Glazer (1998: 32), points out that one of the reasons for the aversion to confronting culture is that it touches the highly sensitive nerves of national, ethnic, and personal self-esteem by communicating the idea that some cultures are better than others, at least in the sense that they do more to promote human well being.

On one side I reject the idea that the only or very best way to be dignified, decent, rational and fully human is to live the life of a North American or a Northern European, but on the other side Africans must eradicate the layer of mud that prevents their societies from moving into modernism. Africa is now at a crossroads. Japan economic miracle has shown clearly that you do not have to embrace “western” culture to modernize your economy and prosper. From the beginning, Japan set out to have one without the other, an approach encapsulated by the saying “Japanese spirit, Western things”.

Mental models are the underlying beliefs that influence the way people behave. Culture is a broader, macro-level variable. Mental models are a micro-level variable. They apply to individuals and group of individuals – and are identifiable and changeable. Culture reflects the aggregation of individual mental models and in turn influences the types of mental models that individuals have. The two are linked in a perpetually evolving system.

Changing mental models is possible but it is hard because it requires the capacity for objective introspection and attribution to internal factors that touch on the most sensitive questions of self-image and respect.

The persistence and destructiveness of the economic and political crisis that have stricken Africa make it necessary for Africans to act without delay.

By fostering a morbid propensity to find fault with everyone but oneself, they promote economic impotence:

Now is the time for concerted national and regional initiatives that change mental models and to focus also on the microeconomic foundations of prosperity. The challenge is how to merge one set of insights with another, to begin to create a locally owned process for change in developing nations that is so thoughtfully integrated, well guided, and productively discussed that it begins to put nations and people on the path to high and rising prosperity.

In the words of Etoung – Manguelle (2000: 65), Africans must go to the heart of their morals and customs and discard what is blocking progress, because Africans if they have capable leaders, are fully able to distance themselves from the jealousy, the blind submission to the irrational, the lethargy that have been their undoing.

If the rich countries have done it, Africa must do the same.

Africans do not belong to a different world. Africans do not enjoy living in shantytowns where there isn't enough food, health care or education for their children. They do not enjoy living in corrupt chieftaincy political systems.

As Daniel Etounga – Manguelle says it seems that some people think that it would be terribly boring if free, democratic elections were organized all over Africa. Were that to happen, Africans would no longer be real Africans, and by

losing their identity – and their authoritarianism, their bloody civil wars, their illiteracy or forty five year life expectancy – they would be letting down not only themselves but also those people who so sympathetically think that Africans can't be expected to behave like human beings who seek dignity and progress on the eve of the third millennium.

Sometimes it is necessary to emphasise the negative in order to make the case: the importance of hierarchical distance in social relationships, the attempt to control uncertainty through religion and immutable destiny set by nature and religion; a time orientation that does not focus on the future, a passivity in the face of power and willingness to accept such power, subordination of the individual to the community and a rejection of "any view of the individual as an autonomous and responsible being", emphasis on current consumption rather than saving for the future, irrational beliefs (e.g., witchcraft), totalitarian polities without collective trust and goals, and conviviality to excess are just a few to mention.

"Poverty, inefficiency and sorrow characterize our African transitional communities Mbigi (1996: 8).

The tragic reality of Africa is that people tend not to have a sense of national identity and tend to be hooked up in narrow ethnic mind-sets. People think of themselves first as either blacks or whites. There is no recorded case in history where a country ever developed and become economically competitive without a sense of collective shared destiny and a shared national identity Mbigi (1996: 16).

There is no recorded case in human history where a society developed and prospered without a high degree of trust and social capital. Societies that are driven with barriers of distrust based on class, ethnicity, kingship

or other factors, will face extra roadblocks in their adoption of new organizational forms Fukuyama (1995: 17).

The real point of leverage in creating change may well be helping to change mental models at the individual level, beginning with the way individuals think about wealth creation and prosperity. There is an important relationship between mental models and prosperity, one that does not necessarily force the *homogenization of global culture*.

There is a great gap between African and Western culture, eloquently articulated by Kenyan political scientist Ali A. Mazini (1990: 5). He observed that Africans borrowed the profit motive but not the entrepreneurial spirit (and) acquisitive appetites but not the creative risk taking ... are at home with Western gadgets but are bewildered by Western workshops ... wear the wristwatch but refuse to watch it for ... punctuality ... have learnt to parade in display, but not to drill in discipline. The west's consumption patterns have arrived, but not necessarily the West's techniques of production.

Cultural factors, profoundly influenced by religion, are the principal obstacles to modernization.

It is not just that they get in the way of entrepreneurial activity, but that they permeate, rigidify, and dominate political, economic, and social behavior.

"Invincible" factors rooted in cultural values and attitudes are the chief obstacles for development and prosperity.

King Mswati of Swaziland may be choosing to ride out efforts to democratize his nation by using a combined claim of legitimacy via the traditional African way of doing things, and the theology of the Divine Rights of Kings.

"The whole world is preaching democracy. They are following this fashion. It does not mean we have to follow them."

"Democracy is not good for us because God gave us our own way of doing things." Mswati said. James Hall (2004: 17).

King Mswati publicly invoked for himself the Divine Rights of Kings doctrine. The king is doubling the justification for his remaining in charge of the country, saying his rule is legitimized by African culture and now by Holy writ.

"If the majority was allowed to choose between one king and a president, they would opt for a president", Reverant Khayeni Khumalo told the king. "That is why we do not need majority rule, because people will make the wrong choices. The majority always fails to choose what is right. When people are given the right to choose, they always choose evil. A king links a country with God and citizens of democracies will not be admitted to heaven."

In an attempt to explore how culture in the subjective sense, affects the extent to which and the ways in which societies achieve or fail to achieve human progress I refer to the works of the following distinguished scholars:

- **Samuel P Huntington** (2000), University Professor at Harvard University and the author of, most recently, "The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order".
- **Lawrence E Harrison** (2000), or Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies and author of "Underdevelopment is a State of mind".
- **Daniel Etounga-Manguelle** (1998), a Cameroonian, is the president and founder of the SADEG and a former member of the World Bank's Council of African Advisors and author of L'Afrique: Does Africa need a Cultural Adjustment?

- **Mariano Grondona** (1999) is a professor of government at the Law Faculty of the National University of Buenos Aires. He is the author of twelve books, including the “*Las Condiciones Culturales del Desarrollo Económico*”.
- **Carlos Montaner** (1999) among his recent books are the best selling “*Manual del Perfecto Idiota Latinoamericano*”; “*Fabricantes de Miseria*”, and “*No Perdamos También el Siglo Veintiuno*”.
- **Michael Porter** (1999) is a professor of Business Administration at Harvard University. He is a strategic adviser to the governments of many countries, and to major corporations and is the author of numerous books, including “*Competitive Strategy*”, “*The competitive advantage of nations*” and most recently, “*On Competition*”.

Daniel Etounga-Manguelle, Mariano Grondona, and Carlos Montaner are not the only Africans and Latin Americans who have come to the conclusion that *culture matters, and cultural change is indispensable*.

They all want to understand better what it is in their culture that stands in the way of their aspirations for a more just, prosperous, fulfilling, and dignified life – and what they can do to promote change.

Winners aim to keep on winning. Clones and crawlers are left behind.

Common and standard approaches should not be allowed to solidify the criss-cross pattern of communications into the bars of a prescribed cage.

People should be encouraged to find themselves, and not forced to hide themselves, in the work environment. The most fulfilled individuals are those who are self aware and true to themselves Coulson-Thomas (1989: 27).

Winning organizations preserve diversity, stay fluid and keep learning and adapting.

2.9.1 The Economic Development puzzle

The greatest puzzle in economic development is why sustained economic growth is so hard to achieve. Before 1820, there was essentially no such thing as sustained economic growth. Angus Maddison (1995: 7) estimates that world growth of GDP per capita averaged around 0.04 percent per annum from 1500 to 1820. Whereas Western Europe and its colonies in North America and Oceania had pulled ahead of other regions by 1820, the gap between Western Europe and the world's poorest region (sub-Saharan Africa) was only three to one, according to Maddison's estimates.

All regions of the world experienced a rise in per capita income after 1820, with world growth rising to 1.21 percent per year between 1920 and 1992, but the growth has been very uneven. The two groups of nations already ahead in 1820, Western Europe and what Maddison terms the Western offshoots (the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) pulled ahead still further, and today they constitute most of the developed world. Among the richest thirty countries in the world as of 1990, twenty-one were in Western Europe or were Western offshoots. Five were in Asia: Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan. The other four countries include two small oil states (Kuwait and United Arab Emirates), Israel, and Chile. These thirty countries account for about 16 percent of the world's population. By the 1990s, the gap between the richest region (the Western offshoots) and the poorest (sub-Saharan Africa) rose to around twenty to one.

So, "why are so many enormously successful" and "can some cultures integrate aspects of the other cultures into their own?"

2.9.2 Economic Development and Culture

If we learn anything from the history of economic development, it is that culture makes almost all the difference. Witness the enterprise of expatriate minorities – the Chinese in East and Southeast Asia, Indians in East Africa, Lebanese in West Africa, *Jews and Calvinists throughout much of Europe, and on and on*. Yet culture, in the sense of the inner values and attitudes that guide a population, frightens scholars. It has a sulfuric odor of race and inheritance, an air of immutability. In thoughtful moments, economists and other social scientists recognize that this is not true, and indeed they salute examples of cultural change for the better while deploring changes for the worse. But applauding or deploring implies the passivity of the viewer – an inability to use knowledge to *shape people and things*. The technician would rather change interest and exchange rates, free up trade, alter political institutions, manage. Besides, criticisms of culture cut close to the ego and injure identity and self-esteem. Coming from outsiders, such animadversions, however tactful and indirect, stink of condescension. Benevolent improvers have learned to steer clear.

But if culture does so much, why does it not work consistently? Economists are not alone in asking why some people – the Chinese, say – have long been so unproductive at home yet so enterprising away. If culture matters, why didn't it change China? We should note that with policies that now encourage rather than suppress economic development, the imbalance between Chinese performances at home and abroad is disappearing, as China sustains the phenomenal growth rates that propelled the Confucian "dragons" from the Third World to the First.

Because culture and economic performance are linked, changes in one will work back on the other. In Thailand, all good young men used to spend years undergoing a religious apprenticeship in Buddhist monasteries. This period of

ripening was good for the spirit and soul; it also suited the somnolent pace of traditional economic activity and employment. That was then. Today, Thailand moves faster; commerce thrives; business calls. As a result, young men spiritualise for a few weeks – time enough to learn some prayers and rituals and get back to the real, material world. Time, which everyone knows is money, has changed in relative value. One could not have imposed this change, short of revolution. The Thais have voluntarily adjusted their priorities. (It should be noted in passing that the Chinese minority led the charge.)

The Thai story illustrates culture's response to economic growth and opportunity. The reverse is also possible – culture may shift against enterprise. We have the Russian case, where seventy-five years of anti-market, anti-profit schooling and insider privilege have planted and frozen anti-entrepreneurial attitudes. Even after the regime has fallen, people fear the uncertainties of the market and yearn for the safe tedium of state employment. They yearn for equality in poverty, a common feature of peasant cultures around the world. As the Russian joke has it, peasant Ivan is jealous of neighbor Boris because Boris has a goat. A fairy comes along and offers Ivan a single wish. What does he wish for? That Boris's goat should drop dead.

Fortunately, not all Russians think that way.

Economic growth is indispensable because other forms of human progress, depend on productive economic activity.

Successful businesses are the engines of growth, for it is at the level of the individual business that wealth creation occurs. Products are created, services provided, productivity is enhanced, and wealth is generated. Without businesses there will be no economic progress, and without economic progress there will be no human progress.

Given these assumptions, the focus turns to a discussion of what makes for successful organizations and how these types of businesses can be fostered.

Finding answers to the strategic problems (business and government) face, is not that difficult. The difficulty is in changing the way that people think about their business problems. There is a legacy of comparative advantage thinking – often embedded in institutions, laws, and policies – throughout much of the developing world, a legacy that has made it very difficult for leaders to make different choices.

Efforts to alter these patterns of behavior in nations throughout the world have shown that these micro-economic problems are rooted in the culture.

Although the strategic patterns should be resolved through the power of analysis, good business, practices, and a commitment to learn, the behavioral patterns are much more difficult to see, understand and change.

The macro-economic variables that affect developing nations are quite different, but the micro economic patterns are strikingly similar.

This observation illuminates the link between culture and economic competitiveness. The way people think about business, economics, or competition, or their values and belief, shapes the quality of the strategic choices they make.

2.9.3 How Culture Influences Progress

2.9.3.1 How Values Shape Human Progress

Samuel P Huntington (2000) drawing mainly from David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, 1998, gives us an account of the importance of cultures and its link with either progress or stagnation.

In his book, *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, (2000, forward), he points a comparison between Ghana and South Korea.

In the 1960's the economies of Ghana and South Korea were very similar.

These two countries had roughly comparable levels of per capita GNP; similar divisions of their economy among primary products, manufacturing, and services; and overwhelmingly primary product exports, with South Korea producing a few manufactured goods. Also, they were receiving comparable levels of economic aid.

Thirty years later, South Korea had become an industrial giant with the fourteenth largest economy in the world, multinational corporations, major exports of automobiles, electronic equipment, and other sophisticated manufactures, and a per capita income approximating that of Greece. Moreover, it was on its way to the consolidation of democratic institutions. No such changes had occurred in Ghana, whose per capita GNP was now about one-fifteenth that of South Korea's. How could this extraordinary difference in development be explained? Undoubtedly, many factors played a role, but it seems that culture had to be a large part of the explanation. South Koreans valued thrift, investment, hard work, education, organization, and discipline. Ghanaians had different values. In short, cultures count.

Perhaps the wisest words on the place of culture in human affairs are those of Daniel Patrick Moynihan: *"The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society."*

The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself.” Huntington, S.P., Harrison, L.E. (2000: 15).

If cultural factors do affect human progress and at times obstruct it, however, we are also interested in culture as a dependent variable, that is, Moynihan’s second truth: How can political or other action change or remove cultural obstacles to progress? Economic development, we know, changes cultures, but that truth does not help us if our goal is to remove cultural obstacles to economic development. Societies also may change their culture in response to major trauma. Their disastrous experiences in World War II changed Germany and Japan from the two most militaristic countries in the world to two of the most pacifist. Similarly, Mariano Grondona has suggested that Argentina was making progress toward economic reform, economic stability, and political democracy in the mid-1990s in part as a result of its disastrous experiences with a brutal military dictatorship, military defeat, and super-hyperinflation.

The key issue thus is whether political leadership can substitute for disaster in stimulating cultural change. Of the roughly 6 billion people who inhabit the world today, fewer than 1 billion are found in the advanced democracies. More than 4 billion live in what the World Bank classifies as “low income” or “lower middle income” countries.

The quality of life in those countries is dismaying, particularly after a half century of development assistance:

- Half or more of the adult population of twenty-three countries, mostly in Africa, are illiterate. Non-African countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and even one in the Western Hemisphere – Haiti.

- Half or more of women are illiterate in thirty-five countries, including those just listed and Algeria, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Laos, Morocco, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia.
- Life expectancy is below sixty years in forty-five countries, most in Africa but also Afghanistan, Cambodia, Haiti, Laos, and Papua New Guinea. Life expectancy is less than fifty years in eighteen countries, all in Africa. And life expectancy in Sierra Leone is just thirty-seven years.
- Children under five die at rates in excess of 100 per 1,000 in at least thirty-five countries, most again in Africa. Non-African countries include Bangladesh, Bolivia, Haiti, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, and Yemen.
- The population growth rate in the poorest countries is 2.1 percent annually, three times the rate in the high-income countries. The population growth rate in some Islamic countries is astonishingly high: 5 percent in Oman, 4.9 percent in the United Arab Emirates, 4.8 percent in Jordan, 3.4 percent in Saudi Arabia and Turkmenistan.

The most inequitable income distribution patterns among countries supplying such data to the World Bank (nor all countries do) are found in the poorer countries, particularly in Latin America and Africa.

At mid-century, underachievement by black Americans was easy to understand. It was an obvious consequence of the denial of opportunity – in education, in the workplace, in the polling booth – the minority that had never been invited into the melting pot, the minority

for whom the Bill of Rights really didn't apply. In many respects, a racial revolution has occurred in the past fifty years, not only in terms of breaking down barriers to opportunity but also in sweeping changes in attitudes about race on the part of whites. The revolution has brought a mass movement of blacks into the middle class, the substantial closing of the black-white education gap, major black inroads in politics, and increasingly frequent intermarriage. But a racial gap remains in advanced education, income, and wealth, and, with 27 percent of blacks below the poverty line and a majority of black children being born to single mothers, the problems of the ghetto are still very much with us.

The racism/discrimination explanation of black underachievement is no longer viable fifty years later, although some racism and discrimination continue to exist.

If colonialism and dependency are unsatisfactory explanations for poverty and authoritarianism overseas how else can the unsatisfactory progress of humankind toward prosperity and political pluralism during the past half century be explained?

A growing number of scholars, journalists, politicians, and development practitioners are focusing on the role of cultural values and attitudes as facilitators of, or obstacles to, progress. They are the intellectual heirs of Alexis de Tocqueville, who concluded that what made the American political system work was a culture congenial to democracy; Max Weber, who explained the rise of capitalism as essentially a cultural phenomenon rooted in religion; and Edward Banfield, who illuminated the cultural roots of poverty and authoritarianism in southern Italy, a case with universal applications.

2.9.3.1.1 The Link Between Values and Progress

Skepticism about the link between cultural values and human progress is found particularly in two disciplines: economics and anthropology. For many economists, it is axiomatic that appropriate economic policy effectively implemented will produce the same results without reference to culture. The problem here is the case of multicultural countries in which some ethnic groups do better than others, although all operate with the same economic signals. Examples are the Chinese minorities in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the United States; the Japanese minorities in Brazil and the United States; the Basques in Spain and Latin America; and the Jews wherever they have migrated.

Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan was among the economic traditionalists on this issue – until he pondered the post-Soviet experience of Russia. He started with the assumption that humans are natural capitalists and that communism's collapse “would automatically establish a free-market entrepreneurial system”. He assumed that capitalism was “human nature”. But he has concluded, in the wake of the Russian economic disaster, that it was “not nature at all, but culture” Greenspan (1999: A17).

Greenspan's words constitute a powerful endorsement for David Landes's analysis and conclusions in *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, not to mention the long chain of insight into the importance of culture and its link to progress going back at least to Tocqueville. But the fact remains that most economists are uncomfortable dealing with culture, particularly since it presents definitional problems, is difficult to

quantify, and operates in a highly complex context with psychological, institutional, political, geographic, and other factors.

Humans in various societies, whether urban or folk, are capable of empathy, kindness, even love, and they can sometimes achieve astounding mastery of the challenges posed by their environments. But they are also capable of maintaining beliefs, values, and social institutions that result in senseless cruelty, needless suffering, and monumental folly in their relations among themselves as well as with other societies and the physical environment in which they live Edgerton (1991: 28).

2.9.3.1.2 The Universality of Values and Western “Cultural Imperialism”

Some anthropologists view progress as an idea the West is trying to impose on other cultures. At the extreme, cultural relativists and cultural pluralists may argue that Westerners have no right to criticize institutions such as female genital mutilation, suttee (the Hindu practice of widows joining their dead husbands on the funeral pyre, whether they want to or not), or even slavery.

But after a half century of the communications revolution, progress in the Western sense has become a virtually universal aspiration. The idea of progress – of a longer, healthier, less burdensome, more fulfilling life – is not confined to the West; it is also explicit in Confucianism and in the creeds of a number of non-Western, non-Confucian high-achieving minorities – India’s Sikhs, for example. I am not speaking of progress as defined by the affluent consumer society, although an end to poverty is clearly one of the universal goals, and that inevitably means higher levels of consumption. The universal

aspirational model is much broader and is suggested by several clauses in the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person ... human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief. ... All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection. ... Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. ... Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services. ... Everyone has the right to education.

2.9.3.1.3 The Relationship Between Culture and Institutions

To repeat, culture is not an independent variable. It is influenced by numerous other factors, for example, geography and climate, politics, the vagaries of history. With respect to the relationship between culture and institutions, Daniel Etounga-Manguelle says, “*Culture is the mother; institutions are the children*” Huntington (2000: 65). This is particularly true in the long run. In the short run, institutional modifications, often impelled by politics, can influence culture consistent with Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s sage observation.

2.9.3.2 Does Africa need a Cultural Adjustment Program?

Daniel Etounga-Manguelle (2000: 65-77) in his article “Does Africa need a Cultural Adjustment Program?”, deliberately emphasizes the negative in order to make his case. He gives us an overview of the

staggering Africa's plight and the need to regenerate the African Culture.

He offers an insight that evokes Toqueville: Culture is the mother; institutions are the children.

Etounga-Manguelle's analysis of African Culture attributes Africa's poverty, authoritarianism, and social injustice principally to traditional cultural values and attitudes such as –

- The highly centralized and vertical traditions of authority
- Focus on the past and present, not the future
- Rejection of "the tyranny of time".
- Distaste for work ("The African works to live but doesn't live to work")
- Suppression of individual initiative, achievement, and saving (the corollary is jealousy of success)
- A belief in sorcery that nurtures irrationality and fatalism.

He starts by pointing out that in Africa:

- Life expectancy is below sixty years in twenty-eight countries. Life expectancy is below fifty years in eighteen countries. Life expectancy in Sierra Leone is just thirty-seven years.
- About half of the more than 600 million people south of the Sahara live in poverty.
- Half or more of the adult populations of at least thirteen countries are illiterate.
- Half or more of women are illiterate in at least eighteen countries.

- Children under five die at rates in excess of 100 per 1,000 in at least twenty-eight countries. In Sierra Leone, the rate is 335 per 1,000.
- The population growth rate is 2.7 percent annually, almost four times the rate in the high-income countries.
- Among countries supplying such data to the World Bank (not all do), some of the most inequitable income distribution patterns are found in Africa. The most affluent 10 percent account for about 47 percent of income in Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and about 43 percent in Guinea-Bissau Senegal, and Sierra Leone.
- And, obviously, democratic institutions are commonly weak or nonexistent throughout Africa.

(World Bank, World Development Report 1998/99, Oxford University Press 1999).

Even in the face of all this human suffering, he cannot resist citing the story of an African government minister carried away in his remarks: "When we gained power, the country was at the edge of the abyss; since, we have taken a great step forward!"

He cites this anecdote in part because as he says, can no one any longer reasonable blame the colonial powers for the African condition. Several decades have passed during which Africans have been in substantial control of their own destiny. Yet today Africa is more dependent than ever on rich countries, more vulnerable than any other continent to maneuvers aimed at giving with one hand and taking back with the other. The World Bank, usually a great source of funds and

advice, is itself short of ideas. Other than structural adjustment programs (whose efficiency has not yet been proven), there is silence.

The need to question the African culture, is evident. But what characterizes the African culture? Is this culture compatible with the demands faced by individuals and nations at the beginning of the twenty-first century? If not, what cultural reorientation is necessary so that in the concert of nations we are no longer playing out of tune? *Does Africa need a cultural adjustment program?*

2.9.3.2.1 Hierarchical Distance

In the view of D Bollinger and G Hofstede (1991), hierarchical distance – the degree of verticality – is generally substantial in tropical and Mediterranean climates, where the survival of the group and its growth depend less on human intervention than it does in cold and temperate countries. In countries with substantial hierarchical distances, the society tends to be static and politically centralized. What little national wealth exists is concentrated in the hands of an elite. The generations pass without significant change in mind-set. It is the reverse in countries with short hierarchical distances. Technological changes happen because the group needs technical progress; the political system is decentralized and based on a representative system; the national wealth, which is substantial, is widely distributed; and children learn things that their parents never knew.

In the more horizontal cultures, subordinates believe that their superiors are people just like themselves, that all people have equal rights, and that law takes precedence over strength. This leads to the belief that the best way to change a social system is to redistribute power. In the more vertical societies, Africa among them, subordinates

consider their superiors to be different – having a right to privilege. Since strength prevails over law, the best way to change a social system is to overthrow those who hold power.

2.9.3.2.2 Control over Uncertainty

Some societies condition their members to accept uncertainty about the future, taking each day as it comes. There is little enthusiasm for work. The behavior and opinions of others are tolerated because deep down people feel relatively secure in the status quo.

In other societies, people are acculturated to conquer the future. This leads to anxiety, emotionalism, and aggressiveness, which produce institutions oriented toward change and the limitation of risks.

Africa, except for the southern tip of the continent, appears to belong entirely to the category of societies with weak controls over uncertainty. To create secure societies, three levers are available: technology, jurisprudence, and religion. We might say that African societies are societies of strong control over uncertainty; unfortunately, the control is exercised only through religion. In the final analysis, if Africans immerse themselves in the present and demonstrate a lack of concern for tomorrow, it is less because of the safety of community social structures that envelop them than because of their submission to a ubiquitous and implacable divine will.

The African, returning to the roots of religion, believes that only God can modify the logic of a world created for eternity. The world and our behavior are an immutable given, bequeathed in a mythical past to our founding ancestors, whose wisdom continues to illuminate our life

principles. The African remains enslaved by his environment. Nature is his master and sets his destiny.

This postulate of a world governed by an immutable divine order in a universe without borders is accompanied by a peculiarly African perception of the notion of space and time.

2.9.3.2.3 The Tyranny of Time

The African sees space and time as a single entity. The Nigerians say, "A watch did not invent man". Africans have always had their own time, and they have often been criticized for it. As an example, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber writes:

Time in Africa has both a symbolic and cultural value that is very important in the manner in which it is lived and felt. This is frankly both a benefit and a handicap – a benefit to the extent that it is satisfying for individuals to live during a period at a rhythm that is their own and that they have no desire to give up. But it is also a handicap to the extent that they are in competition with countries that do not have the same work methods and for which competition at the level of productivity, for example, passes through a more rational use of time Servan-Schreiber (1985: 9).

Etoung Manguelle, emphasizing the negative, tries to give us a shocking perception of African society behaviors that, in his view, do not help progress.

In traditional African society, which exalts the glorious past of ancestors through tales and fables, nothing is done to prepare for the future. The African, anchored in his ancestral culture, is so

convinced that the past can only repeat itself that he worries only superficially about the future. However, without a dynamic perception of the future, there is no planning, no foresight, no scenario building; in other words, no policy to affect the course of events. There can be no singing of tomorrows so long as our culture does not teach us to question the future, to repeat it mentally, and to bend it to our will. In modern society, everyone must prepare. Otherwise, as Seran-Schreiber reminds us, there will be no more seats on the train, no more money at the end of the month, nothing in the refrigerator for the dinner hour, and nothing in the granaries in between seasons Manguelle (2000: 71).

2.9.3.2.4 Indivisible Power and Authority

Over the course of several millennia, societies in the West evolved substantially outside of the influence of religion, leading to the separation of the things of this world from the spiritual world. This evolution also led to the advent of the power of the state, which was certainly still spiritual but detached from supernatural forces that no longer intervened in the governing of this world. In Africa, however, the force of religion continues to weigh both on individual and on collective destiny. It is common for African leaders to claim magical powers.

Etoung Manguelle, an African Cameroonian, former member of the World Bank's Council of African Advisors, give us again, a vivid picture of his perception of traditional African society, where he is deliberately emphasizing the negative, to make a point.

It is difficult to explain African passivity other than by the fear inspired by a God hidden in the folds of the clothes of every

African chief. If a king or president escapes an attack (even a simulated one), the entire population will deduce that he has supernatural power and is therefore invincible. This propensity to equate all power with divine authority does not concern only the "fathers of the nation"; it affects every citizen – even the most ordinary – as soon as he is given any authority whatsoever. Take an African, give him a bit of power, and he will likely become bumptious, arrogant, intolerant, and jealous of his prerogatives. Constantly on his guard and an enemy of competence (not a criterion for electing gods), he is ruthless until an inopportune decree designates his successor. He ends his career entirely devoted to the cult of mediocrity. (It is a well-known fact in our republics that to end the career of a technocrat or a politician for good, you need only point out his excellence.)

The African will not accept changes in social standing: Dominant and dominated remain eternally in the places allocated them, which is why change in social classifications is often condemned. We complain about the difficulties in promoting the private sector in our states. These difficulties are rooted in the jealousy that dominates all interpersonal relations, which is less the desire to obtain what others possess than to prevent any change in social status.

In Africa, you must be born dominant; otherwise, you have no right to power except by coup d'état. The entire social body accepts, as a natural fact, the servitude imposed by the strong man of the moment. It has been argued that the underdeveloped are not the people, they are the leaders. This

is both true and false. If African peoples were not underdeveloped (that is to say, passive, resigned, and cowardly), why would they accept underdeveloped leaders? We forget that every people deserve the leaders it gets Manguelle (2000: 72).

2.9.3.2.5 The Community Dominates the Individual

If necessary to cite a single characteristic of the African culture, the subordination of the individual by the community would surely be the reference point to remember. African thought rejects any view of the individual as an autonomous and responsible being. The African is vertically rooted in his family, in the vital ancestor, if not in God; horizontally, he is linked to his group, to society, to the cosmos. The fruit of a family-individual, society-individual dynamic, all linked to the universe, the African can only develop and bloom through social and family life.

How do we restore the degree of autonomy to the individual that is necessary for his affirmation as a political, economic, and social actor, while preserving this sociability that is the essence of the existence of the African? The suppression of the individual, the cardinal way of ensuring equality in traditional societies, is demonstrated in all areas – not only in economic matters, where the ultimate market price is a function of the presumed purchasing power of the buyer, but in cultural matters, where oral traditions have monopolized the transmission of culture. We might even wonder if it wasn't by design that Africans avoided the written word to assure the suppression of individualism. African thought avoids skepticism, another virus carried by the individual. Consequently, the established belief system remains

absolute: As soon as ancestral beliefs are threatened, the only possible choice is between the established order and chaos.

The concept of individual responsibility does not exist in our hyper-centralised traditional structures. In Cameroon, the word “responsible” translates as “chief”. Telling peasants that they are all responsible for a group initiative is to tell them therefore that they are all chiefs – which inevitably leads to endless interpersonal conflicts.

The death of the individual in our societies explains not only the culture of silence in which men like President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana rise up but also explains the contempt in which people hold all those that occupy an intermediate position in the hierarchy. Thus, in an African ministry, it is well understood that the only person who can solve any problem whatsoever, be it the most commonplace, is the minister himself. Supervisors, managers, and other officials are there only for show. Our ministers have no complaints. It is not good to delegate one’s authority at the risk of encouraging the birth of a new political star that may eventually prove to be a competitor.

We must be realistic. Tribalism blooms in our countries because of both the negation of the individual and the precariousness of his situation in the absence of an operative set of individual rights and responsibilities.

2.9.3.2.6 Excessive Conviviality and Rejection of Open Conflict

The African works to live but does not live to work. He demonstrates a propensity to feast that suggests that African societies are structures around pleasure. Everything is a pretext for celebration: birth, baptism, marriage, birthday,

promotion, election, return from a short or a long trip, mourning, opening or closure of Congress, traditional and religious feasts. Whether one's salary is considerable or modest, whether one's granaries are empty or full, the feast must be beautiful and must include the maximum possible number of guests Manguelle (2000: 72).

He who receives gives, but he who is received also gives in order to truly participate in the joy or pain of his host. Sociability is the cardinal virtue of all human beings; indeed, the African considers any person he meets a friend until the contrary is demonstrated. Friendship comes before business; it is impolite, in a business discussion, to immediately go to the crux of the matter. The African has an inexhaustible need for communication and prefers inter-personal warmth to content. This is the main reason for the inefficiency of African bureaucracies. Each petitioner, instead of writing, seeks to meet in person the official in charge of examining his file, thinking this eliminates all the coldness of writing letters back and forth.

Differences that are the basis for social life elsewhere are not perceived or are ignored to maintain ostensible social cohesion. It is the search for social peace based on a shaky unanimity that pushes the African to avoid conflict – although the continent is surely not free of it. In some African societies, the avoidance of conflict means that justice cannot be rendered in the daytime. In some Bamileke (West Cameroon) villages, the constituted bodies in charge of security and justice are secret and meet at night. Members wear masks to prevent being identified.

Conflict is inherent in human groups of whatever size, yet we try to sweep it under the rug – and have been highly unsuccessful in doing so.

2.9.3.2.7 Inefficient Homo Economicus

In Africa, what classify man are his intrinsic value and his birth. If the African is not very thrifty, it is because his vision of the world attributes very little importance – too little – to the financial and economic aspects of life. Other than some social groups like the well-known Bamileke of Cameroon or the Kamba of Kenya, the African is a bad *H. economicus*. For him, the value of man is measured by the “is” and not by the “has”. Furthermore, because of the nature of the rapport that the African maintains with time, saving for the future has a lower priority than immediate consumption. Lest there be any temptation to accumulate wealth, those who receive a regular salary have to finance the studies of brothers, cousins, nephews, and nieces, lodge newcomers, and finance the multitude of ceremonies that fill social life.

It should not come as a surprise that the urban elite embellish these spending traditions by behaving like *nouveaux riches*. They, of course, have access to large amounts of money, chiefly in government coffers, and to the relatives and friends who are the beneficiaries of our free-spending habits are added banks in Switzerland, Luxembourg, and the Bahamas. African governments are not, it is evident, any better at economic management than are African individuals, as our frequent economic crises confirm.

2.9.3.2.8 The High Costs of Irrationalism

A society in which magic and witchcraft flourish today is a sick society ruled by tension, fear, and moral disorder. Sorcery is a costly mechanism for managing conflict and preserving the status quo, which is, importantly, what African culture is about. Therefore, is not witchcraft a mirror reflecting the state of our societies? There is much to suggest this. Witchcraft is both an instrument of social coercion (it helps maintain and perhaps even increase the loyalty of individuals toward the clan) and a very convenient political instrument to eliminate any opposition that might appear. Witchcraft is for us a psychological refuge in which all our ignorance finds its answers and our wildest fantasies become realities.

Contrary to what some might believe, the Christian religion, far from putting an end to witchcraft in Africa, has legitimized it. The existence of Satan is recognized by the Bible and the White Fathers, thus confirming the existence of sorcerers and other evil persons.

Sects, usually based on the magical power of the leader or prophet, are proliferating in Africa. In Benin, a particularly religious land that is the cradle of Haitian and Brazilian voodoo, fifty-eight new sects were born between 1981 and 1986, bringing the total number of denominations in the country to ninety-two. In Kenya, there might be as many as 1,200 sects: in some rural districts, there are more churches than schools. Some prophets, their "temples" on the street, become affluent because of their ability to detect bad spirits. Others can protect against disease. Still others can help you protect your job and enhance your income.

An example is that of Kombo, a transporter with a fleet of trucks serving the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso, Kombo believes that to European precautions – the regular maintenance of vehicles – it is necessary to add African precautions. What do these include? Well, his witchdoctor gives him some porcupine-fish powder that he pours into his tires in order to prevent punctures. Why, you might ask? Because, when attacked, this thorny fish has the ability to inflate until it doubles in volume. The powder of this fish is therefore perfect for maintaining the pressure.

Sorcery also extends to government. Witchdoctors surround African presidents, and nothing that really matters in politics occurs without recourse to witchcraft. Occult counselors, responsible for assuring that authorities keep their power by detecting and neutralizing possible opponents, have power that the most influential Western advisers would envy. The witch doctors often amass fortunes, and they sometimes end up with official designations, enjoying the direct exercise of power.

Football, the opiate of Africans, competes with politics with respect to sorcery. The story made the rounds that the Elephants of Abidjan lost their match against Egypt for the African Cup because the captain of the team lost a magic charm on the field a little before halftime. The entire team searched for it in vain. Everyone believed that the Egyptians had found it and had made it disappear. Thanks to this deceit, they won the match, two goals to one.

The fact that Africa is not alone in celebrating irrationalism at the outset of the twenty-first century does not excuse their propensity to delegate to sorcerers and witch doctors the

responsibility for solving their problems. Jean-Francois Revel has asked, "Might man be an intelligent being that intelligence does not guide?" In my view, the African is the intelligent being that uses his intelligence least – so long as he is happy to live life as it comes. In an Africa that refuses to link knowledge and activity, our authentic cultural identity is operating when we say, as Revel notes, "Give us development in the form of subsidies, so as to spare us the effort of establishing an efficient relationship with reality." That same culture lies behind our claim to the right to inefficiency in production, the right to corruption, and the right to disrespect basic human rights Manguelle (2000: 74).

2.9.3.2.9 Cannibalistic and Totalitarian Societies

What Africans are doing to one another defies credulity. Genocide, bloody civil wars, and rampant violent crime suggest that African societies at all social levels are to some extent cannibalistic. Those who write laws and those who are responsible for enforcing them are those who trample on them. Thus, in almost all African countries, the day after gaining independence, investment codes designed to attract foreign investment were promulgated. Yet affluent Africans jostle each other at the counters of Swiss, French, Belgian, and English banks, giving the impression that they have no confidence in themselves, in their country, or in what they produce. They appear to destroy with their own hands what they have got.

The truth quickly becomes apparent. Seen from the inside, African societies are like a football team in which, as a result of

personal rivalries and a lack of team spirit, one player will not pass the ball to another out of fear that the latter might score a goal. How can we hope for victory? In our republics, people outside of the ethnic "cement" (which is actually quite porous when one takes a closer look at it) have so little identification with one another that the mere existence of the state is a miracle – a miracle in part explained by the desire for personal gain. There is rarely any vision of a better future for all. At the same time, initiative and dynamism are condemned as signs of personal enrichment. The sorcerer wants equality in misery. There are numerous cases in which someone who has build a house has been told not to reside in it; others who have begun construction have been told to stop the work if they value their lives.

Was African totalitarianism born with independence? Of course not! It was already there, inscribed in the foundations of our tribal cultures. Authoritarianism permeates our families, our villages, our schools, and our churches. It is for us a way of life.

Thus, faced with such a powerful, immovable culture, what can we do to change Africa's destiny? We are condemned either to change or to perish. Manguelle (2000: 76).

2.9.3.3 Culture and the Behaviour of Elites

Carlos Montaner (2000: 57-64), a Latin American scholar, gives us a debate over the causes of Latin America's failure relative to the success of Canada and United States.

He traces the detrimental influence of traditional culture on the behavior of six elite groups: the politicians, the military, the business people, the clergy, the intellectuals and the revolutionaries.

It is interesting to understand his analyses of such influences and to make comparisons to the African scenario and its causes for the underdevelopment, of the African continent.

He points out that debate over the causes of Latin America's failures relative to the success of Canada and the United States has been a recurrent focus of Latin American intellectuals, and there are enough explanations to suit anyone. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, they put the blame on the Iberian inheritance with its intolerant Catholicism. Around the middle of that century, the shortcomings were attributed to the demographic weight of an apparently indolent native population *opposed to progress*. At the beginning of the twentieth century, and particularly with the Mexican Revolution in 1910, it was said that poverty and underdevelopment were caused by an unfair distribution of wealth, above all by the peasants' lack of access to land. Starting in the twenties and accelerating thereafter, "exploitative imperialism", mainly "Yankee imperialism", was blamed. During the thirties and forties, the view was espoused that Latin America's weakness was a consequence of the weakness of its governments, a condition that could only be corrected by turning them into "engines of the economy", converting public officials into businessmen.

All these diagnoses and proposals reached the crisis point in the eighties – "the lost decade" – when experience demonstrated that all of the arguments were false, although each may have contained a grain of truth. The rapid development of countries that were poorer than the Latin American average in the 1950s – South Korea, Singapore,

Taiwan – proved that Latin America had fundamentally misunderstood the keys to prosperity. This inevitably led us back to the eternal question, who is responsible?

One possible, although partial, answer is “the elites”: the groups that lead and manage the principal sectors of a society; those who act in the name of certain values, attitudes, and ideologies which, in the Latin American case, do not favor collective progress. There is no single individual who is responsible; rather, a large number – a majority – of those who occupy leading positions in public and private organizations and institutions are the ones chiefly responsible for perpetuating poverty.

The idea that traditional cultural values and attitudes are a major obstacle to progress has gradually been gaining momentum. But how do these values and attitudes reflect themselves in the way people behave? Montaner suggest how they express themselves in the behavior of six elite groups; the politicians, the military, businessmen, clergy, intellectuals, and leftist groups. Montaner stresses at the outset that it is not fair to blame only the elites, who are, in large measure, a reflection of the broader society. If their behavior strayed radically from the norms of the broader society, they would be rejected. Moreover, within the elites, there are exceptions – people who are striving to change the traditional patterns of behavior that have brought them to where they are.

2.9.3.3.1 The Politicians

Montaner (2000: 58) begins with the politicians, since they are the most visible. Politicians are so discredited in Latin America today that to be elected, they have to demonstrate that they are not politicians at

all but something quite different: military officers, beauty queens, technocrats – anything at all except politicians. Why is this so? Largely because public sector corruption with impunity is the norm throughout the region. According to Montaner it expresses itself in three forms:

- The classical form, in which government officials receive “commissions” and bribes for each project that is won or each regulation that is violated to benefit someone.
- The indirect form, in which the corruption benefits someone with whom you are allied, although you yourself may remain clean. Examples are Joaquin Balaguer in the Dominican Republic and José María Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador.
- The clienteles form – the most costly – in which public funds are used to buy large groups of voters.

It is as if politicians were not public servants elected to obey the laws but rather autocrats who measure their prestige by the laws they are able to violate. That is where the definition of true power rests in Latin America – in the ability to operate above the law.

The truth is that a large percentage of Latin Americans either nurture or tolerate relationships in which personal loyalty is rewarded and merit is substantially ignored. In Latin American culture loyalty rarely extends beyond the circle of friends and family. Thus the public sector is profoundly mistrusted and the notion of the common good is very weak. Consequently it is inevitable that the most successful politicians are those who pay off their allies and sympathizers.

To be sure, these noxious practices are not exclusive to Latin America. What is alarming, however, is the frequency and intensity with which they occur in the region and, above all, the people's indifference to these practices and the impunity with which wrongdoers engage in them. It is as if Latin Americans did not realize that they themselves are ultimately paying for the corruption and inefficiency that contribute so powerfully to the region's poverty.

2.9.3.3.2 The Military

Montaner (2000: 59) goes on, affirming that the military is comparably culpable for Latin America's problems. In the advanced democracies, the role of the military is to protect the nation from foreign threats. In Latin America, the military has often assigned itself the task of saving the nation from the failures of the politicians, *either imposing military visions of social justice by force or simply taking over the government and maintaining public order*. In both cases, it has behaved like an occupying force in its own country.

It has been said that the behavior of the *Latin American military reflects the influence of la madre patria, Spain*. But the historical truth is that when the Latin American republics were established between 1810 and 1821, the putsches in Spain were exceptional and had little success. The time of the insurrections on the Iberian Peninsula coincided with similar phenomena in Latin America but did not precede them. Rather, the Latin American military *caudillos*, who provoked innumerable civil wars during the nineteenth century and prolonged dictatorships during the twentieth, seemed to be basically a Latin American historical phenomenon linked to an authoritarian mentality that had no respect for either the law or democratic values.

Although Latin America has known military dictatorships since the first days of independence early in the nineteenth century, in the thirties and forties the military, led by Getulio Vargas in Brazil and Juan Domingo Peron in Argentina, concluded that it was designated by Providence to undertake a new mishap: to promote state-driven economic development, including the assignment of senior military officers as managers of state enterprises. The basic idea, which never really worked in practice, was that in nations with weak and chaotic institutions, as in Latin America, only the armed forces had the size, tradition, and discipline necessary to create large-scale modern industries capable of competing in the complex industrial world of the twentieth century.

This military involvement in state enterprises has cost Latin America dearly. Like politicians, military officers were corrupt. Their protected enterprises distorted the market, were often excessive in scale, and were vastly overstaffed. The result was inefficiency and obsolescence.

Although there have been a few civilian *caudillos* – for example, Hipólito Yrigoyen in Argentina and Arnulfo Arias in Panama – the *caudillo* tradition in Latin America has been dominated by the military. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, Juan Perón, Anastasio Somoza, Alfredo Stroessner, Manuel Antonio Noriega, and Fidel Castro are good examples. The *caudillo* is more than a simple dictator who exercises power by force. He is a leader to whom many citizens, and practically the entire power structure, delegate full power of decision and control of the instruments of repression. The result is not only antithetical to democratic development but is also extremely costly in an economic sense and inevitably causes confusion of public and private property.

2.9.3.3.3 The Businessmen

According to Montaner (2000: 60), one of the greatest political ironies in Latin America is the frequent accusation that "savage capitalism" is to blame for the poverty of the 50 percent of all Latin Americans who are distressingly poor and survive in shacks with dirt floors and tin roofs. The real tragedy in Latin America is that capital is in limited supply, and a large part of what there is, is not in the hands of real entrepreneurs committed to risk and innovation but in those of cautious speculators who prefer to invest their money in real estate and expect that the vegetative growth of their nations will cause their properties to appreciate in value. These are not modern capitalists but rather landowners in the feudal tradition.

But even worse is the mercantilist businessman who seeks his fortune through political influence rather than market competition. The mercantilist shares his profits with corrupt politicians in a vicious circle that produces both increasing profits and corruption. He often buys tariff protection, which results in higher prices and lower quality for the consumer. He may buy a monopoly position under the pretext of the national interest or economies of scale. Or he may also buy tax privileges, subsidies, preferential interest rates, loans that don't have to be repaid, and preferential rates for the purchase of foreign exchange.

These kinds of cozy relationships between mercantilist businessmen and corrupt politicians have been particularly shocking with respect to the sale of foreign currency at prime rates to import capital goods for local industries. In countries in which a dollar may have three different exchange rates, those with the appropriate relations can buy dollars at a prime rate, sell a portion of them secretly at a highly favorable rate,

pay for the imported goods at yet another rate, and see their profits double as if by magic. And the richer they get, the more corrupt they become.

These harmful practices are not exclusive to Latin America, but the frequency and intensity with which this kind of corruption occurs in Latin America is very troubling, as is the indifference and impunity that accompanies it. The people don't seem to realize that the money acquired by mercantilist businessmen through the sale and purchase of influence comes either directly or indirectly from the pockets of taxpayers. Nor do they appreciate that this type of illicit activity increases the overall cost of transactions, substantially raising the cost of goods and services, further impoverishing the poor.

The fact is, with few exceptions, Latin America has never experienced the modern capitalism combined with political democracy that has produced the high levels of human well-being that are found in the prosperous nations of the West and increasingly in East Asia.

2.9.3.3.4 The Clergy

Montaner (2000: 61) includes the clergy among the elites who are responsible for the misery of the masses. It is painful because those responsible are not all the clergy, only those who preach against market economics and justify anti-democratic actions. It is also painful because those clergy who behave this way do so out of altruism. But it is a quest for social justice that condemns the poor to permanent poverty – a true case of the road to hell being paved with good intentions.

In broad outline, since the second half of the nineteenth century the Catholic Church has lost most of its property, other than schools, hospitals, and a few mass media operations. Once the greatest landlord of the Western world, the Church long ago lost its major property role in the economic area. This does not mean that its influence has diminished, however, especially in moral terms. The Church can still legitimate or discredit given values and attitudes with profound impact on the prospects of the people.

But when the Latin American bishops' conference or the "theologians of liberation" or the Jesuits condemn "savage neoliberalism", they are propagating an absurdity. "Neoliberalism" is nothing more than an array of adjustment measures designed to alleviate the economic crisis in the region: reductions in government spending reductions in the public sector payroll, privatization of state enterprises, a balanced budget, and a careful control of monetary emission – pure common sense in the wake of an interventionist model that failed to produce widespread progress for the peoples of Latin America during more than half a century. These measures, so strongly criticized by the clergy, are no different from the ones the rich European countries demand of each other to qualify for the Euro. It is simply a matter of implementing a sensible economic policy.

The bishops, and particularly the liberation theology clergy, are even more destructive when they attack the profit motive, competition, and consumerism. They lament the poverty of the poor, but at the same time promote the idea that *owning property is sinful, as is the conduct of people who succeed in the economy by dint of hard work, saving, and creativity.* They preach attitudes that are contrary to the *psychology of success.*

For some liberation theology priests, poverty is inevitable, if for no other reason than the alleged imperialism of the rich countries, above all the United States. And the only way out of poverty is armed violence, which has been urged – and never publicly renounced – by liberation theology leader Gustavo Gutiérrez.

2.9.3.3.5 The Intellectuals

Montaner (2000: 62), affirms that, there are few cultures in which intellectuals have as much visibility as in Latin America. This may come from the strong French influence on *Latin American intellectuals*; in France the same thing happens. Once a writer or an artist has achieved fame, he or she becomes an expert on all subjects, including war in the Balkans, the virtues of *in vitro* fertilization, and the disaster that is caused by privatizing state enterprises.

This characteristic of our culture would have no major significance, except for its destructive consequences. This “*todology*” – the faculty to talk about everything without modesty or knowledge – practiced by our intellectuals with great enthusiasm has a price: Everything they state and repeat turns into a key element in the creation of a Latin American cosmivision. This characteristic of our culture has serious consequences, since a significant number of Latin American intellectuals are anti-West, anti-Yankee, and anti-market. Moreover, no matter that their views are contrary to the experience of the twenty nations that are the most developed and prosperous on our planet, they nonetheless profoundly influence the Latin American cosmivision. The effect of their pronouncements is to weaken democracy and impede the development of a reasonable confidence in the future. If the intellectuals promote the vision of a frightening revolutionary dawn,

we should not be surprised by the flight of capital or the sense of impermanence that attaches to our political and economic systems.

Furthermore, what many intellectuals announce in newspapers, books and magazines, radio and television is repeated in the majority of Latin American universities. Most public Latin American universities and many private ones, with some exceptions, are archaic deposits of old Marxist ideas about economy and society. They continue to stress the danger of multinational investments, the damages caused by globalisation, and the intrinsic wickedness of an economic model that leaves the allotment of resources to market forces. This message explains the close relationship between the lessons young scholars receive in the university and their link with subversive groups such as Sendero Luminoso in Peru, Tupamaros in Uruguay, Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria in Venezuela, the M-19 in Colombia, or Sub-Comandante Marcos's picturesquely hooded Zapatistas in Mexico. The weapons these young men carried with them into the jungle, mountains, and city streets were loaded in the lecture rooms of the universities.

The Latin American university – with few and honorable exceptions – has failed as an independent creative center and has been a source of tireless repetition of worn-out and dusty ideas. But even more startling is the absence of a close relationship between what the students are taught and the real needs of society. It is as if the university was resentfully rebelling against a social model that it detests without any concern for the preparation of qualified professionals who could contribute to real progress. The failure of our universities is particularly appalling when we recognize that the majority of universities in Latin America are financed by the national budget – from the contribution of

all taxpayers – in spite of the fact that 80 or 90 percent of the students belong to the middle and upper classes. This means that resources are transferred from those who have less to those who have more. This sacrifice then helps sustain absurd ideas that contribute to perpetuating the misery of the poorest.

2.9.3.3.6 The Left

According to Montaner (2000: 63), the final elite group consists of both labor unions that oppose market economics and private property and that peculiar Latin American category, the revolutionaries.

To be sure, there is a responsible labor movement dedicated to the legitimate interests and rights of workers. Sadly, this is often not the one that is dominant. The unions that burden Latin American societies are those that oppose privatization of state enterprises that have been losing money for decades while providing defective or nonexistent goods and services; the teacher unions that strike because they are opposed to their members taking standard competence tests; and the corrupt union aristocrats who loot retirement funds and health programs for their personal benefit.

Some unions fail to appreciate that the modern, competitive enterprise has to be flexible, capable of adapting to changing circumstances. When the unions make it difficult or costly to change staffing levels or when they establish rigid contracts, enterprises lose competitiveness and unemployment increases because businesses are reluctant to hire people under these conditions.

The revolutionaries are radicals who are convinced that they possess letters of marque that permit them to violate laws in the name of social

justice. Some limit themselves to preaching revolution without taking any additional action to further the revolutionary cause. Others, for whom Che Guavara is often the patron saint, think that it is legitimate to engage in political violence without considering the consequences of their acts. For them, the state is illegitimate and must be attacked at all costs. Their vehicles are student strikes, street riots, sabotage, kidnapping, bombs, and guerrilla attacks.

What have the actions of this indomitable tribe of revolutionaries cost the Latin American nations? The amount is incalculable, but the revolutionary left has to be one of the principal causes of the region's underdevelopment, not just because of its destruction of existing wealth but because it has also interrupted that long and fragile cycle of savings, investment, profit, and reinvestment that produces the wealth of nations.

In conclusion, it is obvious that these elite groups do not exhaust the list of those who have kept Latin America in a state of poverty and injustice. But they figure very prominently. Montaner, by describing the behavioral expression of the traditional cultural values that have shaped them, by spot-lighting that behavior, and by refuting their arguments, contributes to a process of change in Latin America in which these elites become forces for human progress, above all for those most in need: a Latin America where the dispossessed can reasonably hope for a life of freedom, dignity, justice, and prosperity.

2.9.3.4 A Cultural Typology of Economic Development

Mariano Grondona (2000: 44-55), also a Latin-American scholar like Carlos Montaner, has an existential approach to their regions and because of their commitment to it; they want it to advance to new

levels of human fulfillment, closer to those in the developed world. They want their nations to have the democratic stability, justice, opportunity for advancement, and prosperity that they find in the advanced countries.

He underscores the costs Latin America has paid for not heeding the lessons, in cultural and policy terms, of the success of the advanced democracies. He analyses and contrasts development – prone (e.g. western democracies) and development – resistant (e.g. Latin American) cultures.

Grondona concludes that culture is more powerful than economics or politics.

In his analysis he point out to twenty contrasting cultural factors that are viewed differently in different cultures and are the causes of a society itself to choose development or underdevelopment.

He emphasizes that the paradox of economic development is that economic values are not enough to ensure it. *Economic development is too important to be entrusted solely to economic values. The values accepted or neglected by a nation fall within the cultural field. You may thus say that economic development is cultural process.*

Values fall within that province of culture called “ethics”. The behavior of someone who acts out of respect for an intrinsic value formerly accepted at will and later incorporated, as an inner imperative is called “moral”. A person is moral when answering to intrinsic values. If a country achieves economic development when responding to non-economic values that are nevertheless pro-economic, you can conclude that *economic development is a moral phenomenon. Without*

the presence of values favorable to economic development, temptations will prevail. Temptations are the bearers of short-term expectations, but economic development is a long-term process. In the struggle between short and long term, the former will win unless a value intervenes in the decision making process. This is the function of values: to serve as a bridge between short-term and long-term expectations, decisively reinforcing distant goals in their otherwise hopeless struggle against instant gratification.

Values can be grouped in a consistent pattern that you may call a "value system". Real value systems are mixed; pure value systems exist only in the mind, as ideal types. It is possible to construct two ideal value systems: one including only values that favor economic development and the other including only values that resist it. A nation is modern as far as it approaches the former system; it is deemed traditional as far as it approaches the latter. Neither of these value systems exists in reality, and no nation falls completely within either of those two value systems. However, some countries approach the extreme favorable to economic development, whereas others approach the opposite extreme.

Real value systems are moving as well as mixed. If they are moving toward the favorable value-system pole, they improve a nation's chances of developing. If they move in the opposite direction, they diminish a nation's chances of developing.

This typology embraces twenty factors that are viewed very differently in cultures that are favorable and those that are resistant to development. These differences are intimately linked to the economic performance of the contrasting cultures. In choosing a system of values closer to either the favorable or resistant ideal systems, people

actually prefer the kind of economy that flows from those systems, and that is what they will have. This leads to a controversial conclusion: In the last analysis, development or underdevelopment is not imposed on a society from outside; rather, it is the society itself that has chosen development or underdevelopment.

The twenty contrasting cultural factors discussed by Grondona (2000: 47-53) which are linked to human progress or human stagnation are as follows:

2.9.3.4.1 Religion

Throughout history, religion has been the richest source of values. It was of course Max Weber who identified Protestantism, above all its Calvinist branch, as the root of capitalism. In other words, what initiated economic development was a religious revolution, one in which the treatment of life's winners (the rich) and losers (the poor) was centrally relevant. Weber labeled the religious (essentially Roman Catholic) current that showed a preference for the poor over the rich "publican", whereas he termed the current that preferred the rich and successful (essentially Protestant) "pharisaic".

Where a publican religion is dominant, economic development will be difficult because the poor will feel justified in their poverty, and the rich will be uncomfortable because they see themselves as sinners. By contrast, the rich in pharisaic religions celebrate their success as evidence of God's blessing, and the poor see their condition as God's condemnation. Both the rich and the poor have a strong incentive to improve their condition through accumulation and investment.

In the context of this typology, publican religions promote values that are resistant to economic development, whereas pharisaic religions promote values that are favorable.

2.9.3.4.2 Trust in the Individual

The principal engine of economic development is the work and creativity of individuals. What induces them to strive and invent is a climate of liberty that leaves them in control of their own destiny. If individuals feel that others are responsible for them, the effort of individuals will ebb. If others tell them what to think and believe, the consequence is either a loss of motivation and creativity or a choice between submission and rebellion. However, neither submission nor rebellion generates development. Submission leaves a society without innovators, and rebellion diverts energies away from constructive effort toward resistance, throwing up obstacles and destruction.

To trust the individual, to have faith in the individual, is one of the elements of a value system that favors development. In contrast, mistrust of the individual, reflected in oversight and control, is typical of societies that resist development. Implicit in the trusting society is the willingness to accept the risk that the individual will make choices contrary to the desires of government. If this risk is not accepted and the individual is subjected to a network of controls, the society loses the essential engine of economic development, namely, the aspiration of each of us to live and think as we wish, to be who we are, to transform ourselves into unique beings. Where there are no individuals, only "peoples" and "masses", development does not occur. What takes place instead is either obedience or uprising.

2.9.3.4.3 The Moral Imperative

There are three basic levels of morality. The highest is altruistic and self-denying – the morality of saints and martyrs. The lowest is criminal – disregard for the rights of others and the law. The intermediate morality is what Raymond Aron calls “a reasonable egoism” – the individual engages in neither saintly nor criminal behavior, reasonably seeking his or her own well-being within the limits of social responsibility and the law.

The highest morality is illustrated by Marx’s slogan “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs” and by the Roman Catholic Church’s insistence on clerical chastity. Neither is consistent with human nature.

In development-favorable cultures, there is widespread compliance with laws and norms that are not totally exigent and are therefore realizable. Moral law and social reality virtually coincide. In development-resistant cultures, on the other hand, there are two worlds that are out of touch with each other. One is the exalted world of the highest standards and the other is the real world of furtive immorality and generalized hypocrisy. The law is a remote, utopian ideal that does little more than express what people might in theory prefer, whereas the real world, effectively out of touch with *all* law, operates under the law of the jungle, the law of the cleverest or the strongest, a world of foxes and lions disguised as lambs.

2.9.3.4.4 Two Concepts of Wealth

In societies resistant to development, wealth above all consists of *what exists*; in favorable societies, wealth above all consists of *what does*

not yet exist. In the underdeveloped world, the principal wealth resides in land and what derives from it. In the developed world, the principal wealth resides in the promising processes of innovation. In the resistant society, real value resides, for example, in today's computer, whereas the favorable society focuses on the generation of computers to come.

In the British colonies in North America, uninhabited lands were available to those who would work them. In the Spanish and Portuguese colonies to the south, all lands were claimed by the Crown. From the outset, wealth belonged to those who held power. Wealth thus did not derive from work but from the ability to earn and retain the favor of the king.

2.9.3.4.5 Two Views of Competition

The necessity of competing to achieve wealth and excellence characterizes the societies favorable to development, not only in the economy but elsewhere in the society. Competition is central to the success of the enterprise, the politician, the intellectual, and the professional. In resistant societies, competition is condemned as a form of aggression. What are supposed to substitute for it are solidarity, loyalty, and cooperation. Competition among enterprises is replaced by corporativism. Politics revolve around the *caudillo*, and intellectual life has to adjust itself to the established dogma. Only in sports is competition accepted.

In resistant societies, negative views of competition reflect the legitimating of envy and utopian equality. Although such societies criticize competition and praise cooperation, the latter is often less common in them than in "competitive" societies. In fact, it can be

argued that competition is a form of cooperation in which both competitors benefit from being forced to do their best, as in sports. Competition nurtures democracy, capitalism, and dissent.

2.9.3.4.6 Two Notions of Justice

In resistant societies, distributive justice is concerned with those who are alive now – an emphasis on the present that is also reflected in a propensity to consume rather than to save. The favorable society is likely to define distributive justice as that which also involves the interests of future generations. In such societies, the propensity to consume is often smaller and the propensity to save is often greater.

2.9.3.4.7 The Value of Work

Work is not highly valued in progress-resistant societies, reflecting a philosophical current that goes back to the Greeks. The entrepreneur is suspect but the manual laborer somewhat less so, since he must *work to survive*. At the top of the prestige ladder are the intellectual, the artist, the politician, the religious leader, and the military leader. A similar prestige scale characterized Christendom until the Reformation. However, as Max Weber observed, the Reformation, and particularly the Calvinist interpretation of it, inverted the prestige scale, enshrining this work ethic. It is this same inverted value system that importantly explains the prosperity of Western Europe and North America – and East Asia – and the relative poverty of Latin America and other Third World areas.

2.9.3.4.8 The Role of Heresy

With his thesis of free interpretation of the Bible, Martin Luther was the religious pioneer of intellectual pluralism at a time when dogmatism dominated Christendom. The unpardonable crime at the time was not sin but heresy. Yet the questioning mind is the one that creates innovation, and innovation is the engine of economic development. Orthodox societies, including the former Soviet Union, suppress innovation. The collapse of the Soviet Union had more than a little to do with its insistence on Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy.

2.9.3.4.9 To Educate Is Not to Brainwash

We have seen that value systems favorable to development nurture the formation of individuals who are innovators, heretics. Education is the principal instrument of this nurturing. However, this must be a form of education that helps the individual discover his or her own truths, not one that dictates what the truth is. In value systems resistant to development, education is a process that transmits dogma, producing conformists and followers.

2.9.3.4.10 The Importance of Utility

The developed world eschews unverifiable theory and prefers to pursue that which is practically verifiable and useful. The intellectual traditions in Latin America focus more on grand cosmologies, which put it at a developmental disadvantage. *Ariel*, the phenomenally popular book by the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó that appeared in 1900, draws the distinction by using two characters from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: the comely spiritual Ariel representing Latin America, and the ugly, calculating Caliban, representing the

United States. However, it was the North Americans, not the Latin Americans, who opened the path to economic development. At the same time, we must note that utilitarianism suffers from a troubling lacuna, symbolized by the horrors of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

2.9.3.4.11 The Lesser Virtues

Advanced societies esteem a series of lesser virtues that are virtually irrelevant in traditional cultures: a job well done, tidiness, courtesy, punctuality. These contribute to both efficiency and harmoniousness in human relations. They are unimportant in a resistant culture partly because they impinge on the assertion of the individual's wishes and partly because they are overwhelmed by the great traditional virtues of love, justice, courage, and magnanimity. Nevertheless, the lesser virtues are characteristic of societies in which people are more respectful of the needs of others.

2.9.3.4.12 Time Focus

There are four categories of time: the past, the present, the immediate future, and a distant future that merges into the afterlife. The time focus of the advanced societies is the future that is within reach; it is the only time frame that can be controlled or planned for. The characteristic of traditional cultures is the exaltation of the past. To the extent that the traditional culture does focus on the future, it is on the distant, eschatological future.

2.9.3.4.13 Rationality

The modern world is characterized by its emphasis on rationality. The rational person derives satisfaction at the end of the day from

achievement, and progress is the consequence of a vast sum of small achievements. The pre-modern culture, by contrast, emphasizes grandiose projects – pyramids, the Aswan Dam, revolutions. Progress-resistant countries are littered with unfinished monuments, roads, industries, and hotels. But it's not important. Tomorrow a new dream will arise.

2.9.3.4.14 Authority

In ratio societies, power resides in the law. When the supremacy of the law has been established, the society functions according to the rationality attributed to the cosmos – natural law – by the philosophers of modernity (e.g., Locke, Hume, Kant). In resistant societies, the authority of the prince, the *caudillo*, or the state is similar to that of an irascible, unpredictable God. People are not expected to adapt themselves to the known, logical, and permanent dictates of the law; rather, they must attempt to divine the arbitrary will of those with power; thus the inherent instability of such societies.

2.9.3.4.15 Worldview

In a culture favorable to development, the world is seen as a setting for action. The world awaits the person who wants to do something to change it. In a culture resistant to development, the world is perceived as a vast entity in which irresistible forces manifest themselves. These forces bear various names: God, the devil, a powerful international conspiracy, capitalism, imperialism, Marxism, Zionism. The principal preoccupation of those in a resistant culture is to save themselves, often through utopian crusades. The individual in the resistant society thus tends to oscillate between fanaticism and cynicism.

2.9.3.4.16 Life View

In the progressive culture, life is something that I will make happen – I am the protagonist. In the resistant culture, life is something that happens to me – I must be resigned to it.

2.9.3.4.17 Salvation from or in the World

In the resistant conception, the goal is to save oneself *from* the world. According to traditional Catholicism, the world is “a vale of tears”. To save oneself from it is to resist temptations in a quest for the other world, the world after death. But for the puritan Protestants, salvation in the other world depends on the success of the individual’s efforts to transform *this* world. The symbol of the Catholic vision is the monk; that of the Protestant vision, the entrepreneur.

2.9.3.4.18 Two Utopias

Both progress-prone and progress-resistant cultures embrace a certain kind of utopianism. In the progressive culture, the world progresses slowly toward a distant utopia through the creativity and effort of individuals. In the resistant culture, the individual seeks an early utopia that is beyond reach. The consequence is again a kind of fanaticism – or cynicism. The latter utopianism is suggested by the visit of Pope John Paul II to India, where he insisted that all Indians have a right to a dignified life free of poverty and at the same time rejected birth control.

2.9.3.4.19 The Nature of Optimism

In the resistant culture, the optimist is the person who expects that luck, the gods, or the powerful will favor him or her. In the culture favorable to development, the optimist is the person who is resolved to

do whatever is necessary to assure a satisfactory destiny, convinced that what he or she does will make the difference.

2.9.3.4.20 Two Visions of Democracy

The resistant culture is the heir of the tradition of absolutism, even when it takes the form of Rousseauistic popular democracy, which admits no legal limits or institutional controls. In this vision, the absolute power of the king accrues to the people. The liberal, constitutional democracy of John Locke, Baron de Montesquieu, James Madison, and the Argentine Juan Bautista Alberdi characterizes the vision of democracy in the progressive culture. Political power is dispersed among different sectors and the law is supreme.

2.9.3.4.21 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Grandona (2000: 55) concludes that, this list of twenty cultural factors, which contrasts a value system favorable to economic development and one that is resistant, is not definitive. It could be amplified by additional contrasts or it could be reduced, seeking only the most important differences.

It is important to be mindful that neither the "favorable" nor the "resistant" exists in the real world. Rather, as Weber would say, they are *ideal types*, or *mental constructs*, that facilitate analysis because they offer two poles of reference that help us locate and evaluate a given society. The closer a society is to the favorable ideal, the more likely it is to achieve sustained economic development. Conversely, a society that is close to the resistant pole will be less likely to achieve sustained economic development.

An imaginary line runs between the resistant and favorable poles on which the real societies can be located. That location is not permanent, however, because no value system is static. There is continuous, albeit slow, movement on the line away from one pole and toward the other. Like two illuminated ports that call to the navigator from different directions, the ideal types permit a diagnosis of the course and speed of a given nation toward or away from economic development. Should it come close to the reefs of the resistant pole, it is time to consider what needs to be done to change the course and speed of the culture's value system to enhance the prospects of arriving at the opposite pole. Similarly, it should be possible to identify those values that, even if not wholly favorable to development, must be conserved because they preserve the identity of the society – so long as they do not block access to development.

Whether in the West or the East, development did not really exist before the seventeenth century. This was equally true for Europe and China, for pre-Columbian America and India. Productivity levels were low around the world because the societies were all agrarian. There were good years and bad years, mostly the result of climatic factors, above all rainfall, but there was no sustained economic development. The reason was cultural. Values that encouraged capital accumulation with a view to increased production and productivity did not exist. The value systems were anti-economic, emphasizing, for example, the salvation of the soul of the Egyptian pharaohs, art and philosophy in ancient Greece, the legal and military organization of the Roman Empire, mastery of traditional philosophy and literature in China, and the renunciation of the world and the quest for eternal salvation – often through war – of the Middle Ages in Europe.

It was the Protestant Reformation that first produced economic development in northern Europe and North America. Until the Reformation, the leaders of Europe were France, Spain (allied with Catholic Austria), the north of Italy (the cradle of the Renaissance), Portugal and the Vatican. The Protestant Cultural Revolution changed all that as heretofore second-rank nations – Holland, Switzerland, Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries, Prussia, and the former British colonies in North America – took over the reins of leadership. Economic development, in the form of the industrial revolution, brought wealth, prestige, and military power to the new leaders. Furthermore, the non-Protestant nations had to face the reality that their failure to pursue economic development would lead to their domination by the Protestant countries. They had to choose between Protestant hegemony and their traditional “resistant” values – their identity.

The responses varied across a spectrum from one non-Protestant country to another. At one extreme was Puerto Rico, which sold its Latin soul for the mess of pottage of economic development. At the other extreme is the Islamic fundamentalism of Iran, which ardently rejects Western-style developments a threat to an ancestral identity whose preservation is the chief goal of those in power.

2.9.3.5 The Competitive Advantage of Nations

Michael E. Porter in his book *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (New York: Free Press, 1990) gives us an insight of the correlation between the attitudes, values, and beliefs, and the microeconomics foundations of prosperity.

According to him, attitudes, values, and beliefs that are sometimes collectively referred to as “culture” play an unquestioned role in human

behavior and progress. The question is not whether culture has a role but how to understand this role in the context of the broader determinants of prosperity, and the links between culture and human progress from various perspectives. Economic culture is defined as the beliefs, attitudes, and values that bear on the economic activities of individuals, organizations, and other institutions.

Although the role of culture in economic progress is unquestioned, interpreting this role in the context of other influences and isolating the independent influence of culture is challenging. Treatments of the role of culture in economic prosperity tend to focus on generic cultural attributes that are deemed desirable, such as hard work, initiative, belief in the value of education, as well as factors drawn from macroeconomics, such as a propensity to save and invest. These are surely relevant to prosperity, but none of these generic attributes is unambiguously correlated with economic progress. Hard work is important, but just as important is what guides and directs the type of work done. Initiative is important, but not all initiative is productive. Education is crucial, but so is the type of education sought and what the education is used to accomplish. Saving is good, but only if the savings are deployed in productive ways.

Indeed, the same cultural attribute can have vastly different implications for economic progress in different societies, or even in the same society at different times. Frugality, for example, served Japan well until its recent prolonged recession; now it is an obstacle to recovery. The investigation of a wide range of successful nations, including the United States, Japan, Italy, Hong Kong, Singapore, Chile, and Costa Rica, reveals wide and subtle cultural differences

associated with improving economic circumstances that further belie a simple connection between culture and prosperity.

2.9.3.5.1 The Sources of Prosperity: Comparative versus Competitive Advantage

A nation's prosperity, or standard of living, is determined by the productivity with which it uses its human, capital, and natural resources. Productivity sets the level of sustainable wages and returns to capital, the principal determinants of national income per citizen. Productivity, then, is the basis of "competitiveness". It depends on the value of products and services produced by firms in a nation, deriving, for example, from quality and uniqueness, as well as on the efficiency with which they are produced. The central issue in economic development is how to create the conditions for *rapid and sustained productivity growth*.

In the modern global economy, productivity depends less on what industries a nation's firms compete in than on *how* they compete – that is to say, the nature of their operations and strategies. In today's *global economy*, firms in virtually any industry can become more productive through more sophisticated strategies and investments in modern technologies. Modern technologies offer major opportunities for upgrading in fields as disparate as agriculture, small package delivery, or semiconductor production. Similarly, there is scope for more advanced strategies in virtually any field, involving customer segmentation, differentiated products and services, and *tailored value chains to deliver products to customers*.

Hence, the concept of industrial targeting, in which government seeks to favor winning industries, is flawed. There is no good or bad industry

in the new “productivity paradigm”. Rather, the question is whether firms are able to employ the best methods, assemble the best skills, and utilize the best techniques to do whatever they do at an increasingly higher level of productivity. It does not matter if a country has an agricultural economy, a service economy, or a manufacturing economy. What does matter is a country’s ability to organize itself effectively around the premise that productivity determines prosperity for the individuals of that country.

In the productivity paradigm, traditional distinctions between foreign and domestic firms also lose meaning. Prosperity in a nation is a reflection of what both domestic and foreign firms choose to do in that nation. Domestic firms that produce low-quality products using unsophisticated methods hold back national productivity, whereas foreign firms that bring in new technology and advanced methods will boost productivity and local wages. Traditional distinctions between local and traded industries, and the tendency to focus policy attention *only on the traded industries*, also become problematic. Local industries affect the cost of living for citizens and the cost of doing business for traded industries. Neglecting them, creates serious disadvantages.

The productivity paradigm as the basis for prosperity represents a radical shift from previous conceptions of the sources of wealth. A hundred or even fifty years ago, prosperity in a nation was widely seen as resulting from the possession of natural resources such as land, minerals, or a pool of labor, giving the country a *comparative advantage* relative to other countries with less favorable endowments. In the modern global economy, however, firms can access resources from any location cheaply and efficiently, making resources

themselves less valuable. The real value of resources is falling, evidenced by the steadily declining real prices of commodities over the past century. Similarly, cheap labor is ubiquitous, so that possessing a labor pool is not in and of itself a source of advantage. With rapidly declining transportation and communication costs, even favorable geographic location relative to markets or trade routes is less of a source of advantage today than it was in the past. A firm in Hong Kong or Chile, despite great distances from markets, can still be a major trading partner of the United States or Europe.

Comparative advantage has given way as the basis of wealth to competitive advantage residing in superior productivity in assembling resources to create valuable products and services. Countries that improve their standard of living are those in which firms are becoming more productive through the development of more sophisticated sources of competitive advantage based on knowledge, investment, insight, and innovation.

Ironically, in today's global economy it is the local things that are increasingly important and decisive in determining why a particular firm is more competitive and productive than one based elsewhere. This is because rapid flows of trade, capital, and information nullify the advantages that a firm gets from inputs sourced from elsewhere. If a firm in one country buys its machines from Germany, so can its competitor. If a firm sources capital from abroad, so can its competitor. If a firm buys raw materials from Australia, so can its competitor. All these approaches may be necessary, but they have essentially been neutralized as competitive advantages in today's global economy. The remaining sources of competitive advantage are increasingly loyal, including special supplier or customer relationships, unique insights

about market needs gleaned from local customers or partners, special access to technology and knowledge from other local institutions, or production flexibility resulting from the use of a nearby supplier.

2.9.3.5.2 The Microeconomic Foundations of Prosperity

Since many of the external sources of advantage for a nation's firms have been nullified by globalisation, potential internal sources of advantage must be cultivated if a country wishes to upgrade its economy and create prosperity for its citizens. Attention is frequently focused on the importance of building a sound macroeconomic, political, and legal environment. However, macroeconomic conditions, while necessary, are not sufficient to ensure a prosperous economy. Indeed, there is less and less discretion about macro economic policies. Unless they are sound, the nation is punished by international capital markets.

Prosperity ultimately depends on improving the *microeconomic* foundations of competition. The microeconomic foundations of productivity rest on two interrelated areas: the *sophistication of company operations and strategy* and the quality of the microeconomic business environment. Unless companies operating in a nation become more productive, an economy cannot become more productive. Yet the sophistication with which companies compete is strongly influenced by the quality of the national business environment in which they operate. The business environment has much to do with the types of strategies that are feasible and the efficiency with which firms can operate. For example, operational efficiency is unattainable if regulatory red tape is onerous, logistics are unreliable, or firms

cannot get timely supplies of components or high-quality service for their production machines.

Government's role in the productivity paradigm is different and more indirect than in other conceptions of competitiveness. Government responsibilities begin with creating a stable and predictable macroeconomic, political, and legal environment in which firms can make the long-term strategic choices required to boost productivity. Beyond this, government must ensure that high-quality factors (inputs) are available to firms (e.g., educated human resources, efficient physical infrastructure); establish overall rules and incentives governing competition that encourage productivity growth; facilitate and encourage cluster development; and develop and implement a positive, distinctive, and long-term economic upgrading program for the nation that mobilizes, government, business, institution, and citizens. Government and other institutions such as universities, standards agencies, and industry groups must work together to ensure that the business environment fosters rising productivity.

2.9.3.5.3 Building Prosperity: Implications for Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behavior

This discussion of the microeconomic foundations of competitiveness reveals some of the beliefs, attitudes, and values that support and promote prosperity. Prevailing beliefs about the basis for prosperity itself are among the most central. The attitudes of individuals and organisations and their economic behavior are strongly affected by what they perceive to be the way to win. Perhaps the most basic belief undergirding successful economic development is acceptance that prosperity depends on productivity, not on control of resources, scale,

government favors, or military power, and that the productivity paradigm is good for society. Without such beliefs, rent seeking and monopoly seeking will be the dominant behavior, a pathology still afflicting many developing countries.

Another basic belief that supports prosperity is that the potential for wealth is limitless because it is based on ideas and insights, not fixed because of scarce resources. Wealth can be expanded for many by improving productivity. This belief supports productivity-enhancing steps in all parts of society that will expand the pie. In contrast, the view that wealth is fixed and not related to effort leads various groups to struggle over the distribution of the pie, a preoccupation that almost inevitably saps productivity. This zero-sum worldview is central to the theory of a universal peasant culture.

The productivity paradigm gives rise to a whole series of supportive attitudes and values: Innovation is good, competition is good, accountability is good, high regulatory standards are good, investment in capabilities and technology is a necessity, employees are assets, membership in a cluster is a competitive advantage, collaboration with suppliers and customers is beneficial, connectivity and networks are essential, education and skills are essential to support more productive work, and wages should not rise unless productivity rises, among others. These can be contrasted with unproductive attitudes and values: Monopoly is good, power determines rewards, rigid hierarchy is needed to maintain control, and self-contained family relationships should determine partnership.

In any nation, there will be differences among groups and individuals in the beliefs and attitudes they hold. One can also view economic

development as partly shaped by the tug-of-war between productivity-enhancing aspects of economic culture in a nation and productivity-eroding aspects of culture. Especially heavy weight is attached to the beliefs and attitudes of government leaders and the business elites. A strong government may impose a productive economic culture, at least for a time, but acceptance by business interests must develop or economic progress will be slow and reversible. Sustained development will require that productive beliefs, attitudes, and values spread to workers, institutions such as churches and universities, and ultimately to civil society. Otherwise, political support will be lacking for productivity-enhancing policies that challenge vested interests.

2.9.3.5.4 Why do nations have unproductive cultures?

There is growing consensus about what determines prosperity and about the beliefs, attitudes, and values that foster economic process. Why, then, do we have unproductive economic cultures? Why do these persist in certain societies? Do individuals and companies knowingly act in ways that are counter to their economic self-interest?

What people believe about what it takes to be prosperous has much to do with how they behave. And beliefs become reflected in attitudes and values. Unproductive economic culture, then, often arises less from deeply embedded societal traits than ignorance or the misfortune of being guided by flawed theories. The acceptance of flawed theories is sometimes a matter of pure ideology, but sometimes it is a convenience related to desired modes of political control. Military regimes often like import substitution and self-sufficiency policies, for example, because they reinforce their power and control over citizens.

Nations that are able to avoid flawed ideas, for whatever reason, have benefited in terms of economic prosperity.

Second, economic culture appears to be heavily derived from the past and present microeconomic context. True, individuals may act in ways that might hurt the collective interests of the society or national self-interest. However it is rare that individuals knowingly act in unproductive ways that are counter to their individual or company self-interest. The role of cultural attributes, then, is difficult to decouple from the influence of the overall business environment and a society's institutions. The way people behave in a society has much to do with the signals and the incentives that are created in the economic system in which they live.

For example, one often hears complaints about workers in developing countries as having a poor work ethic. But what if there is no reward for hard work? What if there is no advancement even if one works hard? A nation's work ethic cannot be understood independently of the overall system of incentives in the economy. Similarly, companies in developing countries often behave opportunistically and do not plan based on long time horizons. In fact, this short-term behavior often can be rational in an environment in which government policies are unstable and unpredictable. Rent seeking by companies, similarly, is usually associated with a political system that rewards it.

National characteristics ascribed to culture, then, often have economic roots. Good examples are Japan's lifetime employment system and its high savings rate. Lifetime employment was far from the norm in pre-World War II Japan and was originally instituted to control labor strife in the early post-World War II period. High savings is widely recognized

as owing much to the memory of wartime deprivation and its aftermath, coupled with relatively early retirement, a poorly developed pension system, and exorbitant costs of home ownership requiring substantial capital accumulation.

Thus it is difficult to disentangle culturally derived behaviors from behaviors that have been enhanced or encouraged by the economic system. History, in this sense, places a strong imprint on economic culture, both from experiences during “good times” and those during “bad times”. This dependence of culture on circumstance is supported by the success of people from poor countries who have moved to a different economic system. The case of some El Salvadorans in the United States who have achieved remarkable success is one of many examples.

Third, social policy choices can have a strong influence on economic culture because they influence the economic context. A good example is policies toward the social safety net. These directly affect attitudes toward work, personal savings behavior, and willingness to invest in self-education while they indirectly influence many other aspects of a nation’s economic policies. Indeed, economic and social policies are inextricably intertwined.

Much economic culture, is learned directly or indirectly from the economy. Exceptions include those beliefs, attitudes, and values derived not from self-interest or economic interest at all but from purely social or moral choices. Societal attitudes toward older citizens, norms for personal interaction, and religious teachings are examples of social/moral attitudes and values that can shape economic culture independently. Such attitudes and values also have a large role in

establishing a nation's social policy priorities. Even social and moral choices, however, can bear the imprint of past economic circumstances and learning. Religion and philosophy may well reinforce productive – or unproductive – economic culture.

In a world in which productivity, initiative, and learning are the determinants of prosperity, developing countries have unprecedented opportunities to enhance wealth.

Indeed, the forces in the new economy are so strong that it is no overstatement to suggest that economic culture is no longer a matter of choice. The question is, Will a country voluntarily embrace a productive economic culture by changing the old beliefs, attitudes, and values that are impeding prosperity, or will the change eventually be forced upon it? It has become a question of when and how fast a country's economic culture will change, rather than whether it will change. Although older citizens who grew up under past economic approaches often resist change, the generations of younger managers in their twenties and thirties have often been trained in the new economic culture, not infrequently at international business schools. Thus there are also forces for change from within the business elite in many developing countries.

In the modern economy, which exerts great pressure on societies to adopt beliefs, attitudes, and values consistent with the productivity paradigm, does culture today have the same influence in the economic sphere that it had under a different economic order? Historical accounts often include rich discussions of the impact of cultural attributes on societies and their development paths because historically these attributes were persistent and exerted considerable

influence on the economic configuration of societies. Yet the convergence of economic ideas and the pressures of the global market have arguably reduced the scope for cultural variables to influence the economic paths societies choose.

What we are witnessing, in many ways, is the emergence of the core of an international economic culture that cuts across traditional cultural divides and will increasingly be shared. A set of beliefs, attitudes, and values that bear on the economy will be common, and the clearly unproductive aspects of culture will fall away under the pressure, and the opportunity, of the global economy. An important role for culture in economic prosperity will remain, but it may well be a more positive one. Those unique aspects of a society that give rise to unusual needs, skills, values, and modes of work will become the distinctive aspects of economic culture.

Thus, although global convergence around the productivity paradigm is increasing, cultural differences will certainly remain. Globalisation will not eradicate culture, as some have feared. However, instead of isolating some peoples in their economic disadvantage, these cultural differences can contribute the specialized advantages so important to improving the prosperity of nations in the global economy. In a global economy in which so many things can be easily sourced from anywhere, cultural differences that give rise to distinctive products and services should become more celebrated.

2.10 Culture, Globalization and Poverty

The world is hearing a magnificent overture of cultural possibilities. People everywhere, however, are repositioning themselves in this vast global commons

in order to preserve part of their traditions, while at the same time engaging in cultural exchanges and redefining their relationships with neighbours on this tiny planet. Cultural exchanges are in fact the axis of these new phenomena. The challenge for governments and civil societies is to find ways of channeling such exchanges through democratic practices that respect human rights, gender equity and sustainability.

Significantly, a majority of conflicts now arising within nation-states involve cultural matters: the ethnic war in Kosovo; the clash between Christians opposing the Sharia Muslim law as state law and Muslim local authorities in Kaduna, Nigeria; rioting against Chinese in Indonesia as a result of the economic crisis; and mobilization of three million Indians demanding political participation in Ecuador.

Friction based on perceptions of cultural difference between nationals and migrants has also been in the news in developed as much as in developing countries in recent years. Many conflicts are also linked to urban movements that, in new democratic settings, are carving out a new political space for themselves, *inter alia* by reclaiming cultural forms of heritage and identity.

At present, globalization, telecommunications and informatics are changing the way in which people identify and perceive cultural diversity. In particular, the outworn metaphor of the 'mosaic of cultures' or the 'global cultural mosaic' no longer describes different peoples' cultural preferences as they enter the world of the twenty-first century. Cultures are no longer the fixed, bounded, crystallized containers they were formerly reputed to be. Instead they are transboundary creations exchanged throughout the world via the media and the Internet. We must now regard culture as a process rather than as a finished product.

Poverty has been targeted by the United Nations and governments for immediate action, raising once again the issue of its relationship to culture. However, the

contemporary debate is as culture-bound as the versions of earlier times when it was argued that the poor were poor because of their cultural values. A way out of the poverty dilemma calls for a synthesis between the current orthodoxy and a return to the positive and production aspect of the welfare state, while strengthening human rights, democratic governments and popular participation.

In this period of flux and cultural change, people's valuations can no longer be taken for granted. Asian values have long been widely debated in relation to the economic success of East Asia and the recent economic crises there. Opinion surveys show that there is an underlying unity in Asian society's valuation of hard work and the importance of investing in the education of future generations. However, there is a striking diversity of valuations between, for instance, Chinese and Japanese respondents. A similar diversity of responses between older and younger generations points to rapid cultural change.

Opinion surveys in European countries, on the other hand, show that the influx of migrants and the rise of nationalism are the cause of considerable differences in the way nationals perceive themselves. Nationals and migrants have problems in relating to one another. Another opinion survey explores the degree of happiness felt by different nationalities. A significant, optimistic finding is that local and global loyalties are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In a number of countries people are able to link their identity vis-à-vis the national state to a simultaneous attachment to a wider international context. The comfortable distinction between the 'local' and the 'global' is swiftly fading; increasing numbers of people now insist upon being local and global at one and the same time.

2.10.1 Cultural and other injustices

Cultural injustice is rooted in patterns of representation, interpretation and communication. It includes cultural domination, non-recognition

and disrespect. We must assume that justice today requires both recognition and redistribution. But there are interferences between them: recognition claims tend to promote group 'differences'. Redistribution claims, in contrast, often call for changing economic and social structures that exclude certain groups.

Examples of this are gender and cultural strategies for development. Gender has politico-economic dimensions since it structures the division of labour. On the other hand, gender discrimination is a cultural value as well. So remedies pull in opposite directions. There is a feminist redistribution-recognition dilemma: how can feminists fight simultaneously to abolish gender differentiation and valorize gender specificity?

The same kind of dilemma affects cultural diversity. How can indigenous peoples and cultural minorities fight simultaneously to have everything that the dominant cultures have, while at the same time valorizing their own cultural specificity?

This means that conflicts may arise between the preservation of cultural traditions and the attitudes and institutions that are needed for economic growth and development. As Amartya Sen (1999: 31) has argued, it is now for the people to decide whether to sacrifice material goods for the preservation of a culture or whether to sacrifice certain cultural features for greater prosperity. But we must first ask what margins people have for such decisions in today's structures of inequality.

2.10.2 Cultural diversity and inequality

There are two prevalent approaches to these basic issues of inequality. One seeks to redress inequalities through policies of redistribution and direct assistance to the needy. The other conceptualizes inequalities in terms of capabilities and access to opportunities. The means for building capabilities, as also for redistributive policies, necessarily include public action and institutions (primarily but not exclusively the state): access to education (in many countries, the opportunities for young girls have been practically nil, and thus policies to redress discrimination and exclusion have become urgent), access to health services, and opportunities to learn the skills needed to function in the modern world (including information technologies). It should be noted that the effective implementation of a programme to reduce inequalities in capabilities and access requires macroeconomic policy and political regimes that facilitate rather than hinder them.

2.10.3 Creative pluralism

Cultural diversity as a descriptive feature of our contemporary world is our point of departure. Diversity fosters creativity, manifested in the ability of human groups to adapt and transform their living conditions. As the world stands today, diversity and creativity are caught in the cage of inequality and injustice. To move forward, in fact, *imagining difference is the first step, but it must be followed by acceptance of the Other*. This requires recognition that others have the same right to build their consciousness freely as long as their actions do not prevent one from enjoying that same freedom.

Among the dangers of new forms of intolerance, the dogmatism of some self-defined communities is paramount. When ethnicity or any other cultural difference comes to be defined as 'essential', as part of 'human nature', it becomes the basis for claims in societal intergroup conflictive relations. Ethnic differences tend to turn into total identities, fundamental to the very definition of personhood within the group. Often such communities are defined or strengthened as part of the conflict itself and may have weak historical roots. Leaders of such 'postulated' communities show a strong hand to their followers, denying the members their moral autonomy. Under such conditions, outside intervention and enunciation can easily be interpreted as disrespect for cultural diversity.

One significant analytical distinction is between 'divisible' and 'nondivisible' types of conflict. As Hirschman notes, conflicts about distribution can be negotiated, based on 'bargaining and arguing' (1995: 243). *Highly varied though they are, they tend to be divisible; they are conflicts other getting more or less, in contrast to conflicts of the either/or, nondivisible category that are characteristic of societies split along rival ethnic, linguistic, or religious lines.*

We then come, to an old debate in a new guise, that of poverty and culture. Stagenhagen (1999), a well-known Mexican anthropologist, revisits this issue with the assertion that the contemporary narrative on poverty is as culture-bound as the versions of earlier times. He summarizes Oscar Lewis's thesis dating from the 1950s: the poor are poor because their cultural values prevent them escaping from poverty. The solution therefore lies in changing the culture of the poor. Stavenhagen argues that poverty among many world populations today – including migrant populations – is often related to structural

racism, in other words, that most migrants to the industrial countries are poor and come from poor lands. If the poor of the rich countries are still poor and if poverty in the developing countries is not on the wane, it is because current policies have not been successful and alternative solutions must be found. Stavenhagen asserts that political cultures have ways of changing and that, in the face of persistent poverty, social philosophy is returning to some of its fundamental questions: the issues of liberty and equality, individual freedoms and collective responsibilities, the integration of humanity and nature, and the role of government, democracy and justice.

A number of studies show that during the 1980s and 1990s income inequality worsened in most countries as well as between countries. In fact, poverty is often the expression of other forms of group inequality and social exclusion; it is associated with various forms of discrimination, unequal access to essential social services and to participation in government and basic political and decision-making processes. The poor and disadvantaged groups are frequently identified in class terms (landless peasants, urban squatters in the informal economy) or in ethnic terms (racial and cultural minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples).

Over the past few decades, social scientists have studied conditions of poverty in different regional contexts. Regardless of differences, however, certain common patterns recurring among poor families and in poor communities have caught the attention of researchers. Does poverty lead to certain predictable forms of behaviour or recurrent types of social relationships, similar value systems and attitudes? Some authors, following the pioneering work of Oscar Lewis in the 1950s, identify such common traits as the expression of an underlying

'culture of poverty' which poor people around the world are said to share despite other social and cultural variations that may distinguish them. Indeed, comparative micro-level research on poor families and communities shows striking similarities in some aspects and underlines differences in others. For example, family-based social safety nets, communal solidarity, 'jobbing' (doing any kind of work available at almost any wage), widespread attitudes of fatalism and hopelessness, and a youth culture in which violence, drugs and delinquency often appear prominently (particularly in urban areas) are, among others, features that are seen repeatedly in poor households around the world.

However, the concept of the culture of poverty – aside from certain elements – has been more often wielded by the general public than by knowledgeable researchers as a suggested explanation of poverty itself. The poor are presumed to be poor because of certain values in their culture that prevent them from rising out of poverty.

While poverty and its reduction is certainly also a cultural issue, the 'blame the victim' approach that the culture of poverty argument implies is unacceptable on both moral and practical grounds. There is more to a relationship between culture and poverty than the idea that the poor necessarily share a common culture that prevents them from climbing higher on the social ladder.

How is the 'culture of poverty' to be changed without attacking the root causes of poverty? Poverty is not only a lack of material goods or incomes, it is linked to various forms of marginality, discrimination and social exclusion of specific populations or groups.

The world is a mosaic of cultures and societies, and even within the framework of economic globalization, cultural diversity remains vivid

and remarkable. Variations in situations of poverty reflect this diversity. In many cases, in the poor countries, poverty may be due to natural factors such as droughts, floods, desertification or endemic illness. More often than not, however, poverty is caused by human factors: skewed distribution of resources, income and wealth, insufficient capital assets, the workings of exploitative economic relations, inadequate social arrangements, inefficient economic and political institutions, lack of political will, vested interests, or simply by some basic human failings such as greed, intolerance, indifference, egotism and corruption in some, or idleness, passivity, hopelessness and despair in others.

If the poor in the rich countries cannot be wished or washed away, and if in the poor countries poverty is increasing both in quantity and intensity as a by-product of globalization, then surely current strategies to combat this world scourge have not been successful and alternative solutions must be found. Some scholars propound a market-plus strategy, which means preserving and building upon market-oriented development processes but adding a 'social' component by increasing social expenditures, recalling the state into service to carry out certain necessary public investments, and building social service institutions in partnership between governments, business, civil society and the international community, all this with due respect for local and national cultural traditions (Dyke, 1998).

While the incidence of poverty is related to many factors, and now increasingly to global macro-economic forces, the struggle against poverty must also take place at the local level in communities and villages and neighborhoods where the everyday issues must be tackled. One widely held view is that people-oriented, environment-

centred and poverty-concerned development with popular and democratic participation should focus on local issues: access to land, water, forests; preventing and combating pollution, fostering health services for everybody; making education available to all children and adults, particularly girls; training youth for leadership roles; promoting equal rights for women and girls respecting the specific rights of indigenous peoples; creating opportunities for the development of productive activities; strengthening solidarity networks; improving community social services; enabling the redistribution of resources; furthering autonomous governance and democratic decision-making processes; exercising respect for local traditions; using, whenever possible, traditional knowledge and skills; establishing and strengthening local institutions.

Political cultures have a way of changing, and in the face of the dramatic and persistent presence of poverty in the world, social philosophy is returning to some of its fundamental questions: the issues of liberty and equality, individual freedom and collective responsibility, the integration of humankind and nature, the role of government, democracy and justice. Before effective means to eliminate poverty in the world can be implemented, some of these issues need to be resolved at the intellectual level (Sen, 1992).

Truly, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, a new political culture appears to be emerging, without which any serious hope that poverty will disappear from the world in the short run is bound to fail.

2.10.4 The political economy of dignity

Too many discussions of cultural pluralism fail to recognize what may be called 'the political economy of dignity'. That is, they do not

recognize that collective cultural rights, as they have been discussed here, cannot rely entirely on normative calls to tolerance, to recognition or to states to allow minorities to 'enjoy their own cultures'. Although the symbolic core of cultural dignity is an end unto itself and thus cannot be reduced to matters of wealth and stratification, dignity as a part of the public sphere must be placed within the wider context of inequality, both political and economic.

It is a truism that something like half of the world population (a total which has just crossed the six billion mark) lives in poverty, by measures agreed upon by the World Bank, UNDP's *Human Development Report* and other reputable measurements. This shocking fact should caution us against hoping that subscription to certain norms of cultural diversity (difficult enough in itself) will easily translate into public policy. Whether we consider the inequality within nations or between nations, we can easily see why resources for the active support of minority cultural spaces are hard to come by.

These facts about radical inequality (and poverty) have been seriously exacerbated by the globalization of the world's economy in the last few decades. Even the sources such as the World Bank, whose success is measured by higher hopes for economic globalization, have conceded that inequality within and between countries has grown as a result of the tighter integration of the *global economy and the more promiscuous flow of global capital*, even if poverty has not increased in absolute terms. So, global poverty was already unacceptably deep and inequality is growing.

Only by looking to integrative approaches that unite redistribution, recognition and dignity can the requirements of justice for all, be met.

Chapter 3 *RESEARCH METHODOLOGY*

Brynard and Hanekom (1997: 28) is of the opinion that, Research Methodology, or methods of collecting data necessitates a reflection on the planning, structuring and execution of the research in order to comply with the demands of truth, objectivity and validity.

3.1 Aim of the research

The research was done with the purpose of achieving 3 main goals:

1. to consider employee perceptions of Diversity Management in the workplace, and to imprint upon them the need for the building of an active and participative workforce society, that reflects the world in which we live and do business. It should be based on the principles of equal opportunity, to create an *environment of prosperity and harmony, which will maximize the contribution of all, for the benefit of all, without discrimination of any kind.*
2. to empower employees, to develop an understanding of the issues of diversity and how to manage it in the workplace and, to create an environment in which no person receives or is denied opportunity because of race, gender, culture, or ethnicity.
3. To imprint upon managers, supervisors and staff in general that *Management of Diversity is not all about Affirmative Action and Employment Equity.* It is not about managing quotas and numbers. It is about managing people, for their own benefit, and the benefit of the organization and the country.

3.2 Research Information

The information for the research was divided into primary and secondary sources. Brynard and Hanekom (1997: 28) argues that *“when researchers collect their own data, it is called primary data. Should they use data collected by other researchers concerning other research problems, this data is referred to as secondary data”*.

3.2.1 The primary sources

The primary research was done using Qualitative and Quantitative Research Techniques, involving the identification and exploration of a number of often related variables that give insight into the nature and causes of certain problems and into the consequences of the problems for those affected.

It included flexible techniques, such as:

- Loosely structured interviews using open-ended questions;
- Focus group discussions,

The “Qualitative” information was therefore recorded in narrative form.

The “Quantitative Research” technique was structured with a questionnaire to quantify pre-categorized answers.

It was based on “Suggestions for managers” on how to deal with pertinent factors that can improve the understanding and acceptance of Diversity Management in the workplace.

The researcher being the Chief Engineer in charge of the “Hospitals Engineering Services” in the Province, has the duty of visiting all Provincial Hospitals, Provincial Aided Hospitals and Provincial Health

Care Centres, within the Department of Health, to ascertain their needs in terms of any mechanical, electrical, civil, or clinical engineering services.

He was therefore in a position that allows him direct contact with the staff of over 200 different institutions.

The researcher used this facility to conduct an "Informal Survey" regarding the "Employees perceptions of Diversity management in the Western Cape Public Health Sector".

The primary sources of research also included the personal experience of the researcher along his 40 years of employment in South Africa, Portugal, Mozambique and Angola, and the knowledge acquired in his interactions with his superiors, peers and subordinates in the work place.

The research design was therefore primarily of a qualitative nature, based on the purpose and aims of the study.

The purpose of the focus groups was to record "qualitative information" in innovative form and to test member's views.

The interviews were loosely constructed, allowing "much more scope for depth in respondent's answers", and it involved three focus groups of average 5 staff members.

Respondents were free to make any suggestions that could help to achieve a better "Diversity Management" within the PAWC Health Department, and learn more about other cultures.

3.2.1.1 The questions for Qualitative Research

For the purpose of gathering "qualitative information" through focus groups the interviews were conducted in an informal way and the participants were pushed to think and to express freely their feelings and opinions around the following 8 questions:

1. WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, IS "MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY"?
2. DO YOU THINK THAT MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN ORGANISATIONS? CAN MANAGING DIVERSITY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
3. DO YOU SEE DIVERSITY AS A PROBLEM OR AN OPPORTUNITY? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT DIVERSITY OF RACIOETHNIC, GENDER, CULTURAL, AND OTHER IDENTITIES IN THE WORKFORCE BRINGS NET ADDED VALUE TO THE ORGANISATION?
4. DO YOU THINK THAT IGNORANCE OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IS A SOURCE OF INEFFECTIVENESS AND INEFFICIENCY IN THE WORK PERFORMANCE OF DIVERSE WORKGROUPS?
5. WHO DO YOU THINK IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING DIVERSITY?
6. WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT "DIRECT CHANGE DRIVERS" THAT WHEN INCORPORATED INTO THE OVERALL STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS, WILL BRING ABOUT EFFECTIVE DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP".
7. DO YOU THINK DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION / EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IS THE SAME THING?
8. SOUTH AFRICA IS A RAINBOW NATION. DO YOU THINK THAT IT IS A CORRECT STATEMENT?

3.2.1.2. **The questions for Quantitative Research**

For the purpose of “Quantitative Research” the technique was structured around a questionnaire comprising 16 questions. It was sent to 20 staff members, from non-supervisors to supervisors and middle managers. An assurance was given to all respondents that their identities would be kept confidential.

For each question a number of “Suggestion for Managers” was given, based on general knowledge and best practices in Managing Diversity.

The respondents were asked to indicate:

1. If they agree with such best practices;
2. If they think that middle and senior management know such best practices and practice them in the work environment.

The 16 questions and best practices for each one, are indicated as follows:

1. ***Sense of Self and Space***

- Make sure you say good morning and good-bye to each employee every day.
- Introduce new employees to their co-workers formally, taking the individual around to meet each new colleague.
- Be careful in using first names, especially with older workers.
- Ask people what they prefer being called.
- Guard against being overly familiar with workers.
- Learn to listen and create an atmosphere of trust where you can learn about each other's needs.

2. *Communications and Language*

- When there is a language barrier, assume confusion. Don't take the nod or yes to mean the individual understands or agrees. Watch for tangible signs of understanding such as immediately beginning the task and doing it correctly.
- Consider that smiles and laughter may indicate discomfort or embarrassment. See if you can identify what is causing the difficulty.
- Avoid smiling when giving directions or when having serious work-related discussions with employees, especially when giving feedback or when conducting performance reviews.
- Be careful not to think out loud. Employees hearing you may take your off-the-cuff comments literally and may even act on them.
- Watch for subtle clues that may be speaking volumes. A comment about another worker's frustrations may be telling you about a work-group complaint. Hints about family members moving in might be couching a desire for a raise.

3. *Dress and Appearance*

- Before reacting to another's appearance, stop to consider the meaning attached to appearance by the individual.
- When making assessments about job applicants, consider their cultural norms regarding dress.
- Consider the job the individual will be doing and the people with whom he/she will be interacting when determining appropriate dress.
- Teach individuals the cultural rules required in your organization regarding dress and grooming.
- Remember that body scent is not necessarily a sign of uncleanliness.

- Consider uniforms as a way to eliminate differences and build common ground.

4. *Food and Eating Habits*

- When planning catered meals or snacks for meetings and group gatherings, include a variety of foods so there will be something edible and acceptable for all.
- Avoid serving food that might be offensive to some staff members.
- Have alternate dishes available (e.g. a vegetarian plate or fruit salad).
- When choosing restaurants for business meetings, keep individual dietary restrictions and preferences in mind.
- Provide well-ventilated or outdoor eating areas for staff where odors can be more easily dissipated.

5. *Time and Time Consciousness*

- Recognise that differences in time consciousness are cultural and are not a sign of laziness.
- Allow time in your schedule for the development of relationships.
- Make it a point to spend some time each week with each employee.
- Explain the reasons for deadlines and schedules.
- Explain the part promptness plays in assessment of performance and work habits.

6. *Relationships*

- Recognise that family responsibility and loyalty to kin will be a prime value of many workers. Take this into consideration when identifying rewards and motivators for staff (e.g. hiring relatives and giving time off for vacations and holidays).
- Allow employees time to discuss important decisions with family members before they give you a final answer.

- Recognise the informal leadership older members may hold in the work unit. Consult with them and seek their cooperation.
- Show respect to older employees by addressing them first and giving them formal authority when appropriate.
- Recognise that, as the boss, you may be seen as the “head of the work family”. Employees may come to seek your advice and counsel about problems in and out of work.

7. *Values and Norms*

- Consider giving rewards and feedback to the whole work group rather than to individuals.
- Structure tasks to require teamwork rather than individual action. Give workers time to think about and formulate responses to input requests.
- Consider the face-losing potential of any actions you are planning. Seek out ways to achieve your objectives while avoiding diminishing employees.

8. *Beliefs and Attitudes*

- Find out what religious holidays staff members celebrate. Keep those in mind when planning work-group activities, holiday celebrations, and individual schedules.
- Avoid scheduling meetings and training programs on any religious holidays.
- Take advantage of the fact that employees want different holidays, days off, and vacation times (e.g. some people would be willing to work on Sundays or on Christmas day).
- Help newcomers understand the reasons for shared decision-making and the need for suggestions and input from employees.

- Educate employees about EEO and discrimination. Explain the legal liabilities as well as the principles of equality that, though not always adhered to, are foundations of this country.

9. *Mental Processes and Learning*

- Explain cause-and-effect relationships when getting staff members involved in problem solving.
- Ask staff members what they suggest be done about the problems and complaints they express.
- Use nonlinear problem-solving methods such as brainstorming that capitalize on lateral thinking and intuition rather than logical analysis.
- Ask troubleshooting questions such as "What would happen if ...?" in order to get staff to think about possible consequences.

10. *Work Habits and Practices*

- Get to know your employees and find out what place work plays in their lives. Find out what gives them satisfaction on the job.
- Be sensitive to employees' perceptions about the status of certain kinds of work. Explain the reasons for each assignment and its importance in the whole scheme of things.
- Talk to employees and find out what is rewarding to them.
- Understand that taking initiative and making independent decisions may be difficult for some employees. Take time to coach them in this direction.

11. *Eye contact*

- Westerners generally make eye contact during conversation.
- Traditional African people lower their eyelids so as to avoid the gaze of another for the sake of courtesy.

12. *The handshake*

- Westerners generally offer a strong hand and shake hands firmly.

- Traditional African people generally leave their hand in yours for a longer time & shake hands less firmly.
- However, many orthodox Hindus, Jews and Muslims may choose not to shake hands with people of the other sex. Some may only offer fingertips as a token gesture.

13. *To sit or not to sit?*

- Westerners generally expect an invitation to be seated.
- Traditional African people, if in a junior position of authority, will generally sit first (or as soon as possible) as a sign of respect.
- Westerners, if in a junior position, generally greet the more senior person first.

14. *Voice volume*

- Traditionally, black Africans speak to each other in louder voices – so as to indicate that there are no secrets between the two participants.

15. *Gestures of appreciation*

- **Xhosa** people cup one hand on top of the other (or cup them together), and bend knees quickly and slightly.
- **Zulu** people give three gentle claps at chest height, then place their hands in a slightly cupped position next to each other.
- **Hindus** generally offer a slight bow, with fingertips together.
- **Westerners** may briefly dip their heads.

16. *Leaving and entering a room*

Gentlemen before Ladies?

- No matter how high in rank the man is, he should always offer a woman right of way through a doorway. This means not only stepping aside as she enters a room, but also holding the door open for her to pass through.

The cultural difference

- However, cultures do differ, and in some cultures it is customary for the man to precede the woman through a doorway. In traditional African cultures, men always precede women through doorways and into lifts – to protect them from possible danger that may await them.
- In a restaurant or public place, a man should allow a woman to precede him to their table.
- If he is hosting a large group of guests, he should take the initiative – be following the *maitre d'* in leading his guests to their seats.
- This action should be accompanied by a brief explanation of his reason for doing so.

17. *Leaving and entering a room*

- Ask the employee to teach you.
- Ask colleagues from other cultures.
- Tap community resources.
- Read about different cultures.
- Observe without judgment.
- Share in staff meetings what you have each found out and learned.
- Conduct focus groups.
- Use employee or customer survey information.
- Experiment with new methods.
- Spend time in other cultures.

3.2.2 The secondary sources

Information for the secondary sources was obtained by studying, journals and newspaper articles, books, computer searches, abstracts and other publications, enabling the review of existing knowledge on the subject of Diversity Management. The bibliography indicates the study of literature undertaken, to gather information and data collected by other researchers.

Chapter 4 *ANALYSIS OF RESULTS*

The research was done using both Qualitative and Quantitative Research Techniques.

4.1 The Quantitative Research findings

The Quantitative Research was structured around a questionnaire sent to 30 staff members, from non-supervisors to supervisors and middle managers and followed up by telephone.

The questionnaire comprised of 17 questions, as shown in Appendix 1. The respondents were requested to indicate what they personally suggest managers should know and do, in order to address, each of the 17 issues, which are critical, for diversity management competency.

However, as much as 80% of respondents were unable to identify any suggestions, relevant to the issue of diversity management.

This result demonstrated a general ignorance of such matters or at least lack of interest in thinking about such issues.

So, a second questionnaire in a different format, as shown in Appendix 2, was created, making it easier for respondents to respond, by feeding them with appropriate suggestions, and asking for their opinions.

The second questionnaire comprised of 17 questions and for each question a number of "Suggestion for Managers" was given, based on general knowledge and best practice in Management of Diversity.

The respondents were asked to indicate:

1. If they agree with such best practices;
2. If they think that middle and senior management know such best practices and practice them in the work environment.

The 17 questions, the best practices for each one, and the finding of results, based on this qualitative research is indicated as follows:

4.1.1 The questionnaire and findings of results

The respondents findings are indicated as a percentage of the total number of respondents, i.e. a percentage of responses out of 30. So, if the 30 respondents answer yes, it is equivalent to 100%. If 6 respondents answer yes, it is therefore equivalent to 20%. For the sake of simplification the symbol %, is not shown.

Based on these percentages, an analysis of results is also indicated (4.1.2), in graphical form (bar chart) for easy comparison of results.

In the case of 0% (zero percentage), the result of no respondents answers, a number zero is indicated on the bar chart for easier understanding.

Questionnaire

Please place a where you think it is appropriate.

1. NEVER 2. SOMETIMES 3. FREQUENTLY 4. ALWAYS

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
1. Sense of Self and Space:						
• Make sure you say good morning and good-bye to each employee every day.	80	20	60	20	10	10
• Introduce new employees to their co-workers formally, taking the individual around to meet each new colleague.	100		90	10	0	0
• Be careful in using first names, especially with older workers.	100		70	20	0	10
• Ask people what they prefer being called.	100		100	0	0	0
• Guard against being overly familiar with workers.	90	10	0	10	10	80
• Learn to listen and create an atmosphere of trust where you can learn about each other's needs.	100		100	0	0	0
2. Communications and Language:						
• When there is a language barrier, assume confusion. Don't take the nod or yes to mean the individual understands or agrees. Watch for tangible signs of understanding such as immediately beginning the task and doing it correctly.	60	40	60	20	0	20
• Consider that smiles and laughter may indicate discomfort or embarrassment. See if you can identify what is causing the difficulty.	70	30	10	70	10	10

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid smiling when giving directions or when having serious work-related discussions with employees, especially when giving feedback or when conducting performance reviews. 	40	60	0	20	30	50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful not to think out loud. Employees hearing you may take your off-the-cuff comments literally and may even act on them. 	50	50	10	20	10	60
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for subtle clues that may be speaking volumes. A comment about another worker's frustrations may be telling you about a work-group complaint. Hints about family members moving in might be couching a desire for a raise. 	80	20	60	10	10	20
3. Dress and Appearance:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before reacting to another's appearance, stop to consider the meaning attached to appearance by the individual. 	70	30	70	20	10	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When making assessments about job applicants, consider their cultural norms regarding dress. 	80	20	70	20	10	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the job the individual will be doing and the people with whom he/she will be interacting when determining appropriate dress. 	90	10	60	10	10	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach individuals the cultural rules required in your organization regarding dress and grooming. 	60	40	90	10	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that body scent is not necessarily a sign of uncleanness. 	50	50	50	30	0	20

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider uniforms as a way to eliminate differences and build common ground. 	50	50	20	40	20	20
4. Food and Eating Habits:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When planning catered meals or snacks for meetings and group gatherings, include a variety of foods so there will be something edible and acceptable for all. 	100		20	30	30	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid serving food that might be offensive to some staff members. 	100		20	30	20	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have alternate dishes available (e.g. a vegetarian plate or fruit salad). 	100		20	30	30	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When choosing restaurants for business meetings, keep individual dietary restrictions and preferences in mind. 	100		20	40	30	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide well-ventilated or outdoor eating areas for staff where odors can be more easily dissipated. 	100		10	10	80	0
5. Time and Time Consciousness:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that differences in time consciousness are cultural and are not a sign of laziness. 	40	60	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow time in your schedule for the development of relationships. 	70	30	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it a point to spend some time each week with each employee. 	60	40	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the reasons for deadlines and schedules. 	100		100	0	0	0

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the part promptness plays in assessment of performance and work habits. 	100	0	80	10	10	0
6. Relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that family responsibility and loyalty to kin will be a prime value of many workers. Take this into consideration when identifying rewards and motivators for staff (e.g. hiring relatives and giving time off for vacations and holidays). • Allow employees time to discuss important decisions with family members before they give you a final answer. • Recognise the informal leadership older members may hold in the work unit. Consult with them and seek their cooperation. • Show respect to older employees by addressing them first and giving them formal authority when appropriate. • Recognise that, as the boss, you may be seen as the "head of the work family". Employees may come to seek your advice and counsel about problems in and out of work. 	100		100	0	0	0
	100		80	20	0	0
	100		90	10	0	0
	100		90	10	0	0
	100		70	30	0	0
7. Values and Norms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider giving rewards and feedback to the whole work group rather than to individuals. 	70	30	80	20	0	0

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure tasks to require teamwork rather than individual action. Give workers time to think about and formulate responses to input requests. 	60	40	80	20	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the face-losing potential of any actions you are planning. Seek out ways to achieve your objectives while avoiding diminishing employees. 	100		100	0	0	0
8. Beliefs and Attitudes:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what religious holidays staff members celebrate. Keep those in mind when planning work-group activities, holiday celebrations, and individual schedules. 	60	40	30	40	10	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid scheduling meetings and training programs on any religious holidays. 	100		20	30	20	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of the fact that employees want different holidays, days off, and vacation times (e.g. some people would be willing to work on Sundays or on Christmas day). 	100		50	30	20	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help newcomers understand the reasons for shared decision-making and the need for suggestions and input from employees. 	100		100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate employees about EEO and discrimination. Explain the legal liabilities as well as the principles of equality that, though not always adhered to, are foundations of this country. 	100		50	40	10	0

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
9. Mental Processes and Learning:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain cause-and-effect relationships when getting staff members involved in problem solving. 	100		100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask staff members what they suggest be done about the problems and complaints they express. 	100		100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nonlinear problem-solving methods such as brainstorming that capitalize on lateral thinking and intuition rather than logical analysis. 	80	20	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask troubleshooting questions such as "What would happen if ...?" in order to get staff to think about possible consequences. 	90	10	100	0	0	0
10. Work Habits and Practices:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know your employees and find out what place work plays in their lives. Find out what gives them satisfaction on the job. 	100		90	10	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to employees' perceptions about the status of certain kinds of work. Explain the reasons for each assignment and its importance in the whole scheme of things. 	100		80	20	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to employees and find out what is rewarding to them. 	90	10	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that taking initiative and making independent decisions may be difficult for some employees. Take time to coach them in this direction. 	80	20	90	10	0	0

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
11. Eye contact:						
• Westerners generally make eye contact during conversation.	90	10	0	100	50	40
• Traditional African people lower their eyelids so as to avoid the gaze of another for the sake of courtesy.	80	20	0	30	40	30
12. The handshake:						
• Westerners generally offer a strong hand and shake hands firmly.	90	10	0	30	30	40
• Traditional African people generally leave their hand in yours for a longer time & shake hands less firmly.	50	50	0	30	20	50
• However, many orthodox Hindus, Jews and Muslims may choose not to shake hands with people of the other sex. Some may only offer fingertips as a token gesture.	20	80	0	20	50	30
13. To sit or not to sit?						
• Westerners generally expect an invitation to be seated.	60	40	20	20	40	20
• Traditional African people, if in a junior position of authority, will generally sit first (or as soon as possible) as a sign of respect.	50	50	30	20	20	30
• Westerners, if in a junior position, generally greet the more senior person first.	70	30	10	30	30	40

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
14. Voice volume:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditionally, black Africans speak to each other in louder voices – so as to indicate that there are no secrets between the two participants. 	40	60	0	10	60	30
15. Gestures of appreciation:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xhosa people cup one hand on top of the other (or cup them together), and bend knees quickly and slightly. 	50	50	0	10	40	50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zulu people give three gentle claps at chest height, then place their hands in a slightly cupped position next to each other. 	50	50	0	20	50	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hindus generally offer a slight bow, with fingertips together. 	50	50	0	20	30	50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westerners may briefly dip their heads. 	50	50	0	30	30	40
16. Leaving and entering a room:						
<u>Gentlemen before Ladies?</u>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matter how high in rank the man is, he should always offer a woman right of way through a doorway. This means not only stepping aside as she enters a room, but also holding the door open for her to pass through. 	40	60	0	30	50	20

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<u><i>The cultural difference</i></u>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, cultures do differ, and in some cultures it is customary for the man to precede the woman through a doorway. In traditional African cultures, men always precede women through doorways and into lifts – to protect them from possible danger that may await them. 	50	50	0	20	60	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a restaurant or public place, a man should allow a woman to precede him to their table. 	60	40	0	30	60	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If he is hosting a large group of guests, he should take the initiative – be following the <i>maitre d'</i> in leading his guests to their seats. 	50	50	0	20	70	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action should be accompanied by a brief explanation of his reason for doing so. 	50	50	0	50	40	10
<i>17. Ten ways to learn more about other cultures:</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the employee to teach you. 	80	20	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask colleagues from other cultures. 	60	40	80	20	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap community resources. 	50	50	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read about different cultures. 	60	40	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe without judgment. 	80	20	70	30	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share in staff meetings what you have each found out and learned. 	100	0	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct focus groups. 	50	50	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use employee or customer survey information. 	40	60	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiment with new methods. 	50	50	100	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time in other cultures. 	40	60	100	0	0	0

4.1.2. Graphical representation of results

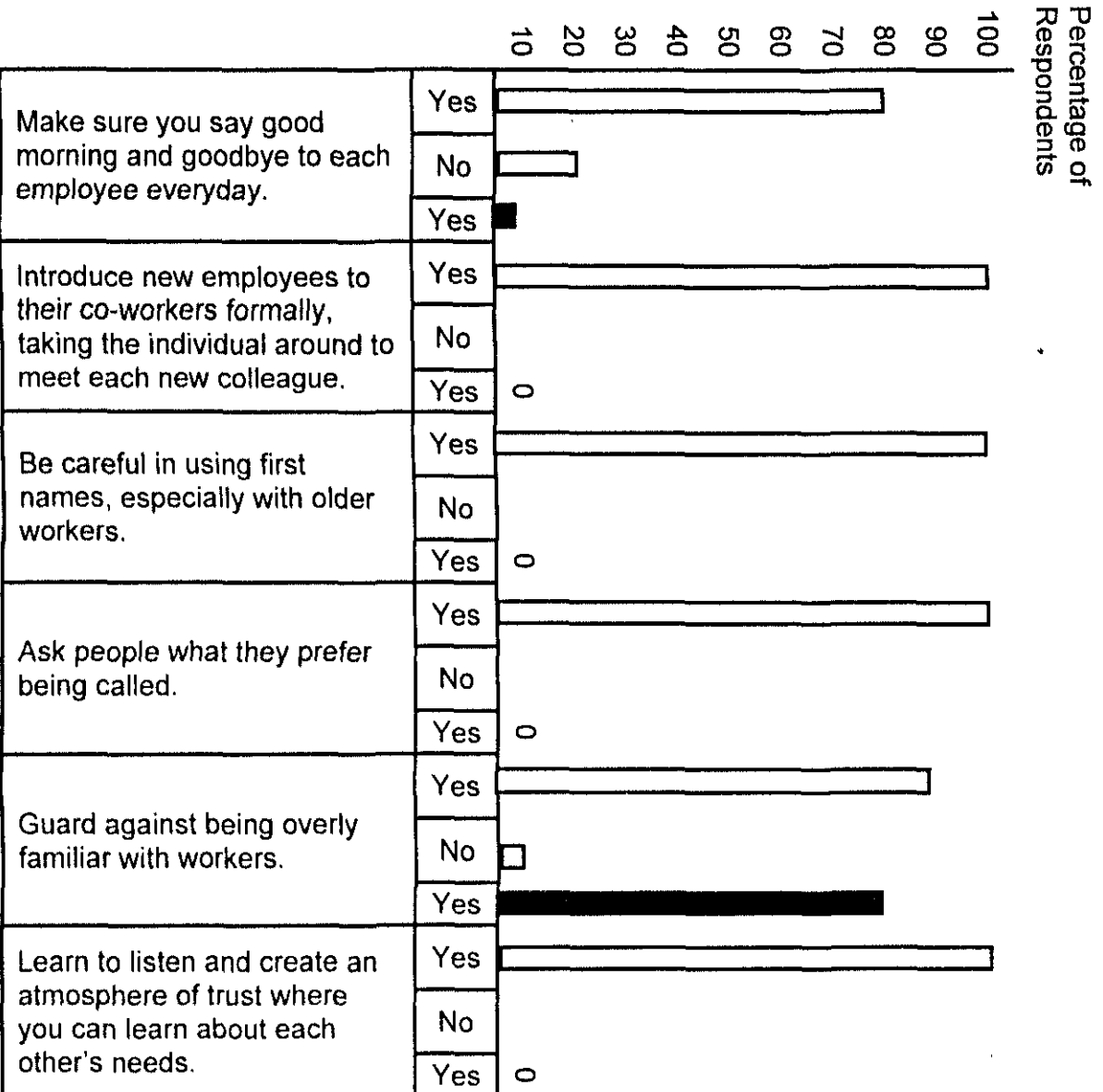
Legend (it applies for all questions)

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?



1. Sense of Self and Space

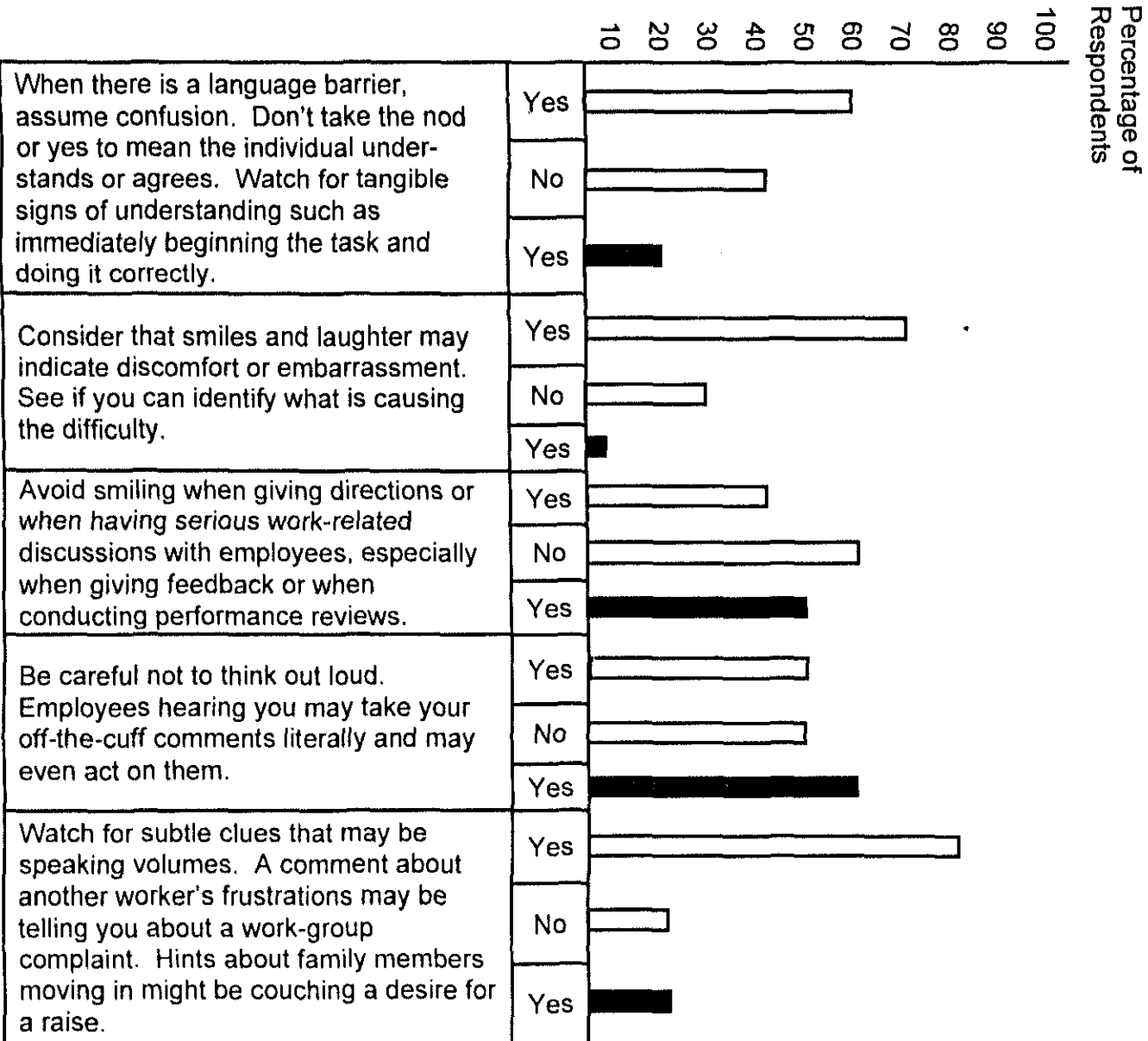


Do you agree this is a good practice?



Does middle and senior management always practice it?

2. Communications and Language

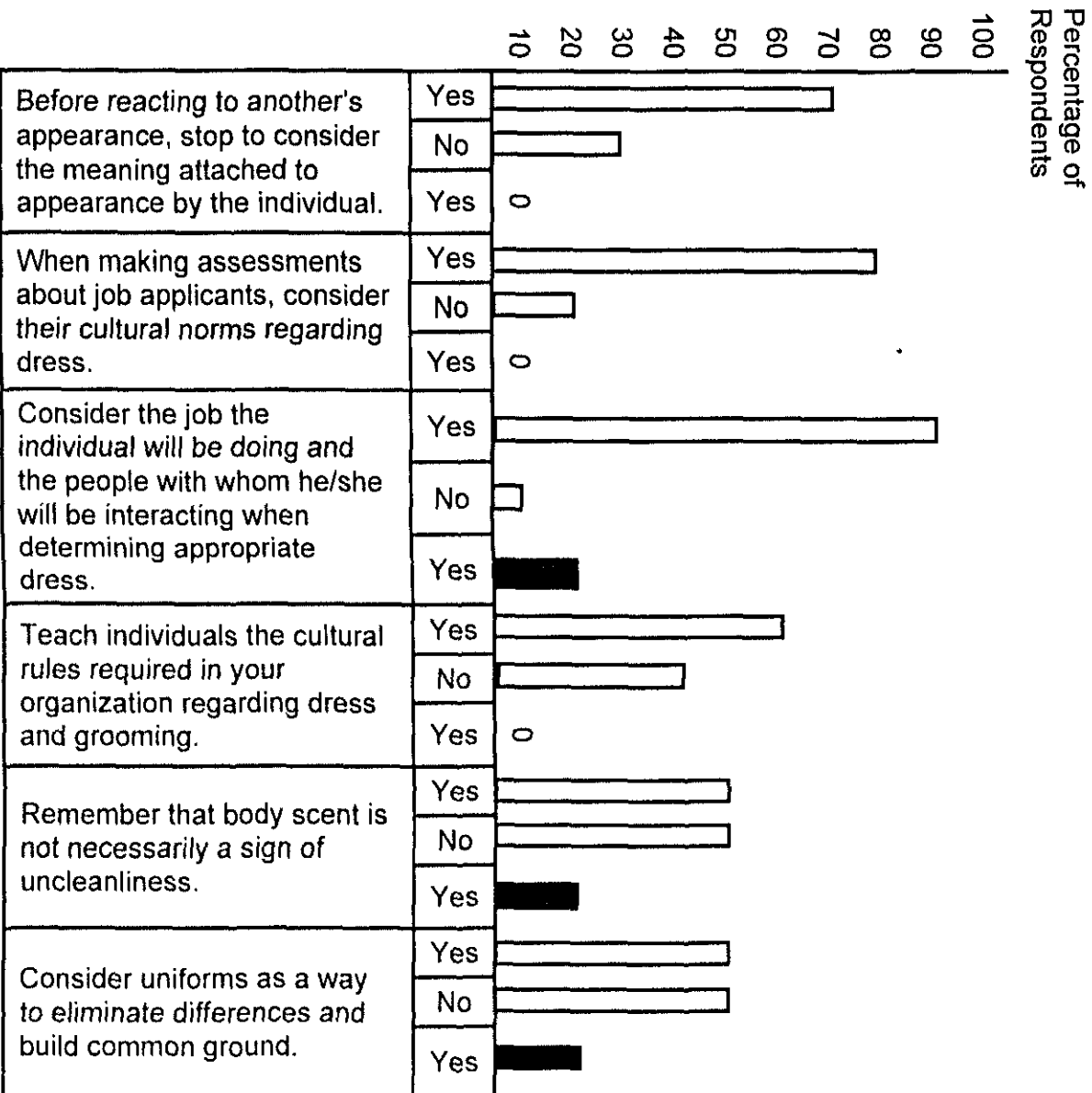


Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?



3. Dress and Appearance

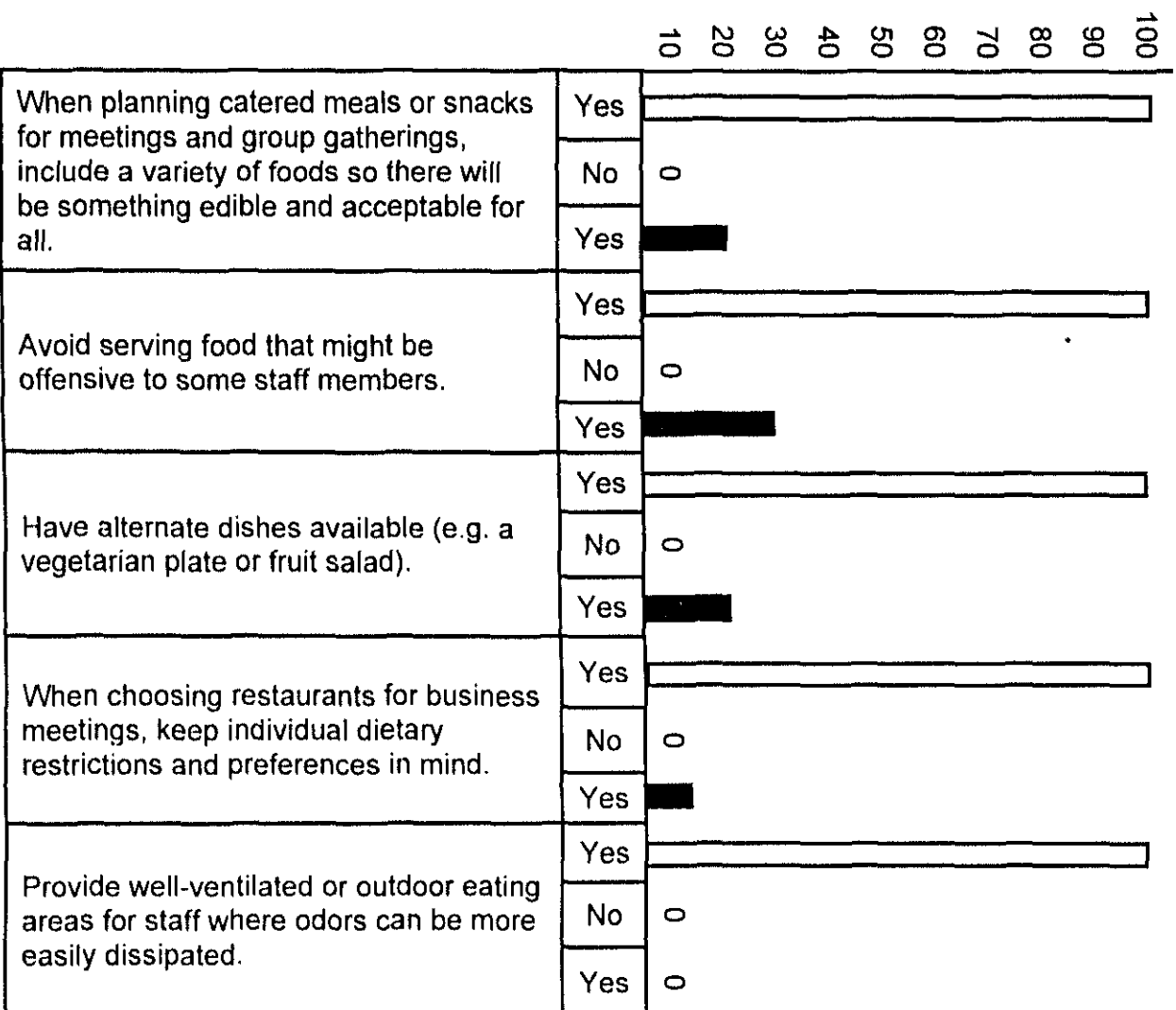


Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



4. Food and Eating Habits

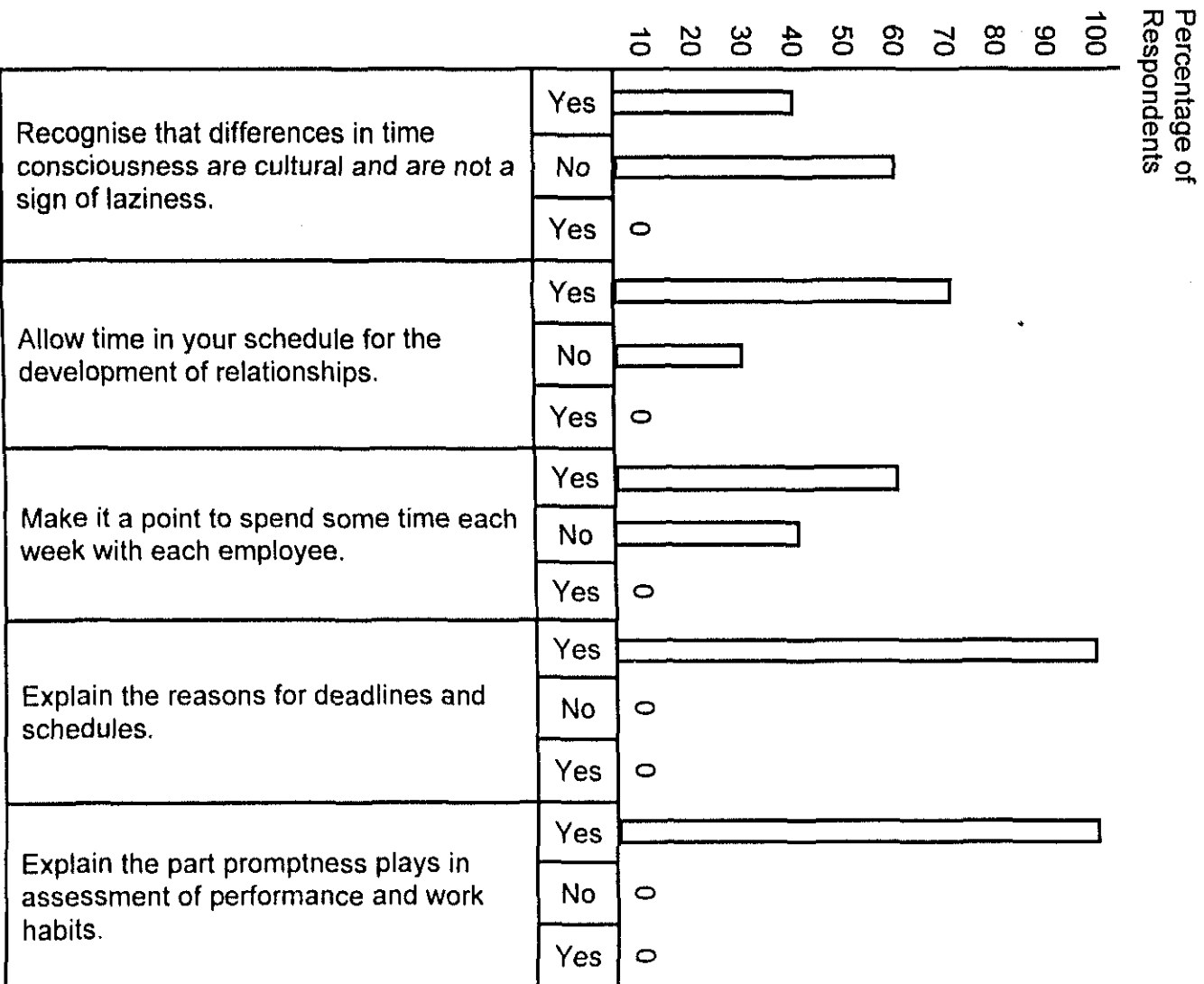
Percentage of Respondents



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



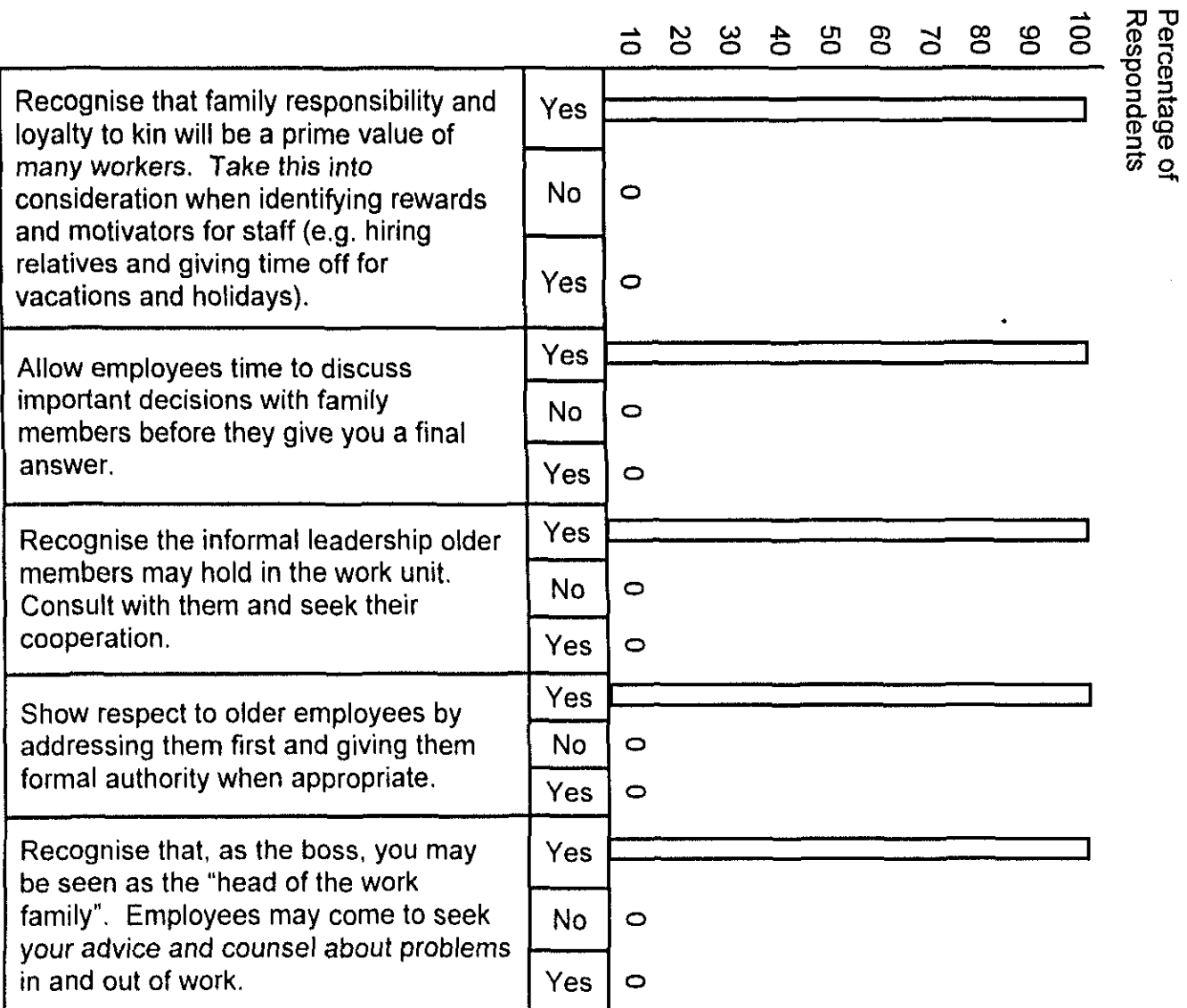
5. Time and Time Consciousness



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



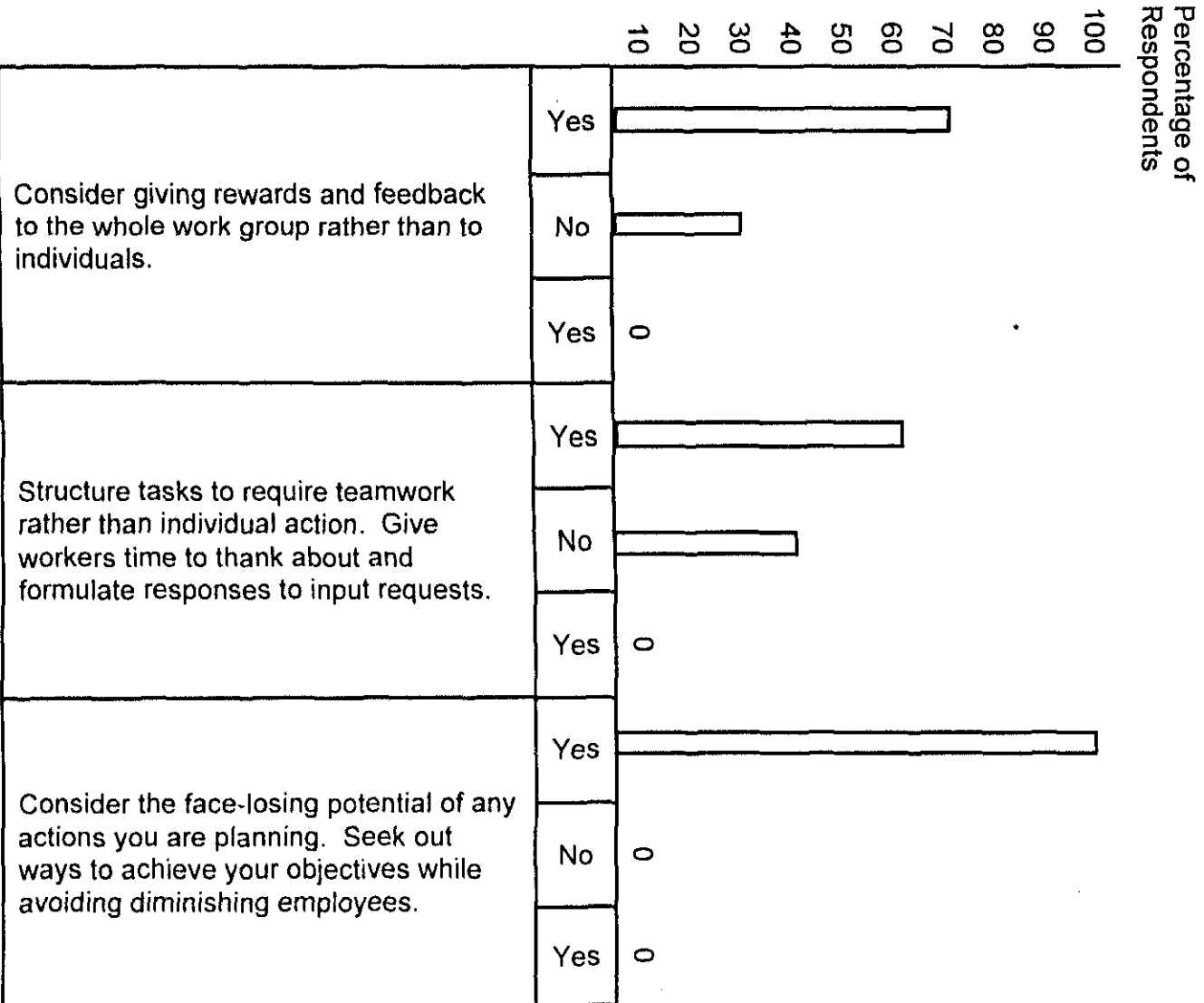
6. Relationships



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



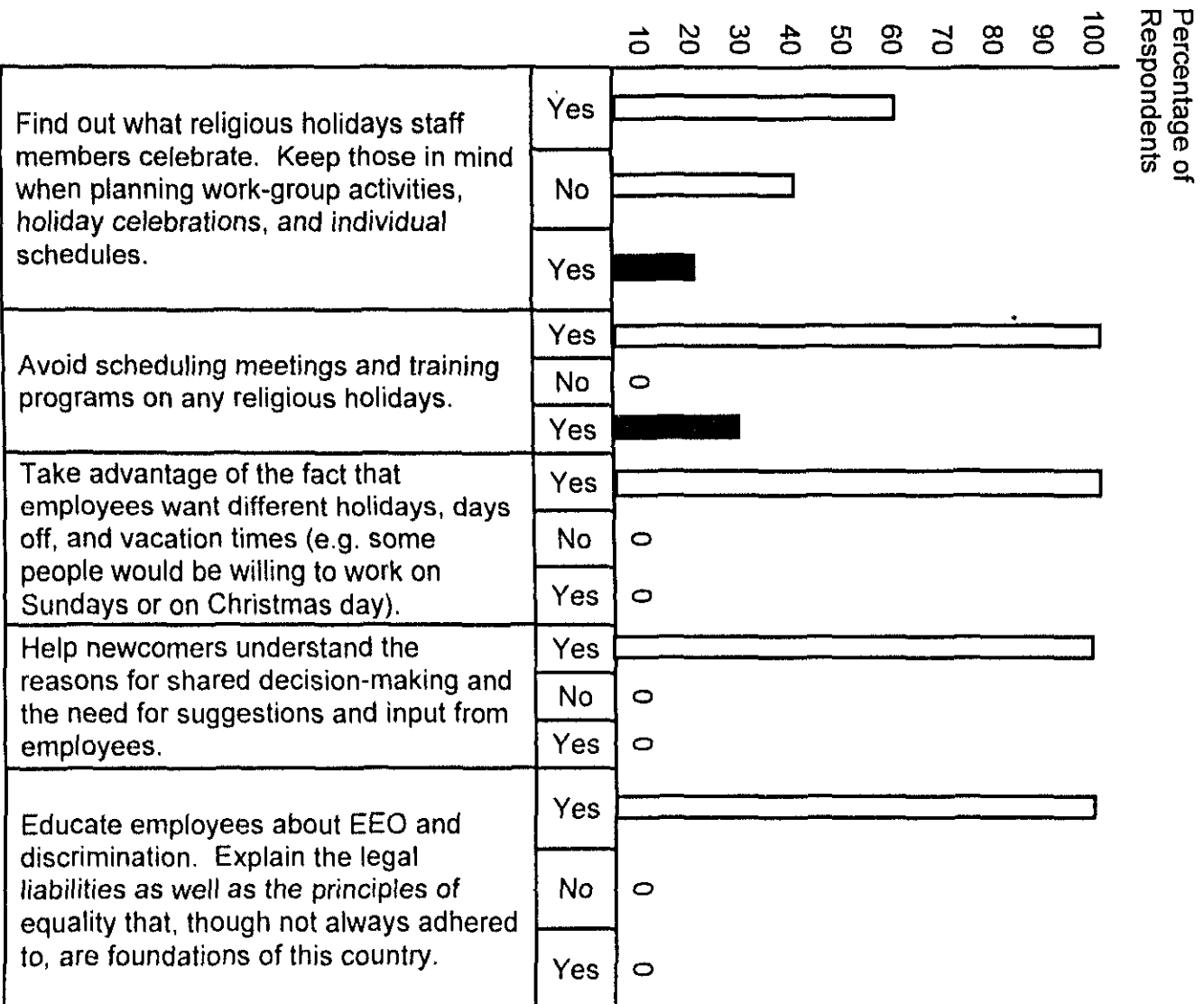
7. Values and Norms



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



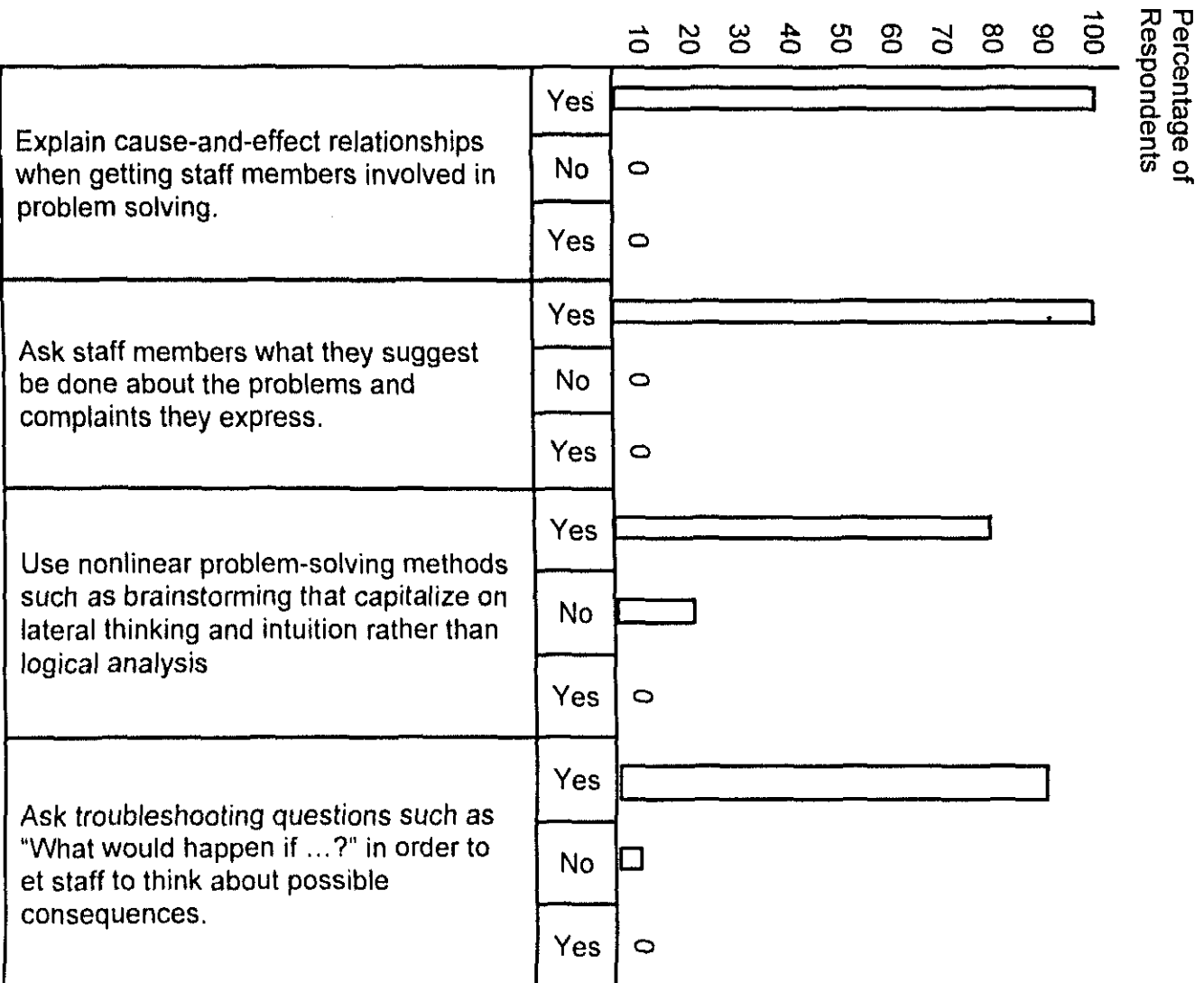
8. Beliefs and Attitudes



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

9. Mental Processes and Learning

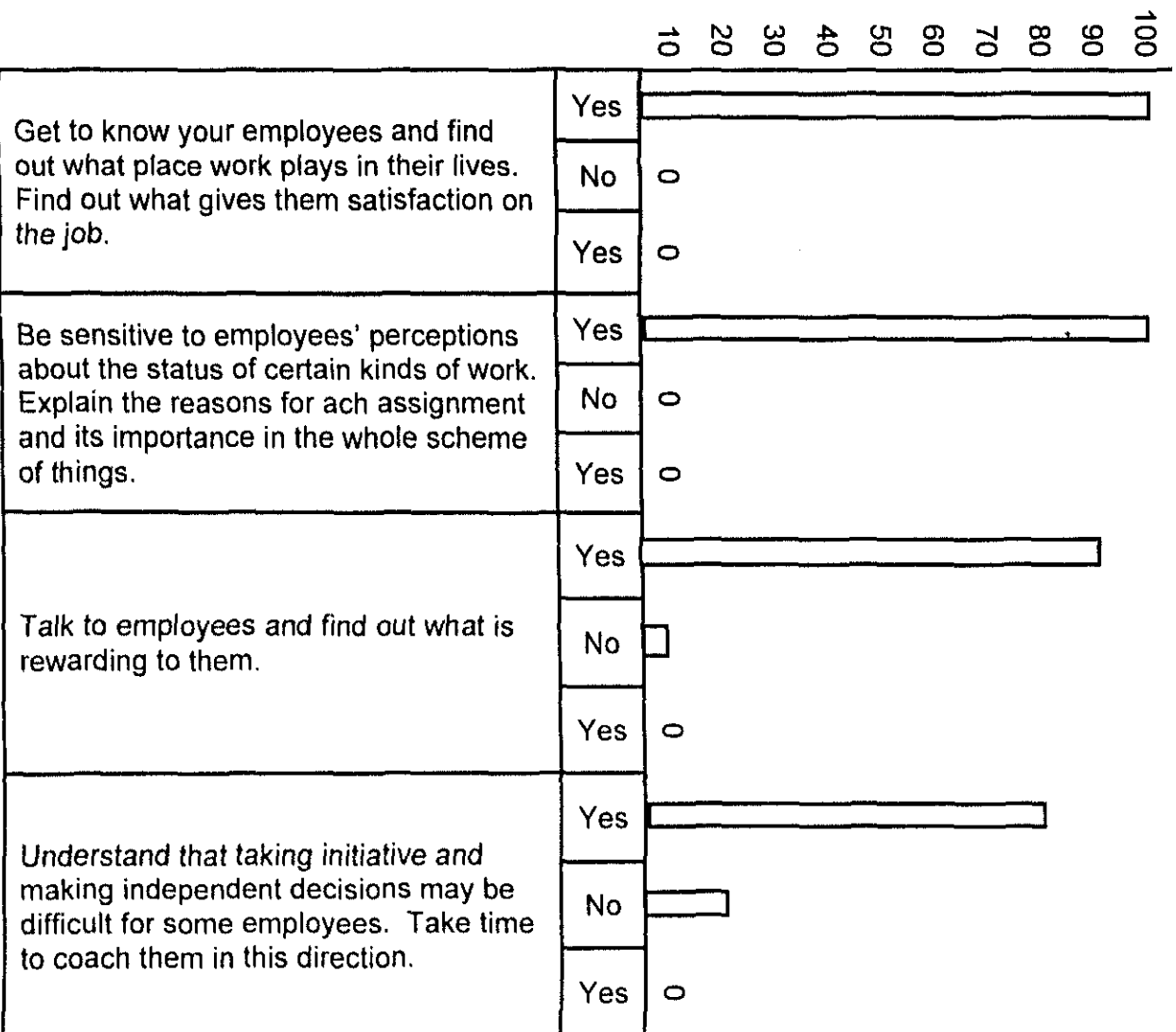


Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



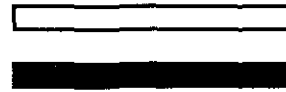
10. Work Habits and Practices

Percentage of Respondents



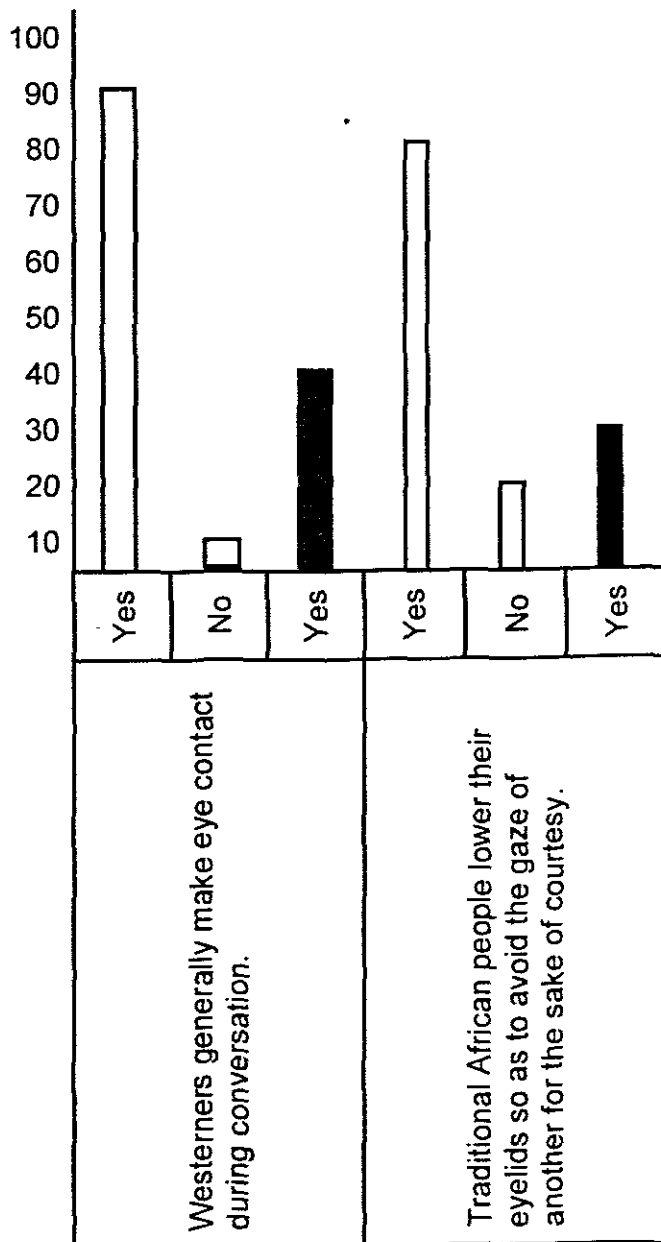
Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?



11. Eye contact

Percentage of Respondents

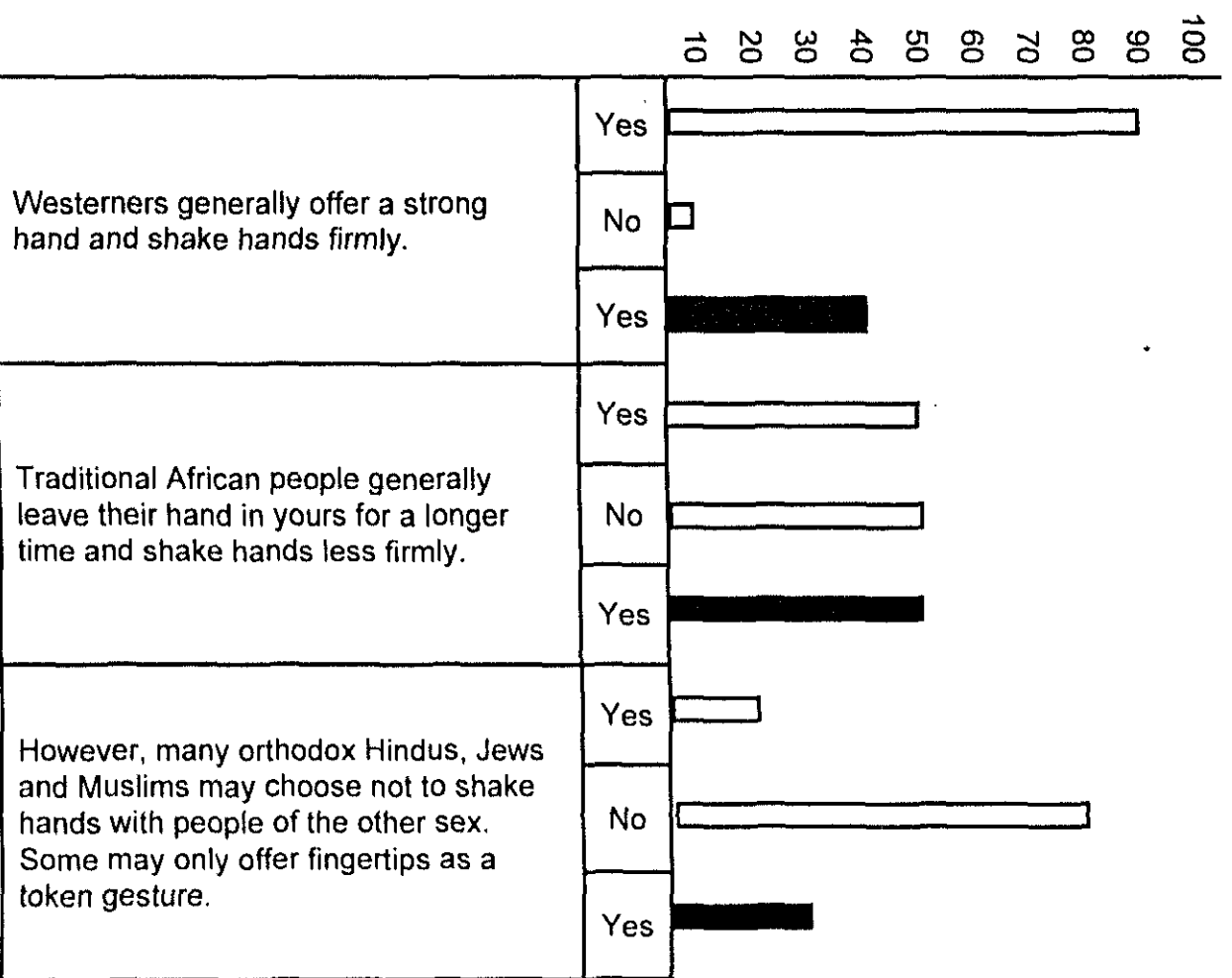


Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



12. *The handshake*

Percentage of Respondents



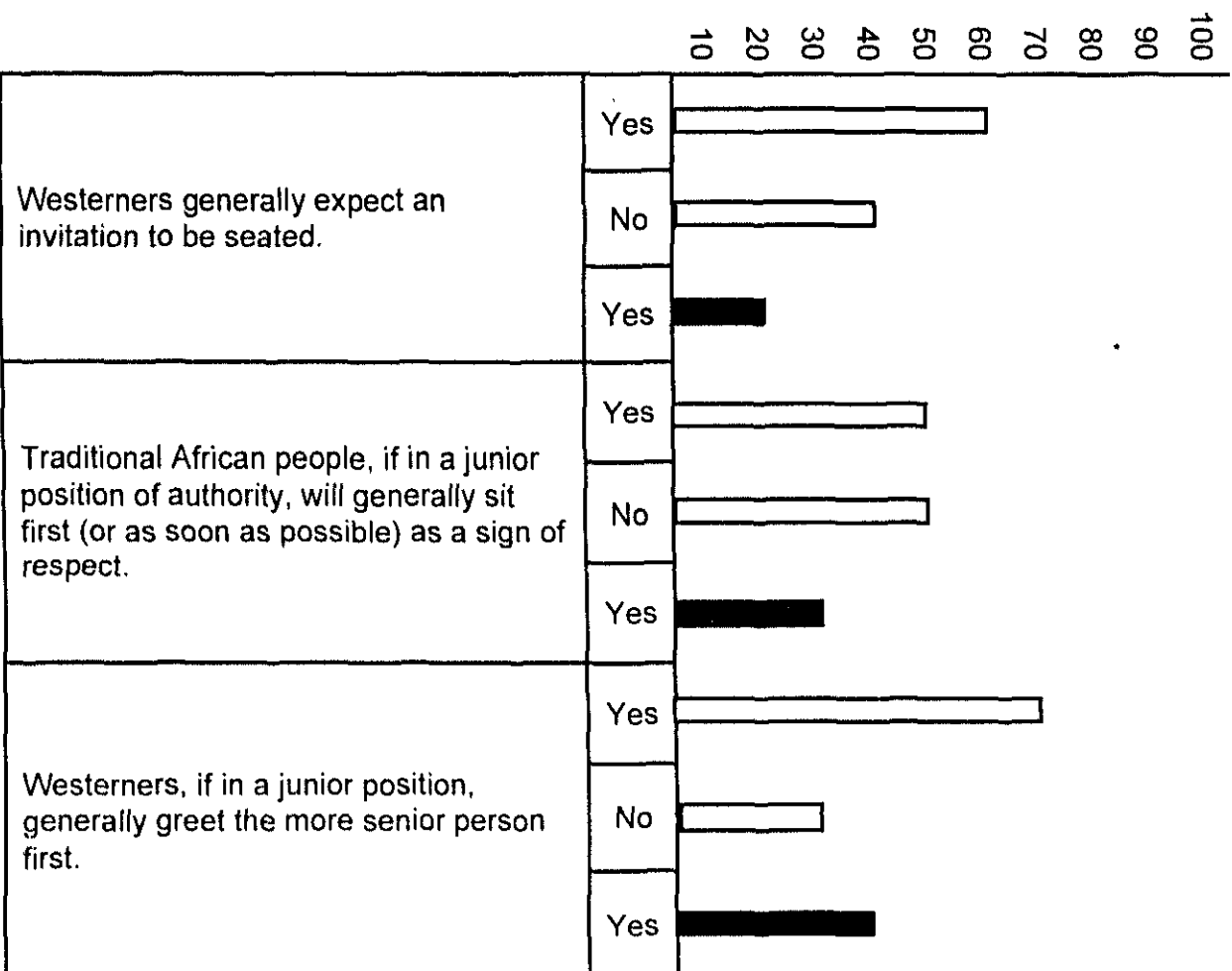
Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

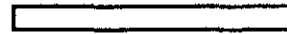


13. *The sit or not to sit?*

Percentage of Respondents



Do you agree this is a good practice?

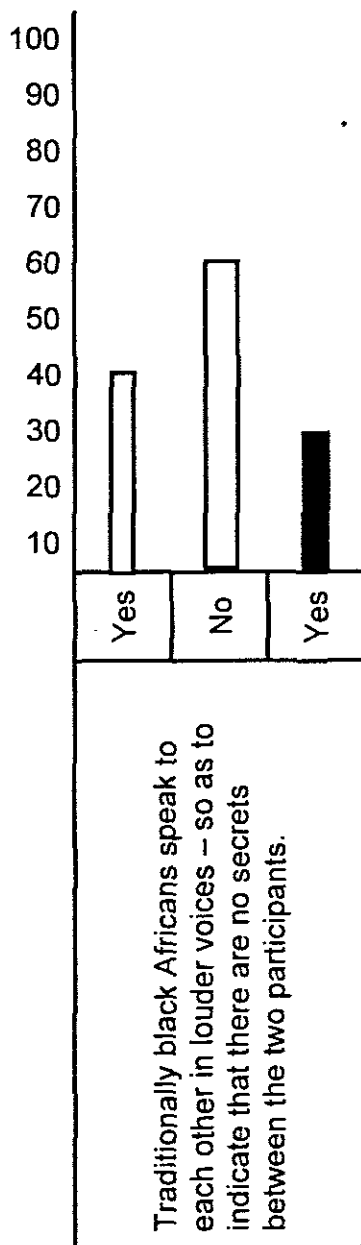


Does middle and senior management always practice it?



14. Voice volume

Percentage of Respondents

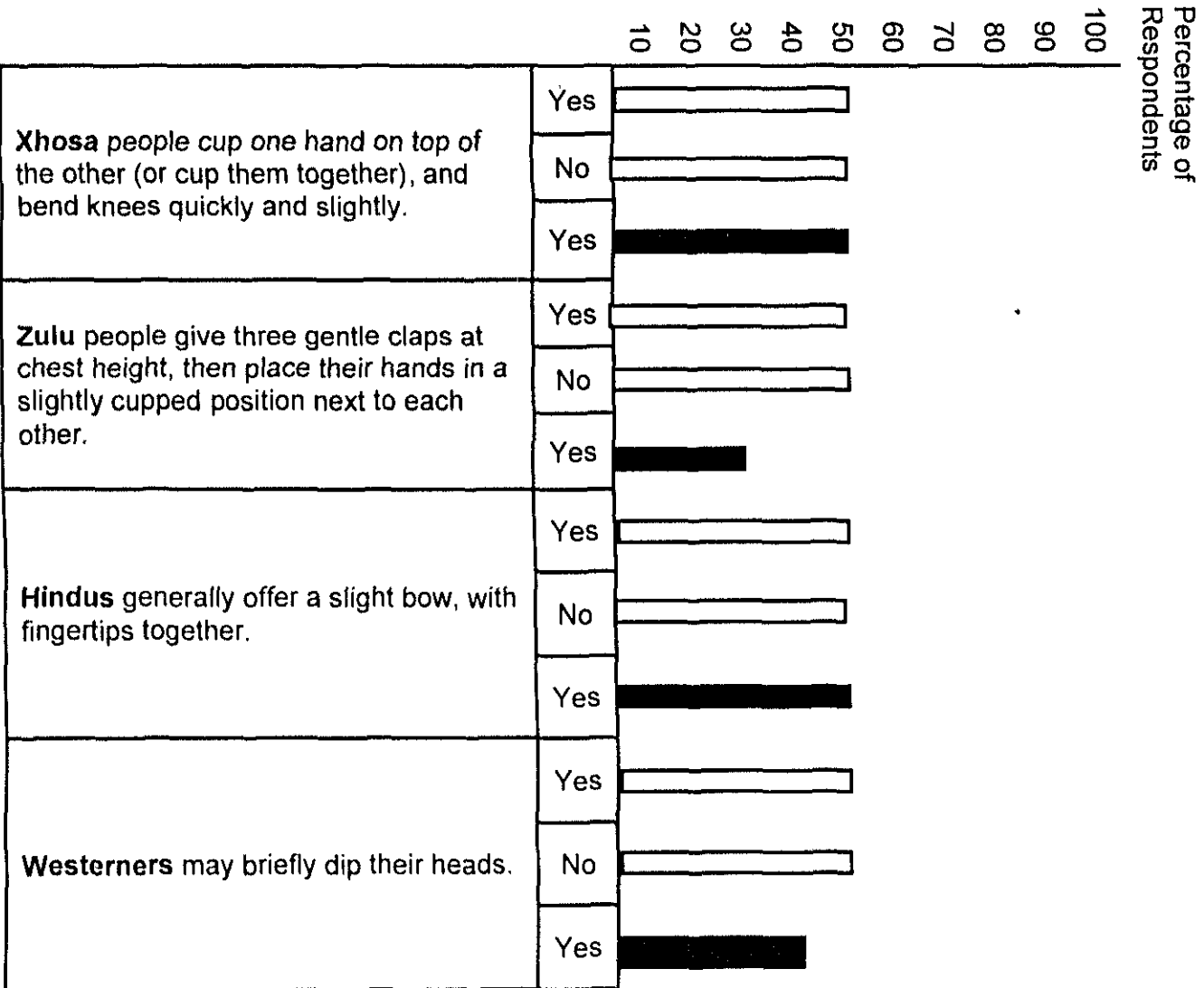


Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?



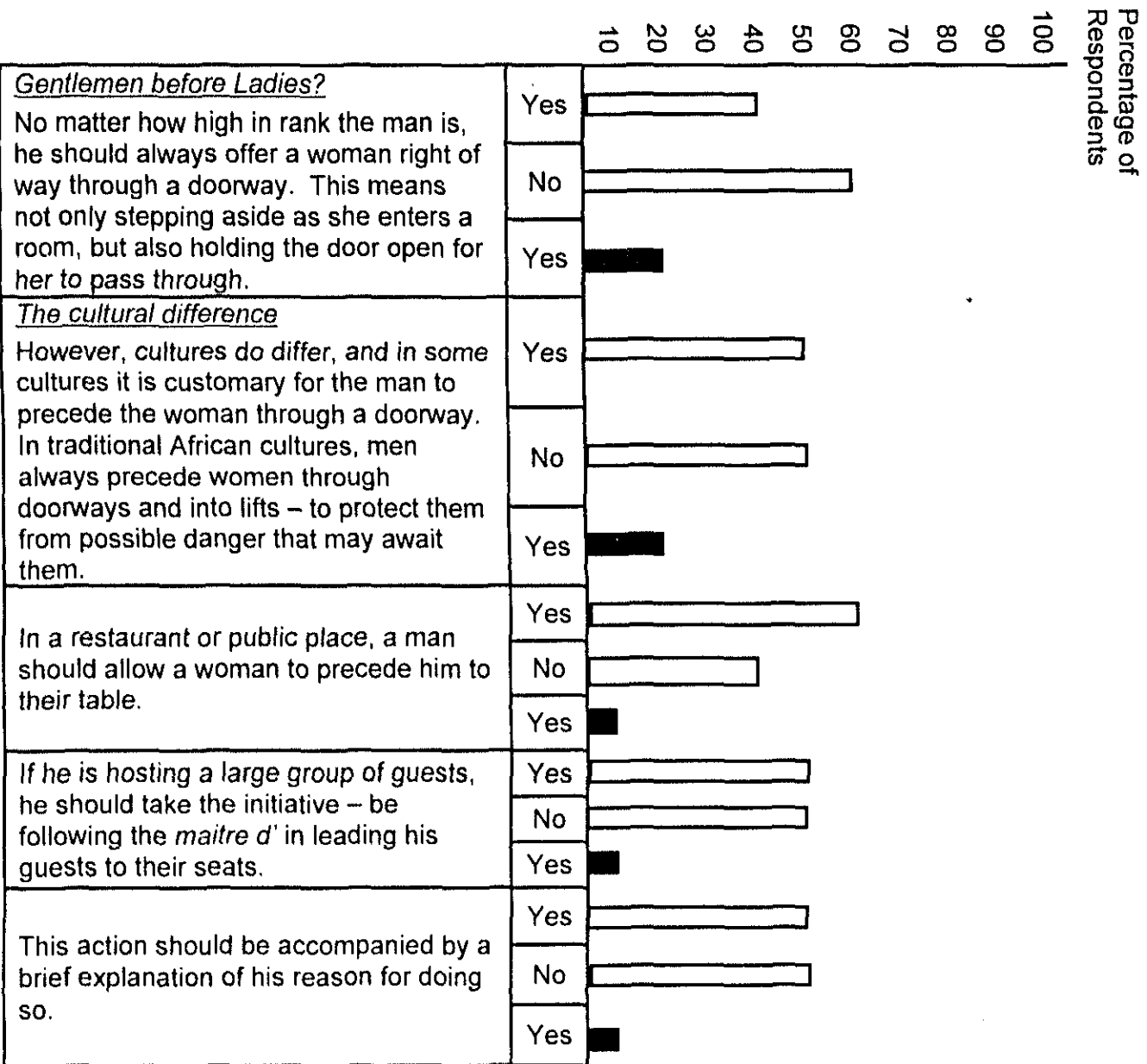
15. Gestures of appreciation



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



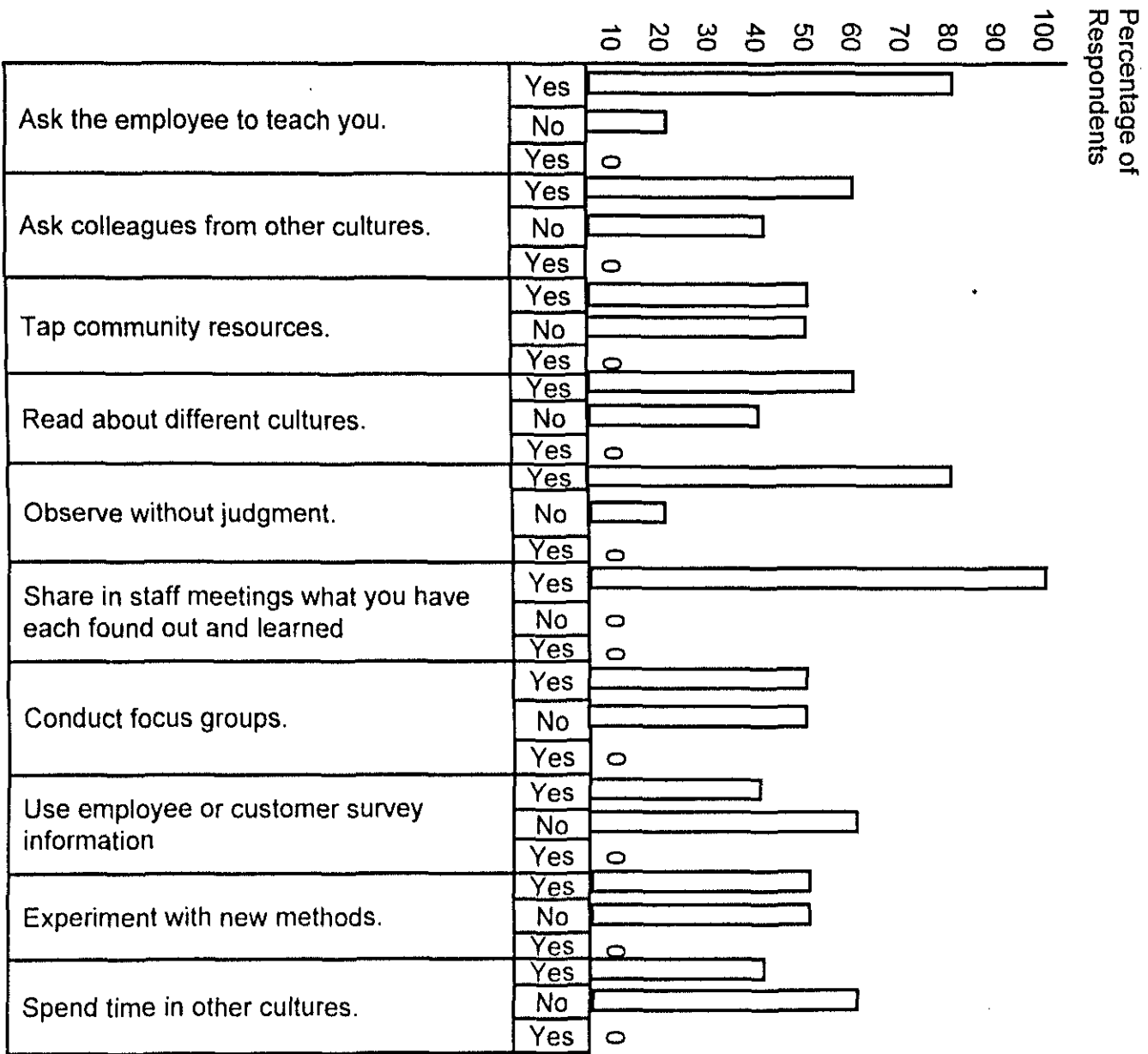
16. Leaving and entering a room



Do you agree this is a good practice?
 Does middle and senior management always practice it?



17. Ten ways to learn more about other cultures



4.2 The Qualitative Research findings

The Qualitative Research was structured around flexible techniques, such as, loosely structured interviews using open-ended questions and three focus group discussions.

Participants were encouraged to express their feelings and opinions around the following 10 questions, for which the findings of their responses are indicated as follows:

4.2.1 The questionnaire and finding of results

Q1. What, in your opinion, is Management of Diversity?

90% of the respondents were under the impression that Management of Diversity was about Affirmative Action, Employment Equity, i.e., about the need to have the numbers right. 90% of the respondents also tended to use diversity to refer to *designated persons in terms of race and gender or simply anyone who is not a white male*. So, white males were not included.

No one saw Managing Diversity, as the process of creating and maintaining an environment that naturally enables all organizational participants to reach their full potential, and that it relates to all members of the organization, not just selected target groups.

Most of the people failed to recognize that Diversity refers not only to the dimensions of race and gender but rather to an infinite number of dimensions and it means more than just cultural diversity, or managing quotas.

However 80% of respondents agreed that it would be difficult to have Affirmative Action succeed without generating white male backlash and charges of preferential treatment, since AA does not include white males.

Q2. *Do you think that Management of Diversity is an important issue for South African organizations? Can managing diversity make a difference?*

50% of the respondents said, yes, it is important. However the non-white respondents saw it as important to only redress the inequalities of the past discrimination.

For the white respondents, it took the form of affirmative action. "We don't have enough of the previously disadvantaged people, such as blacks and woman – we'd better hire some to make up for all those years of negligence".

100% of the white respondents felt that this attitude created a backlash with the white male respondents. They felt that they will be overlooked so that a "quota can be filled". It created an "us versus them" mentality, and an adversarial environment that is unproductive.

Only 10% of the respondents agreed that it is important for managers to develop the real potential of the mix of the people, thus capitalizing on the competitive opportunities offered by employee diversity.

Q3. *Do you see Diversity as a problem or an opportunity? Do you believe that diversity of racioethnic, gender cultural, and other identities in the work force brings net added value to the organization?*

70% of the respondents saw people's diversity as a problem, mainly because diversity was positioned in a way that one group take continuous blame for the past, making unity impossible.

A focus on only culture, race and gender, which ignores ability (skills) and competence – and constantly blames the white male for past injustices – only increases the polarization between groups.

For 80% of the respondents, managing diversity was viewed as controlling or coping with, and believed that associating diversity with management is to imply that diversity is a problem, and a liability.

85% of the respondents failed to see the advantages and benefits offered by work groups that are not unified in one culture, history, race, or gender, and how much more can be achieved with a cross-section of the richest mix of ethnic groups and races.

They failed to understand that the richer the mix, the broader the perspectives and the greater the creativity.

Q4. *Do you think that ignorance of cultural differences is a source of ineffectiveness and inefficiency in the work performance of diverse workgroups?*

On this question the respondents were 50% equally divided in their responses.

About half said yes, ignoring cultural differences can be a source of lower work performance.

The other half did not think that it will make a difference, or even by acknowledging those differences it will only create more problems.

80% of the respondents failed to understand that *Managing Diversity and differences are not the same, and Diversity includes similarities and differences.*

Another limitation on the respondent's answers was the assumption that the major source of discrimination is within personal relationships. *This premises, ignores discriminatory capability unintentionally and intentionally built into organizational systems and cultures, and leaves in place conditions that do not work naturally to enable all people to reach their full potential in pursuit of the organization's objectives.*

Only about half of the respondents agreed that managers should learn that differences do not mean weaknesses and that by *diversifying the workforce the competitive ability in the long term is optimized.*

Q5. *Who do you think is responsible for managing diversity?*

Because 90% respondents, saw managing diversity as quota filling, as laws imposed on people, they perceived *Managing of Diversity, being just about race and gender or the previously disadvantaged groups in the work place, to be the responsibility of the Human Resources Department.*

They did not see diversity as a responsibility of everyone for creating pro-actively a culture where each individual can develop and contribute to the organization, and human plurality thrives in harmony not in danger of potential destructive conflicts.

Q6. What, in your opinion, are the most important “direct change drivers”, that when incorporated into the overall strategic management process, will bring about effective diversity leadership.

90% saw Affirmative Action and Employment Equity as the most important change drivers, driven by legislation, focused on demographic profile change, government mandated to change historic patterns of discrimination, with the sole beneficiaries as the protected groups.

90% of the respondents did not see the change drivers as a process of creating and maintaining a positive environment where the differences of all personnel are recognized, understood, and valued, so that all can reach their full potential, and maximize their contribution, without discrimination.

In fact 90% of the respondents did not see Diversity being the uniqueness of all individuals that encompasses different personal attributes, values, and organizational roles.

90% of the respondents see diversity mainly in terms of racial fortresses.

Q7. Do you think Diversity Management and Affirmative Action / Employment Equity is the same?

90% respondent's answers to question 1, have shown a general misconception about Diversity Management being the same as Affirmative Action (AA) or Employment Equity (EE). Most of the respondents saw AA and EE as management of diversity practices to get the numbers right, the "right the wrongs" approach, and mainly through "quota filling".

They see managing diversity as legislative laws. 95% of the respondents failed to understand that Diversity Management entails an inclusive and positive attitude, which does not focus on the partition of differences, but celebrates the commonality of difference.

Q8. South Africa is a rainbow nation. Do you think it is a correct statement?

80% of the respondents expressed the feeling that it is only in name. Its success will depend on managing the high expectations of the black people for improved quality of life on the one hand, and the white negative fears on the other hand. In other words, the issue of Affirmative Action and how it will be managed will determine the success of the current efforts at nation building in South Africa.

85% of the respondents agreed that there are still too much distrust based on class, ethnicity, and other factors, setting people apart, so the various ethnic groups still do not have a common agenda.

85% of the respondents agreed that many people tend not to have a sense of national identity and tend to be hooked up in narrow ethnic and racial mind-sets.

So 85% of the respondents see South Africa as a rainbow nation only when an ethnic and racial trust is created to overcome the tragedy of apartheid.

60% respondents expressed the fear that the slogan "Rainbow Nation" promotes multiculturalism and not non-racialism and hence the reproduction of a neo-apartheid state, with people remained forever in their racial fortress.

4.3 Summary of findings

The Quantitative research results shows that, **all** respondents see middle and senior management in a very negative way, regarding Diversity Management matters, specially in terms of Managing, Sense of Self and Space, Time and Time Consciousness, Relationships, Values and Norms, Beliefs and Attitudes, Mental Processes and Learning, Work Habits and Practices, and Ways to Learn more about other Cultures.

The Qualitative research results show that:

1. Most respondents are ignorant of any issues pertaining Management of Diversity
2. Management of Diversity is practiced mainly as a quota filling, and to conform with Affirmative Action and Employment Equity, government directives.
3. There are no formal policies with the aim of efficient and effective management of diversity within the workplace: i.e. to create a harmonious

work environment without racial or cultural conflict, for the benefit of workers and the organization.

4. There is a general lack of understanding that Diversity can be very valuable and beneficial for the organization if properly managed, but can also be destructive, if not managed efficiently and effectively.

Chapter 5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 Managing Diversity – the greatest potential advantage

Managing Diversity (MD) is the process of creating and maintaining an environment that naturally enables all organizational participants to reach their full potential in pursuit of the enterprise's objectives (Roosevelt Thomas (1999: 27)).

There are many definitions of 'diversity management', and numerous terms are used to describe essentially the same thing. In a pragmatic sense, the common ground in these definitions includes:

- They acknowledge the reality that people differ in many ways;
- They identify implications for the workplace, or society generally, that arise because of the diversity, and
- They suggest or imply strategies to ensure that these issues are addressed, in the interest of the workplace, or society generally.

So, managing diversity is truly an evolving process, an ongoing way of operating in an environment that will need no special arrangements to avoid inappropriate, unnecessary barriers. It relates to all members of the organization, not just selected target groups.

Managers tend to use diversity to refer to designated persons in terms of race and gender or simply anyone who is not a healthy white male. Instead in managing diversity, diversity refers to the collective mixture, like a stew, not a melting pot, and it includes the white male.

It is not about white males learning how to manage others, but rather any manager enhancing his or her ability to empower whoever is in his or her workforce.

Managing, with respect to diversity, is not defined as controlling, containing or coping with, and believing that associating diversity with management is to imply that diversity is a problem.

Managing should be seen as enabling, empowering or influencing the work force to work together in harmony, to develop the hidden potential within each one. As Peter Senge said in his book, *The Fifth Discipline*, the organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the ones that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels and by all people in an organization.

Managers tend to focus on creating diverse workforces or on including groups that have traditionally been excluded from significant roles in the work place, but the issue is whether the organization has the managerial and organizational capacity to secure the necessary productivity and harmony from a diverse work force.

Building and sustaining a healthy, empowered work team necessitates the recognition and optimisation of diversity within the team. Each team is characterised by a unique array of talents, experiences and backgrounds.

These individual qualities should be blended harmoniously, rather than toned down and homogenized.

Members of such teams will be out there with the people. They will need sensitivity, intuition and cross-cultural awareness rather than media schedules.

Managing Diversity is one of the greatest potential advantages over (competitors who) are unified in their culture, history and race. As superb as they are, this is a

limiting factor. By contrast, more can be achieved with a cross-section of the richest mix of ethnic groups and races. The richer the mix, the broader the perspectives and the greater the creativity.

Each manager should be faced with the challenge of developing the real potential of the mix of the people, thus capitalizing on the competitive opportunities offered by employee diversity.

The organic network thrives on argument and debate, and is made more vibrating by variety and diversity.

Diversity refers not only to the dimensions of race and gender but rather to an *infinite number of dimensions and it means more than just cultural diversity*, which in everyday use refers to characteristics of the individuals.

There are people out there who think, feel and dream in a billion different ways. They are individual human beings, not a line on a graph.

Diversity and differences are not synonymous. Managing diversity and managing differences is not the same. Diversity includes similarities and differences. It refers to the mixture of differences not the melting of contents.

Most managers are not addressing diversity, but rather what should be done about the last beans added to the mixture.

In the past, people who considered different tended to view this condition as being inferior or inadequate; thus they were eager to be assimilated into the mainstream culture of the organization.

Now, increasingly, people who are considered different do not see this condition as negative and, in fact, may celebrate being different. So, they are less eager to assimilate, to be mainstreamed. They are willing to assimilate – to fit in, to adapt

– but only when absolutely necessary. Managers are forced to deal more and more with unassimilated diversity, with people who differ on and below the surface, as opposed to individuals who appear different on the surface, but behave similarly as a result of assimilation.

Workers are bringing their differences with them and insisting that managers take them into account, because more and more they accept that they do not have to be white, or male to be okay. Also “knowledge workers” are more prevalent in today’s workforce and expect to have discretion in the performance of their tasks.

5.2 Treatment of Diversity

One can describe the historical treatment of diversity as:

1. Denial
2. Affirmative action/assimilation, and
3. Understanding differences.

5.2.1 Denial

Historically, denial of diversity and differences has played a major role in managerial thinking. Managers would tell employees who were different that their differences would not in any way affect how the organization treated them. Instead, merit and performance alone would determine how far the individual would go.

Statements reflecting the denial approach would be. “In this corporation, we are race-blind, color-blind, and gender-blind. We will not prejudge you.” Or “John, when I look at you. I do not see a black man. I simply see a competent individual like myself who has done well.” (This last comment was made by a white male to a black male and was intended as a compliment. It is a sign of changing times

that the black male did not view it as such and thought an unspoken response. "Who wants to be like you?")

The basic assumptions of this denial approach have been the following:

- To be different is to have some kind of defect or disadvantage.
- Not to see the difference means that you are not prejudging the individual as having a weakness or limitation.
- To avoid this prejudice constitutes a favor to the individual difference.
- Simply to avoid prejudice is enough to ensure the elimination of discrimination within the organization.
- The organization's culture, based on the requirements of the dominant group, would remain intact. I refer to a culture based on the need of one group as a monoculture.

The motivation for practicing denial has tended to be legal (the law requires it), moral (personal or corporate moral prescriptions require it), social responsibility (good corporate citizenship requires it). Regardless of the motivation, the major benefits of the approach have been that people who are different have been able to enter organizations with the hope that they would not be prejudged, that quality interpersonal relationships have been fostered, and that blatant racism, sexism, and other discrimination have been discouraged.

On the other hand, two severe limitations exist with this approach. It requires that people who are different are willing to have their differences denied. When individuals were less inclined to celebrate being different, this requirement was not a problem. Now, this requirement makes it extremely difficult for a manager to practice denial. People just are not as willing to see their differences as negatives and to have them denied.

An additional limitation is the assumption that the major source of discrimination is within personal relationships. This premise ignores discriminatory capability unintentionally and intentionally built into organizational systems and cultures, and leaves in place conditions that do not work naturally to enable all people to reach their full potential in pursuit of the enterprise's objectives.

5.2.2 Affirmative Action/Assimilation

Affirmative Action managers have reached out to create a diverse work force with respect to race and gender, but legislation does not erase ideas.

They have aimed for a melting pot wherein new employees are supposed to lose their differences and are shaped to fit a mold that reflects existing organizational behavior norms. Hence, managers could say they had a diverse work force, for indeed they had non-Whites and women, but in reality the diversity was only at the surface. Assimilation through the melting pot was to ensure minimization of differences and conformity of behavior. The result has been "assimilated diversity", which in fact is diversity only of surface appearance.

The belief has been that this approach would be the means for creating a diverse work force and for facilitating upward mobility for non-whites and women. A major benefit of this alternative has been greater inclusion of non-whites and women in corporations and other organizations than before.

The limitations of this approach have been several in number.

First, in times of an economic pie that is perceived to be shrinking, it is difficult to have AA succeed without generating white male backlash and charges of preferential treatment, since AA does not include white males. Consequently, managers have had great difficulty sustaining AA progress.

Second, to the extent that employees celebrate their differences, they become resistant to adaptation except where it is absolutely necessary. The greater the resistance, the greater the difficulty in implementing AA.

Implied here is that while there always will be assimilation and the requirement to fit a mold, managers will increasingly have to focus on true requirements as parameters governing adaptation, and not on preferences, traditions, or convenience. A significant implication is that major shifts in the way of doing business may be necessary to come up with a mold that works for a diverse set of employees. In the interim, the growing tendency to celebrate differences will make implementation of AA/assimilation difficult.

Assimilation notions assume essentially an exclusive and racist view of nationality, nationhood and culture Gilroy (1987: 60).

Affirmative Action, as practiced traditionally, does not seek to change existing systems and culture, but rather complements them in order to accommodate people who are different or do not fit.

The "fast racing cycle of AA" undermines its implementation.

Following celebration, the apparent progress becomes undone, and the new recruits leave or stagnate. Once again the problem is recognized and the cycle begins anew.

The reality of the cycle and its growing costs should encourage managers to seek ways of complementing AA.

Finally the beneficiaries of AA often have mixed feelings about the benefits and they want to avoid the stigma attached to their achievements as "AA beneficiaries". These mixed feelings do not contribute to an environment conducive to implementing AA.

5.2.3 Understanding Differences (UD)

Understanding Differences (UD) is a derivative of the traditional AA/assimilation approach. The AA assumptions of assimilation and monoculture hold for this option as well. Additionally, a basic assumption of UD is that conflict and poor interpersonal relationships are due to lack of understanding.

The goal, therefore, of UD is to foster awareness, acceptance and understanding of differences among individuals, with the expectation that the results would be enhanced interpersonal relationships, greater appreciation and respect of others, greater acceptance of differences, and minimization of blatant expressions of racism, sexism, and other prejudice. And indeed these expected results often do materialize.

As impressive as the results can be in terms of greater harmony, the limitations are also significant. Most critical is that UD leaves unchanged the systems and culture of the organization. The manager, therefore, can accept and understand differences, be free of racism and sexism, and have excellent interpersonal relationships, and still not know how to manage diversity – not know how to create a set of systems and a culture that will naturally enable all employees. Also, without culture and system changes, the UD manager finds it difficult to sustain gains.

A limitation shared by all three approaches is that they eliminate or minimize differences. This loss prevents the manager from realizing gains associated with diversity. One manager commented, "It's ironic. We often seek people who are different, but then work to assimilate them as soon as they join".

This irony is especially pronounced with UD, where participants often enhance their acceptance and their understanding of diversity while holding on to strong expectations of assimilation to the existing culture.

In sum, all of the traditional approaches have limitations that inhibit their utility as effective vehicles for creating an environment that works naturally for all. It is in the context of this circumstance that the concept of Managing Diversity is evolving.

5.3 Managing Diversity (MD), the right approach

Several attributes differentiate MD from the traditional approaches.

It has become increasingly clear that some workers may be confused by the concept of managing diversity. Employees sometimes confuse managing diversity with employment equity and affirmative action programs. Some people use the three terms interchangeably.

Affirmative action programs are an outgrowth of EE laws, rules and regulations. Affirmative action is government-initiated and mandated in certain circumstances. It is compliance-based and relies on statistical comparisons of various demographic groups. Affirmative action programs contain goals and timetables designed to bring the level of representation for designated groups into parity with relevant and available labor force indices.

Affirmative action programs seek limited bottom line results by changing the mix of women, non-whites, and persons with disabilities in a particular organization. While affirmative action programs are mandated, managing diversity initiatives are voluntary in nature.

While affirmative action programs are a reaction to under representation, managing diversity initiatives are proactive. Managing diversity seeks to address issues related to human resources, internal communications, interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, quality, productivity, and efficiency. Some of the

human resource issues addressed by properly managing diversity may be indirectly related to EE and affirmative action concerns. The main focus of managing diversity is to find productivity gains through respecting, valuing, and using the differences people bring to the workplace. The idea is to find a way to let everyone do what he or she does best in order to gain a competitive edge. *While affirmative action seeks an end result, managing diversity is a long-term change process that seeks to identify and actually change the organizational culture of an organization.* In the short-term, organizations need both an affirmative action plan and a managing diversity strategy. The sooner we all learn the differences between managing diversity, EE and affirmative action, the more prepared we will be to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

MD differs from Affirmative Action in significant ways. AA assumes assimilation that the individual who is different or who does not fit will adapt. MD assumes that the manager and the organization, as well as the individual, will be willing to engage in a mutual adaptation process to produce a productive relationship between the individual and the organization.

AA focuses on recruitment, upward mobility, and retention, while MD addresses the question of utilization. Here, the assumption is that to the extent that an individual's potential is tapped, the manager has to worry less about upward mobility and retention. The emphasis on utilization suggests that it is not sufficient to meet the needs of employees, for individuals can have their needs met and still be underutilized. Employees can be satisfied and underutilized. MD is not so much a call to secure more diversity, but rather a means of better utilizing the diversity already on board.

Because of its grounding in the legal motive, AA requires achievement of the desired results as early as possible. If you are out of line legally, you wish to realign yourself as quickly as possible. MD on the other hand stresses producing

the desired results as *naturally* as possible. The assumption is that the manager will be able to sustain the results longer if they flow from an environment that naturally generates them.

Finally, AA emphasizes doing something for the “disadvantaged”. MD seeks to do something for the manager who needs to enhance his or her ability to enable an increasingly diverse work force. MD is not about doing something for minorities and women, eliminating discrimination, doing justice, being fair, doing good, doing the “right thing”, leveling the playing field, making amends for past wrongs, or about civil rights or women’s rights. It is about improving the *manager’s managerial capability*.

Similarly, MD differs from Understanding Differences. UD works to foster acceptance and understanding of differences, while MD focuses on improving managerial capability. As noted earlier, improvement in accepting and understanding differences does not necessarily mean progress with managerial capability.

MD stresses the business (viability) motive above the legal, moral and social motives. Given the magnitude of changes of ways of doing business associated with MD, the traditional legal, moral, and social-responsibility motives are not sufficient. Masking the bottom-line case for MD represents a major challenge, simply because most managers have not viewed the traditional diversity dimensions of race and gender as business issues.

MD calls for working on the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels. Traditionally, much effort has been devoted to helping individuals come to grips with their personal predispositions toward differences and learn to build and maintain quality interpersonal relationships across diverse groups. MD calls for the continuation of those efforts, but also recognizes the need to work on the organizational level.

Managers have ignored organisational dimensions, primarily because they have assumed that the individual employee would adjust. Under this assumption, the manager has no need to explore the possibility of change at the organisational level. With relaxation of the assimilation assumption, managers implementing MD must work organizational culture and system issues.

Leadership that does not understand and values diversity will turn into dictatorship.

Lovemore Mbigi (1996: 146), argues that the success of the new "rainbow nation" depends on managing the high expectations of the black population for improved quality of life on the one hand, and the white negative fears on the other hand.

The central issue to these two separate agendas is the debate in what the emerging public policy will be.

How will it past imbalances and inequalities?

In other words, the issue of Affirmative Action and how it will be managed, will determine the success of the current efforts at nation building in South Africa, Mbigi (1996: 75).

In the USA Affirmative Action is about the integration of a marginalized black minority that is politically and economically powerless with a 90% white majority, which is politically and economically powerful. In fact, if in America this 10% was promoted into managerial and supervisory positions, it would not substantially alter the material circumstances of the white majority and their life opportunities, Mbigi (1996: 76).

In South Africa, the context is different and this gives Affirmative Action a different meaning to both blacks and whites. How can a resource – rich minority

of 15 percent whites with a threatened power base absorb an 85 percent poverty-stricken majority, which is politically powerful?

The challenges in this aspect are very different.

In the past, South African organizations have dealt with racial diversity enforcing an assimilation process.

Thus, non-whites were forced to change in order to fit into the existing male white organisations' culture.

Cox (1993) argues that blacks should not be required to fit into ready-made white corporate cultures.

The corporate culture should be expanded to accommodate the diversity of all its people.

So, the management of diversity should not be seen as a simple human relations approach. It takes more than just treating people equally, more than just acceptance, tolerance or understanding of diversity, to create an empowered and committed workforce.

Managing diversity is a complete managerial process for creating an environment in which all employees feel motivated, respected and accepted, one that replaces a feeling of alienation with a sense of belonging.

Diversity if managed properly is an asset rather than a liability. Diversity Management produces and maintains a positive work environment. It recognizes and understands the differences of all the people who work for the organization.

In doing so, the organization that participates in this management can gain full productivity with common values. Also, this type of management utilizes a

synergy model – assuming that a diverse group of people will find effective and creative new ways to work with one another.

There is a growing awareness universally that diverse teams tend to outperform homogeneous teams of any composition. Homogeneous groups may reach consensus quicker, but often they are not as successful in generating new ideas or solving problems because their collective perspective is narrower.

A diverse team invariably brings a variety of perspectives and a level of creativity to bear on problem analysis, alternative generation and selection, which is impossible to duplicate when that diversity is absent.

In manufacturing you try to stamp out variance. With people, variance is everything.

In doing so, the organization that participates in this management can gain full productivity with common values. Also, this type of management utilizes a synergy model – assuming that a diverse group of people will find effective and creative new ways to work with one another.

Managing diversity is a challenge. It seeks to create a sense of solidarity and community rather than an organization of parts. The parts alone, separated, do not create a working whole. Developing common goals and objectives is one of the first steps towards a harmonious diverse working environment.

This type of management emphasizes the value of each individual's contributions to work process. It also stresses that equal opportunity should be for *everyone*, not just for the minority. Diversity management allows for each individual in the company to reach their full potential – only enhancing the potential of the company.

To ensure diversity in the workplace, employees need to be chosen based on their individual qualifications. The employers in turn must believe that they are hired because of these qualifications, not because of their ethnicity, age, or sex. Workplace diversity is not something that can be instituted in one day. It is something that is incorporated into the business practice over time and becomes *attitude of the organization*.

So managers should learn that differences do not mean weaknesses and that by diversifying the workforce the competitive ability in the long term is optimized.

Four propositions to consider:

- **Human resources management:** companies that manage diversity will have improved productivity, innovation, learning and performance.
- **Knowledge creation:** research shows that diversity improves the quality of decisions, provides superior solutions and innovative ideas.
- **Going global:** diversity management facilitates the development of cross-cultural capabilities to manage the complexity of the international marketplace.
- **Sales and marketing:** diversity represents a large repository of market intelligence and innovation on potential customers, suppliers and strategic partners, who are increasingly global and multicultural.

Managing diversity becomes much more attractive if you say, "I have to tap the full potential of everyone in the organization". I highlight the fact that this is a process, not an intervention with a beginning and an end. It's a way of doing business, a way of operating. When you have finished managing diversity, when you have finished doing it, what you have put in place is a new way of operating, a new way of thinking.

The goal is to create an environment that does not have to be assisted to empower, to work for, individuals who are different, but who are qualified. It

works for all individuals who are qualified regardless of how similar or how different they might be. This is aimed at all participants, not at a select group or select groups. It relates to everyone.

I make the point; finally, that managing diversity is not an end in and of itself. It's a means to an end, and that end is enhanced capabilities to achieve organizational objectives.

Business may say that focusing on Diversity is the right thing to do; however shifting the subject from a moral platitude to a business imperative will be crucial to success in this changing workforce.

Organizations should recognize that employees frequently make decisions and choices that draw upon their cultural background – choices made because of their identify group affiliations.

Organisations behaving in this paradigm, should develop an outlook on diversity that enables them to incorporate employees' perspectives into their core functions, to tap into the true benefit of their diverse workforce. In this way the organization internalizes differences among employees so that it learns and grows through them.

However for organizations to become winners, correct Management of Diversity at organizational level must be complemented by correct Management of Diversity at national level.

5.3.1 Business Focus on Diversity Leadership

Businesses may say that focusing on diversity is the right thing to do; however, shifting the subject from a moral platitude to a business imperative will be crucial to success in this changing workforce.

The nature of management is changing but the majority of managers still today ask, what's wrong? Why has it gone wrong? How can we fix it?

Future managers should be more concerned with creating new realities, in making the future happens.

The power has been the speed with which you can identify what's wrong or is not the way it should be and react (from the past) to get it back to the way it should be.

In this context there is a way that things should be. And when they are that way things are right. When they are not that way, there is something wrong with me, with them or with it.

"This is the world of is. That's the way it is. Nothing can change it." This is the consequence of 3 centuries of influence from mechanical newtonian thinking, of cause and effect, of linear relationships, of a world that behave in deterministic ways.

For 3 centuries, we have been planning, predicting, analyzing and controlling the world with an intense belief of cause and effect. If we believe that leaders must have their hands into everything, controlling every decision, person and moment, then we cannot hope for anything except what we already have – a constant of frantic efforts that end up destroying our individual and collective capacity.

But what if we stopped looking for control and began to look for setting a stage on which predictable miracles, can and do occur, creating a domain of constant

creativity and constantly learning how to become more capable of participating in our unfolding future?

If people are machines, seeking to control us, makes sense, but they aren't so, seeking to impose control through rigid structures and by positional power is seldom right.

Leadership is not about positional power; it's ultimately not even about what we do. Leadership is fundamentally about creating, new realities, with courage, ethics and vision.

It is about learning how to create the future and it exists when people are no longer victims of circumstance, but are participants in creating new circumstances.

Leadership is about creating, day by day, an environment in which we, and those around us, continually deepen our understanding of reality and are able to participate in shaping and creating the future, a collective vision of what is wanting to emerge in the world and then having the courage to do what is required, with ethics, and valuing the diferentness of people.

This type of leadership has to do with transformation, and renewal and continuous reinvention, not just continuous incrementalism. It introduces new ways of comprehending the issues and paradoxes that trouble organizations most – chaos, control, freedom, communication, participation and prediction.

Space everywhere is thought to be filled with fields, invisible, non-material influences that are the basic substance of the universe. We cannot see the fields, but we observe their effects. In science, Newton introduced the first field, gravitation.

In organizational terms leaders must closely learn the impact of non-material forces like **culture, values, ethics, differentnesses**, which can be observed in behaviour, yet doesn't exist anywhere independent of these behaviours.

What is it that influences employee behaviour or that encourages employees to practice things like excellent customer service?

We could ask about the messages that fill the space of the organization, as an organization "field" that is influencing behaviour.

We might discover that while we say we want outstanding customer service, there are other messages that exert reverse pressure. Perhaps people are being signaled that they must make their quotas this quarter, no matter what.

Or that they must make their boss look good above all other considerations.

We can never see a field, but we can easily see its influence by looking at behaviour. To learn what is in the field, look at what people are doing, and saying.

When organizational space is filled with divergent messages, when only contradictions float through the ethers, their invisible incongruity becomes visible as troubling behaviours. Because there is no agreement, there are more arguments, more competition and more power plays. People say one thing and mean another. Nobody trusts anybody.

The organization changes direction frequently and can't find its way, becoming an organization of desintegrity where our words would be just heard but not seen.

You can not say that part of a company behaves ethically and part does not; that is like saying that your left foot behaves ethically because it does not kick the cat, while your right foot is unethical because it does.

Organisations, such as business are formed as responses to social needs, and have no other function than to supply that need; thus they have an integral link

with the societies that form them, societies more and more pluricultural and different from each other.

It is not just deliberate action to do harm that is unethical. Failing to act, can be considered unethical as well; neglect can be as harmful as deliberate action.

The real threat is when an elite class develops which thinks it stands apart from society, the "masters of the universe".

But society is everything; businesses are part of society, they get their customers there, they hire their employees there.

The real challenges, are those we pose ourselves; our real foes are inside us.

One of the great paradoxes of business is that an organisation's people are its greatest asset, but they are alas potentially its greatest liability.

Lack of the necessary human qualities emotional intelligence, and knowledge is the most common cause of business failure, in a world of diversity.

Tradition, if accepted **uncritically**, can choke the life out of a corporation.

But the key word is **uncritically**. Study the past like any other source of knowledge, and you will find it can be a launch pad, not an anchor.

The question should not be, does the past have any value, but rather, can you afford to neglect any source of knowledge and inspiration that might help you to compete and win?

Chapter 6 *CONCLUSION*

South Africans now enjoy freedom of religion, belief and opinion. They are free to follow the dictates of their conscience.

But such freedom should be exercised with due regard for the rights of others.

Those who wish to have their religion, culture and differentness respected must in turn, respect others, as well as their diversity.

So, they must learn about and understand the significance of the religions and cultural lives of others, as well as their diversity.

In business, as in life we should ...

- be sensitive towards the role played by difference, and
- seek the common good.

The very survival of mankind depends on people developing concern for the whole of humanity, not just their own community or nation.

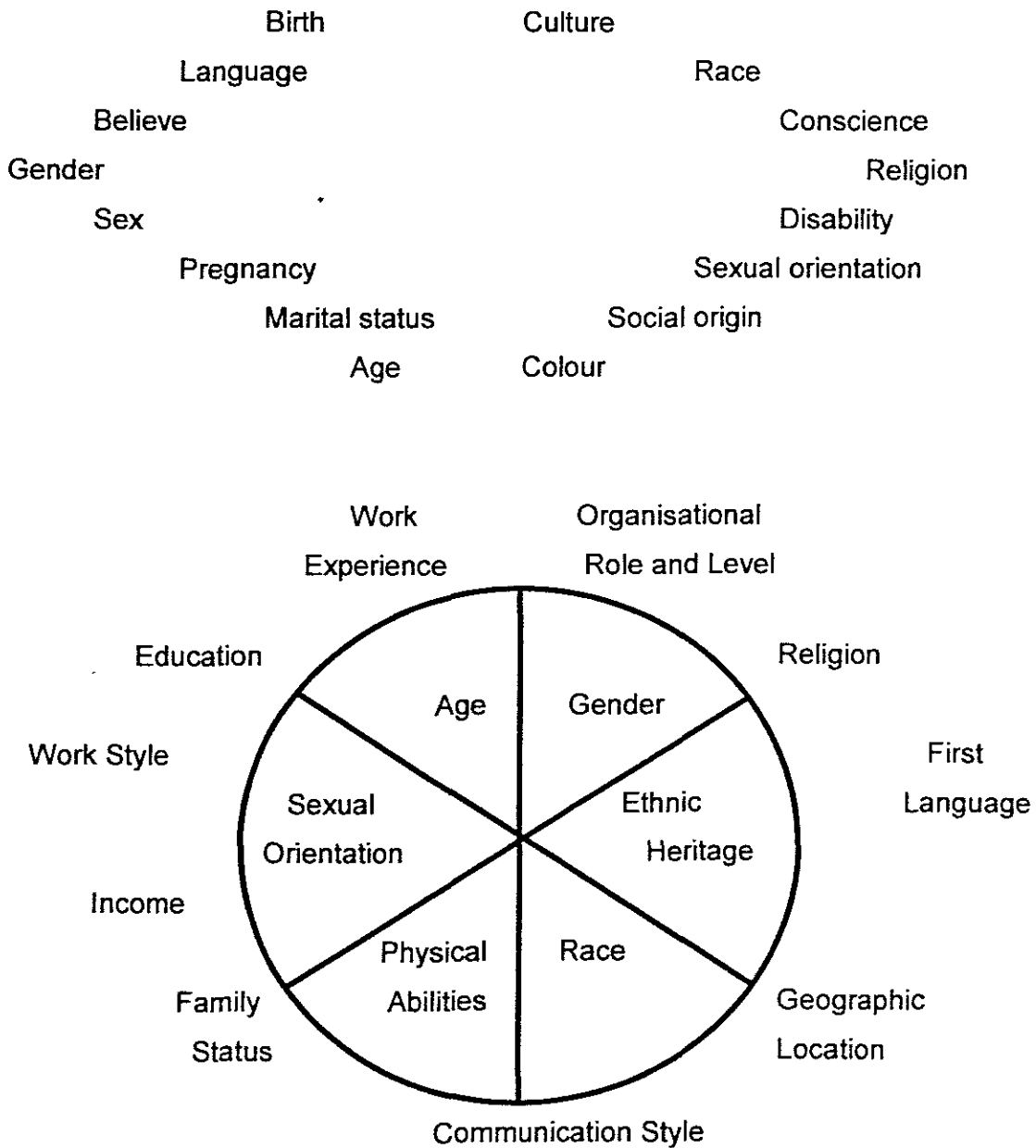
Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. The people of South Africa must believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

For the first time in the country's history, South Africans have a constitution that recognizes the cultural and religious diversity of our national society.

It affirms the values of "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom".

6.1 Dimensions of Diversity

The South African Constitution Acknowledges diversity in terms of -



Primary Dimensions

 Secondary Dimensions

(M Loden – Implementing Diversity – 1996)

The dynamic interaction among all the dimensions of diversity influences one's self image, value, opportunities and expectations.

- We come from different cultural backgrounds.
- We follow different religious practices.
- We hold different perceptions about issues such as politeness, social correctness, generosity and time. We speak different languages.
- We celebrate our rites of passage according to our ethnic or religious roots.
- We have different dietary laws, dress codes and cultural taboos.

And yet ...

- Our children attend school together; we conduct business with people from all walks of life and we celebrate our humanity together.

Yet every day, we enter a place where no one knows what the cultural diversity rules are. A place where we spend more time, with more people of different backgrounds than in any other part of our lives: The workplace.

- And without knowing, we may offend the very same people with whom we wish to co-operate or include in our business dealings because we are ignorant about:
 - their social/religious and dietary customs and traditions.

Knowing how to respond to the glad and sad tidings that mark the lives of others makes one so much more sensitive and skilled in practicing human relations!

South Africa is a radically pluralist society with the potential for destructive conflicts if the organisation's culture does not ensure fairness to all its members.

Increased diversity presents challenges to leaders who must maximize the opportunities that it presents while minimizing its costs. To accomplish this,

organizations must be transformed from monolithic or plural organizations to a multicultural model, characterized by a culture that values diversity. The organization that achieves these conditions will create an environment in which all members can contribute to their maximum potential.

DIVERSITY IS NOT	DIVERSITY IS
A HRD responsibility alone	Everyone's responsibility
Just about race and gender or the previously disadvantaged groups in the work place	About your internal customers (employees) and external customers (prospective clients).
Exclusive	Inclusive – it is about all of us.
Diversity is not another fad.	The changes we see happening now, will continue.
A problem.	An opportunity

So, '**diversity**' is about creating pro-actively a culture where each individual can develop and contribute to the organisation, and human plurality thrives in harmony not in the danger of potential destructive conflicts.

It relates to people's values, human rights, civil rights and people's beliefs.

It refers to a mosaic of diverse people who bring a variety of differences as assets to be nurtured not to be suppressed.

People retain their individuality while contributing to the common goals. It recognizes and values differences. We may be different, but being different is not wrong.

Interpersonal relationships should be managed on the basis of unconditional acceptance and positive regard.

Managers must develop new skills and awareness to handle the new challenges of internal and global diversity: Cross cultural understanding, the ability to build networks, and the understanding of geopolitical forces.

Managerial reality is not absolute; rather it is socially and culturally determined. Across all cultures, human beings are coming together to perform certain collective acts, encounter common problems that have to do with establishing direction, co-ordination and motivation. Culture affects the way in which they can be resolved. Social learning also establishes horizons of perception (Pascale and Athos, 1989).

6.2 Approaches to Managing Diversity

1. Golden rule approach.
2. The “right the wrongs” approach
3. The Platinum approach: Value the “differentness” of others

1. **The Golden rule approach:** Treat everyone the same way.

However, people from the dominant culture – who can have good intentions – assume that they should treat people according to their own standards. So, individual differences are ignored.

2. **The “Right the Wrongs” approach:** Takes the form of affirmative action.

“We don’t have enough of the previously disadvantaged people, such as blacks and women – we’d better hire some to make up for all those years of negligence.”

It creates a backlash because “traditional” employees feel that they will be overlooked so that “a quota can be filled”.

It creates an “us versus them” mentality, which is unproductive.

3. **The Platinum approach - The “Value and Management of Differences” approach**

It recognises differences and acknowledges that they exist, but does not require people to be assimilated into the dominant culture.

It allows for the individual mosaic of people to create the aggregate picture of an organisation.

When you join an organisation, you carry your “differentness” with you.

Employees do not set aside their cultural values and deep beliefs when they come to work.

When it involves managing others different from yourself, your reaction and solutions will depend on how much you know, understand, and value the “differentness” of others.

It is an overall long-term process approach, which seeks the commitment of the whole organisation if any success is to be achieved.

The challenge for the manager is to create an environment that recognises and honours the right to be different, and the right of people to be treated the way they want to be treated. So:

2. **The Golden Rule** - Treat people as you want to be treated.

(Plural organization)

3. **The Platinum Rule** - Treat others as they want to be treated.

(Multicultural organization)

It shows respect and honoring of our differences.

We need to ask others what they want, and tell others what we want.

It takes diversity beyond culture, and ensures that everyone is included and everyone wins.

As our society becomes increasingly high-tech as well as multicultural, the need for a non-offensive, sensitive, and personal touch in our interactions increases.

No matter what your level of intelligence or talent is, your success in the workplace depends to a large extent on your ability to work with other people. And now those people are multifaceted, multiracial and multicultural.

When you adapt your behaviors to the cultural practices of others, you're more likely to earn cooperation and support, get commitments, gain friends and clients, and keep peace.

Whether diversity becomes an asset or a liability to you and your organization depends on how you use it.

6.3 Diversity vs. Affirmative Action

Diversity is neither Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) nor Affirmative Action (AA).

EEO and AA are mainly about "quota filling". Both are laws that are imposed on people and create an adversarial environment.

The then President Mandela, on a speech quoted on the Natal Mercury, 10 February 1995, indicates that Affirmative Action is aimed at redressing wrongs, not creating new ones.

As the then President Mandela stated at the opening of the Parliament on 19 February 1995, programmes should be aimed at ensuring that those who were disadvantaged by apartheid in the past are given the "capacity" to catch up

with those who were given the opportunity to develop and advance themselves in terms of management and other skills. Mandela stated that when the government talk of affirmative action, it speaks of a human resource development programme which will ensure that all people, and not merely some, are given the possibility to develop their talents and to contribute to the development of their country.

An organization that emphasizes quota filling as diversity management will undermine the true intent of valuing diversity.

Magan, Nanane (2001: 25) states that generally there is a view of Diversity management that results in the creation of an Employment Equity office, staffed by a black person and the organization is seen to actively recruit affirmative action candidates in certain posts. This is evident from the wording used in the recruitment advertising. The organizations are usually also dependent, to some extent at least, on winning government tenders and regard legislative compliance as essential. What such organizations do not understand is that they are not managing diversity, and diversity interventions based on this model alone can often create more problems than they solve.

In managing diversity, the aims should be:

1. The goal is the creation and management of a diverse workforce, the establishment of quality interpersonal relationships and the full utilization of human resources.
2. The primary motive is the exploitation of the 'richness' that can flow from diversity and the attainment of competitive advantage and effective service.
3. The primary focus is on understanding, respecting and valuing differences, creating an environment appropriate for full utilization (culture and systems) with the inclusion of white males.

4. The benefits are the mutual respect among groups, enhances overall management capability, natural creation of a diverse workforce, natural upward mobility, a greater receptivity for affirmative action, sustained benefits and an escape from frustrating cycles.
5. The challenges are that this requires long term commitment, a mindset shift, modified definitions of leadership and management, mutual adaptation by the company and individuals and systems changes.

The employment equity legislation provides companies with the opportunity to make the management of diversity a business strategy. But managers, black, white, male, female and the disabled, need to become competent to manage diversity. It is definitely not an innate ability of any person who is appointed to manage others.

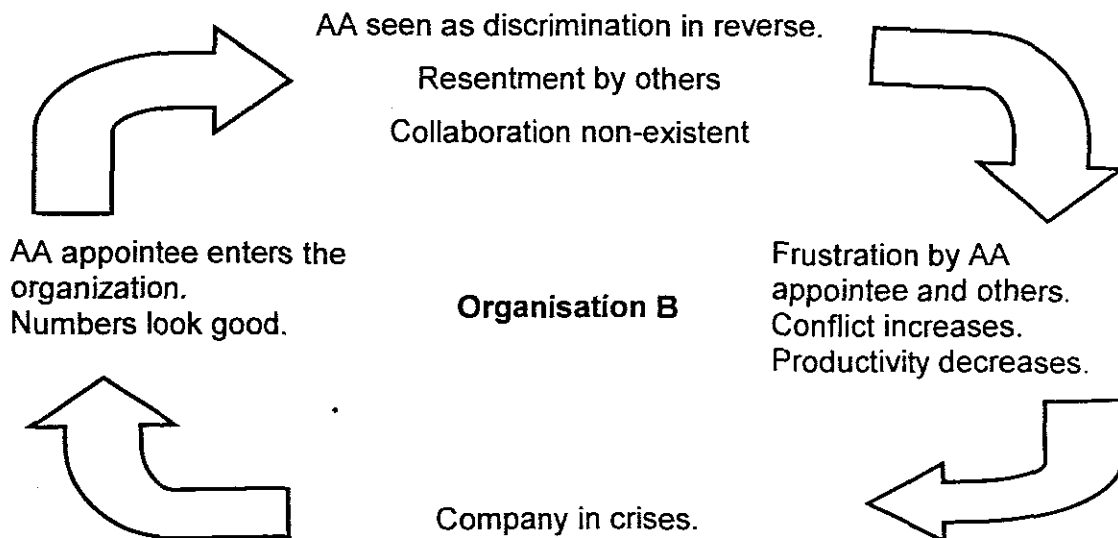
The focus should be on accelerated training and development of the previously disadvantaged people, to enable them to do the job affectively and compete on a basis of similar competencies.

For true equality to succeed:

- Less emphasis on race, gender and other differences;
- Focus on person's capabilities and structural adjustments that support **diversity**.

Affirmative Action should focus on managing the fears and concerns of the various racial and social groups in the organization, with great sensitivity.

This cannot be decreed through a memorandum.



Result: Country competitiveness diminishes.
 G.D.P does not grow enough.
 Poverty and unemployment increases.

Affirmative Action should focus on creating opportunities to obtain the necessary skills and competencies, as well as rewards and status for all blacks and not just the black elite and black middle class.

It should preserve black solidarity.

Affirmative Action programmes will fail as long as they are positioned as welfare programmes.

The focus should be on the cultural transformation of the entire organization accompanied by total affirmative change, but aimed at redressing the wrongs not creating new ones.

6.3.1 Key difference between Employment Equity, Affirmative Action and Managing Diversity

EE / AA	Diversity Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by legislation • Piecemeal initiatives • Assimilated into existing culture • Removing barriers • Focus on improving demographics • Makes assumptions • Quantitative: Focused on demographic profile change • Government Mandated: Imposed and often unwelcome. • Remedial: Focused on changing historic patterns of discrimination • Reactive: Problem response. • Beneficiaries: Protected groups. • Initial Step. • Culture Change Not Required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by business needs • Holistic strategy • Inclusion in an open culture • Nurturing potential • Focus on improving workplace • No assumptions no judgments • Qualitative: Focused on environmental readiness • Voluntary: Internally driven and welcomed. • Strategic: Focused on increasing innovation and creating competitive advantage. • Proactive: Opportunity driven. • Beneficiaries: Everyone • Follow-up Step. • Culture Change Required.

(M Loden – Implementing Diversity 1996 & SAMDI – African Leadership in the Public Adm. – 2000)

EEO / AA	VS	DIVERSITY
Government initiated		Voluntary (organization driven)
Legally driven		Productivity driven
Quantitative		Qualitative
Problem focused		Opportunity focused
Assumes assimilation		Assumes integration
Internally focused		Internally and externally focused
Reactive		Proactive

Source: Cascio, WF. 2003. *Managing human resources*. Boston: Irwin, p. 121.

Affirmative Action in South Africa should not be about correcting demographic imbalances, but about appropriate actions to deal with major societal restructuring.

A focus on only culture, race and gender, which ignores ability (skills) and competence – and constantly blames the white male for past injustices – only increases the polarization between groups.

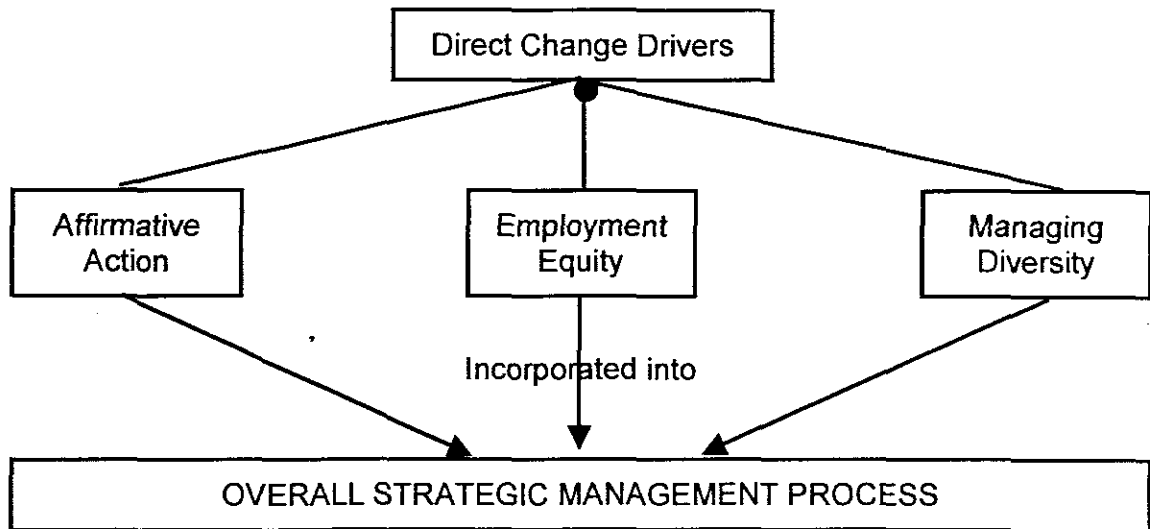
Positioning **diversity** so that one group must take continuous blame for the past – makes unity impossible.

Yes – acknowledge the past wrongs, but it is critical to look to the future.

Affirmative action fails to deal with the root causes of racial and gender prejudice.

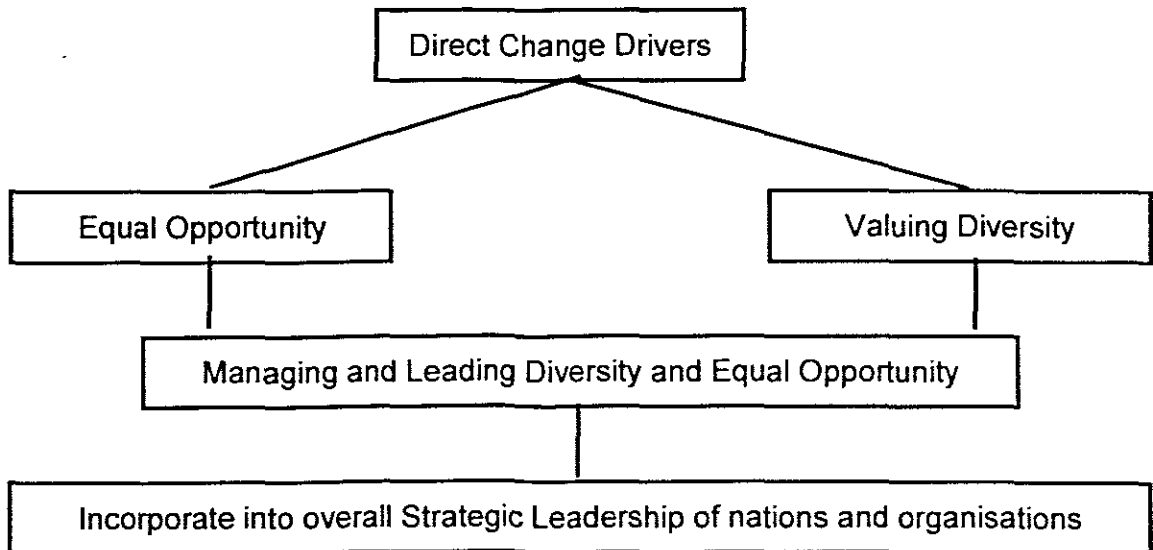
It fails to ensure synergy and to maximize the potential of every individual.

6.4 Direct change drivers to manage diversity



(Diagram adapted from Y du Plessis – Contemporary Issues in Strategic Management – 1996)

My own interpretation of the critical change drivers however, is as follows:

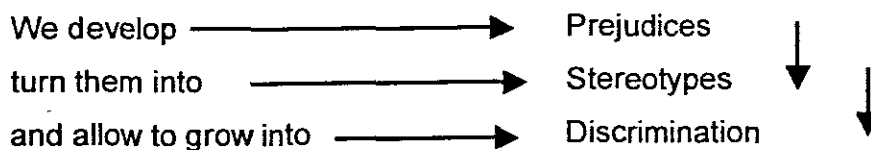


Diversity is not a replacement for Equal Opportunity
 – the two are interdependent.

6.5 Barriers to Managing Diversity

- Prejudice -** Preconceived feeling or bias
An opinion without judgment.
Comes from a belief in the superiority of one's own race, culture or class.
It gives some a better change than others, in getting respect and opportunities.
- Stereotyping -** When we apply our biases to all members of a group or we apply our experiences with one member of a group to the entire group.
- Discrimination -** Is treating people differently, unequally and usually negatively because they are members of a particular group.

We develop prejudices, turn them into stereotypes, and allow them to grow into discrimination.



Doing nothing is also taking a position.

We have a responsibility to speak out against intolerance.

- Too many “quick fix” solutions with short-term sustainability: “Corporate psychotherapy”.
- Like A Action, programmes of “understanding differences” are not sufficient as stand alone interventions.
- These programmes have as their goals the promotion of quality relationships at work and the reduction of social conflict. But the emphasis is on individual and interpersonal issues only.

- What is not addressed, are the issues most critical: Organisational culture, structures and policies, and effectively learning how, in the long range, to manage employee diversity, based on equal opportunity practices.

Experience both in this country and abroad suggests that the reasons for the problems with the implementation of an inclusive diversity strategy are:

1. Many managers do not understand what the concept of diversity really means.
2. Despite being told all about the value of diversity to the organization, many managers, 'in their hearts', are not convinced that diversity really does make sound business sense.
3. Diversity skills, which are transferable to any context, are not always explicated in a practical way.
4. Diversity is often not integrated with other core business and people management principles and practices.
5. Diversity is often not performance managed in the same way as other strategic objectives.

6.6 Eurocentric vs. Afrocentric Culture

Most programs are failing in South Africa because of:

- A lack of racial respect between whites and blacks;
- A lack of respect between social classes, as well as
- A lack of respect between management and employees.

We need to negotiate a shared vision in our organizations a practice of internal business cooperation, in a racially and socially divided society, which is a very strong part of the African Heritage.

South African management mindset and practice is drawn from only the “Euro centric Heritage” and ignores the “Afro-Asian and Afro centric” heritage of Ubuntu, with its concern for people.

The European heritage contributes to task efficiency and effectiveness and business competitiveness.

The African heritage provides a better way of managing people and performance relationships, through the spirit of business cooperation, the spirit of serving in harmony and the spirit of African hospitality, and cultural tolerance.

The reality of South Africa is that people tend not to have a sense of national identity and tend to be hooked up in narrow ethnic mindsets. People think of themselves first as either blacks or whites, Zulu or Xhosa, English speaking or Afrikaans.

No society developed and prospered without a high degree of trust and social capital, without a sense of shared destiny and, shared national identity. “Societies that are driven with barriers of distrust, based on class, ethnicity, kinship or other factors, will face extra roadblocks in their adoption of new organizational forms.” (Francis Fukuyama, 1995: 38)

South Africa needs to create this sense of patriotism of “We are South Africans first”.

Euro Centric	Afro Centric
Belief in individualism and free will.	Social orientation.
Belief in capitalism and self-interest.	Working for the common good.
Belief in managing top-down: telling people what to do.	Non-adversarial style. Co-operation.

Euro Centric	Afro Centric
Belief in systems and structures to keep things orderly.	Emphasis on common goals with other members of the community.
Belief in defining people in terms of their roles and functions	Stress on the humanity of individuals (ubuntu).
Emphasizes the rights of the individual.	Demands for balancing the rights of individuals and the group.
Authority derives from position. Positional power, through knowledge and skills. Whether their peers have confidence in them is unimportant. Power / authority granted from the levels above	The individual receives an identity through the community. Authority derives through acceptance and ability to interact with other members of the group. Requires consensus from the levels below. Right to lead must be granted by those down the line.

These two different leadership approaches in the country represent one of the dilemmas South African managers face. On the one hand there is the Eurocentric or Western approach that has proven value in improving organizational and work performance worldwide and in South Africa.

On the other, the supporters of the Afrocentric management approach argue that, for managers to be relevant in South Africa, they must accept concepts embodied in the indigenous black philosophy. The same dilemma applies to foreign companies that want to do business in South Africa.

Either Eurocentric or Afrocentric culture have positive and negative influences on economic performance. The challenge is for the maximization of the positive and elimination of the negative factors. The glorification, alone, of the one culture, will not take Africa, and African organizations into the path of economic progress.

Managers do not, and should not, attempt to choose between Eurocentric and Afrocentric management approaches in South Africa. Instead, business needs to marry these two sets of values, even if the marriage is a rather hasty one.

However, the previous thinking, action and behaviour of the South African corporate world and culture lay somewhere between those of Europe and the USA and had little to do with Africa.

If South African organizations are to survive, the dominant Western management paradigm needs to move in the direction of valuing the Western as well as the Afrocentric management systems alongside each other as equally important.

South African leaders need to understand the different cultural expectations of all South Africans and corporate South Africa needs to 'South Africanise' in order to mobilize the people of South Africa effectively.

According to Cox (1994: 128) in culturally diverse organizations, members will have significant group related differences in norm and value orientations in such areas as time and space, leadership styles, individualism-collectivism, cooperation-competition, locus of control, and communication styles.

- 1: Ignorance of cultural differences is a source of ineffectiveness in the work performance of diverse workgroups. Likewise, knowledge of the cultural differences in diverse workgroups will enhance work relationships and work team effectiveness.
- 2: In traditional assimilationist-oriented organizations, cultural differences between designated and non-designated group members will create barriers to full participation of designated group members.
- 3: In pluralistic/multicultural organizations, cultural differences among members will be utilized to enhance creativity and problem solving.

One of the critical issues and main obstacles and barriers to building a culture of valuing diversity in South African organizations is the socialized mindsets of the different cultural groups. The entrenched mental barriers tend to manifest in the implicit norms, values and perception of self and others and tend to find explicit expression in management practices and behaviour.

In order to build a corporate multicultural identity, a strategy for managing cultural diversity is required. This strategy would have to build consensual realities through an acute awareness and understanding of the differences and commonalities in cultural preferences of the diverse cultural forces present in the organization.

The common vision should emerge from the perception of a common identity and shared values through a culture of valuing diversity.

The impact of this learning process of discovering the mutual benefits of multiculturalism to South African organizations should not be underestimated since this is the only way in which diversity will genuinely be valued in organizations.

However, cross cultural training and sensitization alone are not sufficient for addressing the organizational procedural and policy discriminatory practices or the structural inequalities in the organizations.

Transformation must be systemic and a holistic approach should be applied to change organizational practices, procedures, systems, strategies and leadership as well as individual attitudes and values so that we can ultimately achieve a culture of valuing diversity and organizational effectiveness.

6.6.1 Management implications of the cultural differences between white and black managers

WHITES

High uncertainty avoidance

- More worry about the future
- Tendency to stay with the same employer
- Loyalty to the employer is seen as a virtue
- More emotional resistance to change
- Less risk taking
- Managers must be experts in the field they manage
- Initiative of subordinates should be kept under control
- Rules should not be broken
- Planning is important

High assertiveness

- Direct and aggressive
- Dominant

High future orientation

- Emphasis on planning for the future
- The dominant temporal horizon is the future
- Time is tangible and divisible
- Due dates, schedules and promptness are important
- Time is money

BLACKS

Average uncertainty avoidance

- Greater readiness to live for the day
- Less hesitation about changing employers
- Loyalty to employer is not seen as a virtue
- Less emotional resistance to change
- More risk taking
- Managers need not be experts in the field they manage
- Delegation to subordinates can be complete
- Rules may be broken for pragmatic reasons
- Planning is not seen as so important

Low assertiveness

- Less direct and more face saving
- Shows subordination

Low future orientation

- Immediate gratification and less emphasis on planning
- The dominant temporal horizons are the present and past
- Time is flexible and intangible
- Due dates, schedules and promptness are relative
- Relationships are more important than time

High individualism

- Organizations are not expected to look after employees
- Employees are expected to look after their own interests
- Promotion from inside and outside, based on market value and merit
- Managers try to be up to date and endorse modern management ideas
- Policies and practices apply to all
- Belief in individual decisions and incentives
- Competition among employees for recognition and rewards
- People ideally achieve alone and assume personal responsibility
- Everyone has a right to private life and their opinion
- In negotiations decisions typically are made on the spot by a representative
- Emphasis on directive leadership, individual self-sufficiency – individual rights are important

Low humane orientation

- Unfair and selfish behaviour
- Lack of concern and respect for all employees
- Neglect of employee welfare
- Violation of human rights
- Discriminatory practices
- Employees are seen as instruments of workers
- Mistrust, unfriendliness and suspicion

High collectivism

- Employees expect organizations to look after them – and can become alienated if the organization dissatisfies them
- Employees expect the organization to look after their interests
- Promotion from inside on the basis of seniority
- Less concern with fashion in management ideas
- Policies in group decision and incentives
- Lack of competition among employees
- People ideally achieve in groups which assume joint responsibility
- Private life is invaded by organizations and clans to which you belong; opinions are predetermined
- Decisions typically referred back by the delegate to the organization
- Emphasis on consensus, cooperation, collaboration and interdependence – group harmony is important

High humane orientation

- Emphasis on fairness and altruism
- Respect and concern for all employees
- Health working conditions are important
- Human and group rights are important to all
- Lack of discrimination practices
- Employees are seen as people
- Trust and friendliness

High performance orientation	Above average performance orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High emphasis on education and reward for outstanding behavior • Tradition, convention, saving of face and social reciprocation are not so important • Performance orientation manifests at individual level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on education and rewards for outstanding behavior • Tradition, convention, saving of face and social reciprocation are emphasized • Performance orientation manifests at group level

Source: Adopted from Hofstede (1980, 1991, 1996), House (1993), Triandis (1995), Berger (1996), Dorfman (1996), Hoeklin (1996), Reiger and Bignaut (1996), Tayeb (1996), Abraham (1997), House et al (1997b) and Schermerhorn and Bond (1997).

6.7 The forces that shape culture

Culture is something that over arches, reflects and ultimately has its own effect on the social.

It is the creation of a consensus over values and standards and relates to the beliefs and values people have about societies, social change and the ideal society they seek. (Billington, 1991: 1)

Cultures take a long time to develop through generations. Perhaps no force is stronger in shaping behavioural standards than **religion**. If a culture has a long standing, dominant religion, active and firm in its teaching of what is right and wrong, those teachings have much to say about that culture's core values.

Though all the major religions are practiced in Africa, the traditional religion was animism. Africans believed that a supreme being created and regulated all aspects of life and, represented by spirits embodied in nature, intervened freely in human affairs, through departed ancestors.

Africans thus resigned themselves to their fates.

As a result, life was unhurried and was perceived to proceed according to nature's pace and rhythms.

The subsistence economy and lack of alternatives engendered the "work to live" attitude characteristic of a "being" culture not "doing culture". The little time not spent tending to survival was devoted to leisurely pursuits. The African mind developed as an instrument for experiencing and enjoying life, not solving its mysteries. The future held little meaning relative to the past, and time as an abstraction had little value. The only realities that mattered were actual events and human relationships. Life was something to be experienced, not planned. The most desirable outcome of human endeavor was survival, and the primary means to that end was harmony with humanity, nature and God.

How **political power** is distributed and exercised shapes attitudes towards authority, willingness to accept direction, and sense of self-reliance and independence.

The **physical surroundings** of a people help shape the nature, intensity and longevity of their values.

The degree of isolation or interaction afforded by the geography and topography of their homeland, the amount and kind of natural resource endowments, the felicity or harshness of its climate and exposure to invasion and natural disaster all can have an effect.

The manner in which a people sustains itself **economically**, how it organizes itself to produce or obtain the necessities of life, determines the roles individuals are assigned and the relationships among them, and shapes attitudes toward meaning in life and work.

The forces shaping sub-Saharan African culture include –

- Physical isolation that precluded assimilation of the developments and advances of others.
- Animism and dependence on nature
- Paternalism and familial hierarchy typical of agricultural societies
- European statism and geographic fragmentation of society.

The core values developed by these forces include:

- **Large Power Distance** – stemming from recognition of and submission to the authority of age – based wisdom and experience, essential in an agrarian, subsistence economy; amplified by the emergence of authoritarian monarchies and confirmed by the relatively brief colonial experience and the statistic influence of European powers.

People feel dependent on those in authority and expect direction from them. Those in authority exercise power in an autocratic or paternalistic manner and they assume to be there because they have a right to it, either by virtue of inheritance or because of superior expertise.

- **Collectivism** – essential for survival in a rigorous environment poor in resources and supporting only small, widely dispersed communities, with the extended family as the primary collective unit.
- **Feminity** – essential to maintain harmonious relationships within the collective unit and with supernatural and natural forces.
- **Egalitarianism** – reflecting mutual dependence and respect for each individual as a vehicle for nature's life force and the kingship lineage.
- **Low Uncertainty Avoidance** – a result of fatalistic dependence on the supernatural and nature, with its unpredictable events and cyclical

rhythms of constant change. A steady paycheck is preferred to performance-based compensation.

- **Particularist Ethics** – a result of lack of universal moral precepts or religious law typical of animistic beliefs. Maintaining a relationship may be more important than getting the job done.

Being familiar with someone is more important than familiarity with their products. Obligations to a particular person supersede the general or universal duties to society at large.

- **Status by Ascription** – based on age and experience; a lack of opportunity to establish measures of merit in a subsistence economy, and a dominance of external attribution

Those in authority act in accordance with their roles; actual performance and results are less important. Unfavorable results are attributed to external and uncontrollable causes. They deem title and seniority more important than competence. They want respect and deference regardless of capabilities or achievements.

In order for political democracy, and human progress to flourish in Africa, it must be underpinned by the very deep cultural roots that facilitate progress, either from Euro, Asian or Afrocentric culture and the erasure of what blocks it. It must be nourished by the fertility of economic prosperity and well being, and the desire for good governance.

It is not by mere coincidence that the march to black rule in Africa, which started in Ghana in 1957, had become something of a political and economic nightmare. It is war revolting to behold. Out of the 50 countries

that had gained black majority rule, all but 4 had regressed into repression
Mbigi (1996: 22).

The majority of the black governments had perfected and expanded the repressive structures that the colonial governments had left in place. Most of them had developed into dictatorship of the one party variety.

Political repression, institutional decay, corruption and economic stagnation or regression had become the features of governance in Africa
Mbigi (1996: 22).

It is necessary to have a clean break with the past.

The past is discredited and a blight on the African collective social memory which Africans must erase.

Poverty, inefficiency and sorrow characterize the African continent (Mbigi, 1996: 8).

High performance, determinates and change is the way to minimize these negative features.

6.8 Culture and Change

Etounga-Manguelle (2000: 75) indicates that the first objective is to preserve African culture, one of the most – if not the most – humanistic cultures in existence. But it must be regenerated through a process initiated from the inside that would allow Africans to remain themselves while being of their time. These humanistic values *must be kept* – the solidarity beyond age classification and social status; social interaction; the love of neighbor, whatever the color of his skin; the defense of the environment, and so many others. However it is crucial to destroy all within the African culture that is opposed to the mastery of the

future, a future that must be prosperous and just, a future in which the people of Africa determine their own destiny through participation in the political process.

In doing so, it is important to be mindful that culture is the mother and that institutions are the children. More efficient and just African institutions depend on modifications to the African culture, to promote the qualities that engender human progress.

According to him, Africa needs to undertake peaceful revolutions in four sectors: education, politics, economics, and social life.

Education. The traditional education of the African child prepares boys and girls for integration into their tribal community. To the child are transmitted not only the habits customary for his or her age and sex, but all the values and beliefs that are the cultural foundation of the group to which he or she belongs. In a system in which education is perceived above all as an instrument of socialization, the traditional African child is educated by the entire community. The problem is that this system offers few incentives for children to improve themselves, to innovate, or to do better than their parents.

One of the key elements of winning economies is that they focus on education.

How then can the educational systems so strongly handicapped, be reformed by both a conservative culture and a lack of infrastructure and pedagogical facilities? Very simply, by asserting the absolute preeminence of education, by suppressing the construction of religious structures and other palaces to the detriment of schools, and by modifying the content of the curricula, accenting not only science but especially the necessary changes of the African society. This means critical thinking, affirmation of the need for sub-regional and continental unity, rational development of manual as well as intellectual methods of work, and, in general, the qualities that engender progress: imagination, dissent,

creativity, professionalism and competence, a sense of responsibility and duty, love for a job well done.

The African school should henceforth mold future businesspeople, and therefore job creators, not just degree recipients who expect to be offered sinecures. From the time the child is in elementary school, the young African will have to be awakened to time management, not only in terms of production but especially in terms of maintenance of infrastructure and equipment. The teaching of technological maintenance is surely more important than courses on the role of the one-party system in national integration and on the infallibility of the "Father of the Nation".

But change must not stop there. The role of the African woman – the abused backbone of our societies – in society must also be transformed. Women do not have access to bank accounts, credit, or property. They are not allowed to speak. They produce much of our food, yet they have little access to agricultural training, credit, technical assistance, and so on.

In Africa as elsewhere, the emancipation of women is the best gauge of the political and social progress of a society. Without an African woman who is free and responsible, the African man will be unable to stand on his own.

Politics. Once education has been reformed, African political systems will change virtually by themselves. A new type of citizenship will emerge, one that gives more room to the individual, his worth as a social actor, his ability to adapt to his institutional environment, and the demands that progress puts on his community. African nations need to extend the pluralism that already exists in the diversity of their peoples to the political arena. They must cultivate tolerance and emphasise merit. Regional integration must replace nationalism.

Economics. To revolutionize the African economic culture, Africans must understand that instead of depending on a world market that they are virtually excluded from, they must first establish integrated markets among themselves. They must accept profit as the engine of development. They must recognize the indispensable role of individual initiative and the inalienable right of the individual to enjoy the fruits of his labor. They must understand that there can be no real or lasting economic growth without full employment. The entire African population must be put to work. It is impossible for anyone to be both unemployed and a good citizen, especially in countries with no social safety net.

Social Life. African civil society will not emerge without qualitative changes in behaviour, first in the relationships among Africans and then with respect to behaviour toward foreigners, to whom Africans generally feel inferior. Africans must have more self-confidence, more trust in one another, and a commitment to a progress that benefits all. They need more rigor and a systematic approach to the elaboration of strategies – and implementation of decisions taken – whatever the costs.

The collective African culture is extremely strong on collective solidarity and there is a need to draw inspiration from it.

Etounga-Manguelle (2000: 76) concludes that Africa is now at a crossroads. The persistence and destructiveness of the economic and political crises that have stricken Africa make it necessary for Africans to act without delay. Africa must go to the heart of her morals and customs in order to eradicate the layer of mud that prevents their societies from moving into modernism. Africans must lead this *revolution of minds* – without which there can be no transfer of technology – on their own. They must place their bets on their intelligence because Africans, if they have capable leaders, are fully able to distance themselves from the jealousy, the blind submission to the irrational, the lethargy that have been their

undoing. If Europe, that fragment of earth representing a tiny part of humanity, has been able to impose itself on the planet, dominating it and organizing it for its exclusive profit, it is only because it developed a conquering culture of rigor and work, removed from the influence of invisible forces. Africa must do the same.

The paradox in South Africa is that we have political winners who are economic losers, and economic winners who are political losers.

The task of collective leadership in South Africa is to create economic and competitive citizenship for the majority, and political citizenship for the minority ethnic groups.

Whites must stop thinking of themselves as the superior race or the "right" color. Blacks must realise that the people they work with today are not the same people who enslaved their ancestors generations ago. They must forgive whites for the intolerable acts of the past.

Blacks must not blame their present co-workers for the way their ancestors were treated by European settlers.

No one should be criticized, ostracized or demoralized for history. In order to work together, we must concentrate on our strengths and respect each other as *individuals and as members of unique and different cultures*. We do not have to be clones to be equals.

Whites should know and not forget the enormity of the negative impact brought upon the Africans in the past. Africans found themselves judged by the *standards of a culture very different than their own; an emotive, communal, feminine "being" people, close to one another and to nature found itself immersed in a "doing" culture based on individuality, nationality, objectivity, and technology and driven by the expectation that it could shape nature to its will.*

Whereas Africans were unfamiliar with the notion of private prosperity, they found themselves to be private property (slavery).

As succeeding generations descended into slavery, much of their cultural heritage was lost, forced to modify behavior drastically. They were deprived of their kin, "class", language, dress, and diet; their way of life; their behavioral compass; and ultimately their humanity. They had no choice but to assume the behaviours forced upon them by masters, who sought to condition them to think of themselves as inferior

Racism is still today not a side issue or a peripheral affair. The same arguments and fears that exist today were part of "white reaction to "blacks", since hundred of years ago.

According to Lovemore Mbigi (1996: 136), social research indicates that about one million black youths in South Africa are completely marginalized. They have become a lost generation of criminals and prostitutes. The sad thing is that no alternate programme is reaching them.

This is mainly because the extended African family has broken down in the South African urban situation and no other institutional form has emerged to replace it, except street gangs. One study estimates there are 1,200 known fulltime crime syndicates in the country, and an estimated six million black youths are on the brink of also total marginalisation. Can you afford to be blind to this tragedy and not to make your contribution for change?

6.9 The Cultures of Development

All human beings live in the same physical world, but their understandings about the world vary and their behaviour is at least as much determined by those understandings as it is by the objects and people around them. In short, culture

is the foundation of human life, and in order for people's behaviour to change, their understanding of the world around them must also change to some extent, and the behaviour of the members of a group can be understood only according to the culture of that group.

Culture is cumulative in that as time goes by new understandings are added to those already shared. Adding new understandings may do more than enlarge a culture; it may also change its quality. Culture is not behaviour, it is a guide for behaviour, *but it is not the only determinant of behaviour. Although culture is not the only determinant of behaviour, it is important in shaping people's judgments and perceptions and people's views of what is.*

Perhaps the greatest source of failure in planning programs or projects is the difficulty of *foreseeing all of the connections between understandings that will eventually turn out to be relevant to whether or not the change is welcomed and adopted.*

Culture is a cultural independent variable in terms of explaining different patterns of *political and economic development – that is, the subjective attitudes, beliefs, and values prevalent among the dominant groups in the society.*

Culture can be thought of at a variety of levels. Within nations significant cultural differences may exist among regions, ethnic groups, and social classes. *Even greater differences in culture usually exist among nations, and the nation and the nation-state are probably the most important units for the analysis and comparison of culture and its effect on development.* Beyond the nation, however, exist a number of broad cultural families or groupings, often including several nations that often share much in terms of common race and ethnicity, language, religion, and history.

“Why did so many African countries record so little progress towards any goals? In 1962, for instance, Ghana and South Korea had virtually identical economies in terms of per capita GNP, sector sizes, and exports. Twenty years later they could hardly have been more different. Looking at the economic and political variables in those countries in 1962, one could never have predicted that divergence. If one had thought at that point in terms of the differences between West African and Korean cultures, however, that divergence in development might not have been so surprising” Inkeles, A. & Sasaki, M. (1996: 478).

Widespread agreement appears to exist among scholars and practitioners on the desirability of societies becoming wealthy, equitable, democratic, stable, and autonomous. These goals, however, emerge out of the Western and particularly the Nordic experience. They are Western goals, as is, indeed, the concept of development itself. The articulated support for them by political and intellectual elites throughout the world may simply be tribute to the intellectual dominance of Western ideas, the extent to which non-Western elites have been indoctrinated in Locke, Smith, Rousseau, Marx, and their twentieth-century disciples. These ideas may find little support in the indigenous culture. In contrast to the Western model, another culture's image of the good society may be of a society that is simple, austere, hierarchical, authoritarian, disciplined, and martial.

Inkeles (1996: 479) states that, the image of the developed Western society – wealthy, equitable, democratic, stable, autonomous – thus may not constitute a meaningful model or reference group for a modern Islamic, African, Confucian, or Hindu society. Throughout the non-Western world, societies have judged themselves by Western standards and have found themselves wanting. According to Inkeles maybe the time has come to stop trying to change these societies and to change the model, to develop models of a modern African, Islamic, Confucian, or Hindu society that would be more relevant to countries

where those cultures prevail. In some measure, of course, this process has been under way for some time as Third World intellectuals have spun out theories of "African socialism" and "Islamic democracy". The useful models, however, are less likely to come from the normative theorizing of intellectuals than from the historical experience of societies.

The relevance of culture to explaining different patterns of development may also be enhanced by once again emphasizing the distinction between modernization and Westernization. In theory these concepts were always distinguishable; in application, however, they seldom were distinguished. In many respects they overlapped. With respect to the non-Western world, the two usually went together no matter how much non-Western elites might attempt to differentiate technology and material processes, on the one hand, from basic values and norms, on the other. More recently, however, in a variety of ways in many different circumstances, non-Western values, attitudes, beliefs (religious and otherwise) have reasserted themselves. As Western colonial rule fades into history, as elites are increasingly the product of their own culture rather than that of Europe or America, as the masses in their societies, never much exposed to Western culture, play an increasingly important role in politics, as the global influence of the principal Western powers continues its relative decline, the indigenous cultures naturally become more important in shaping the development of these societies. The partnership between modernization and Westernization has been broken. While continuing to pursue modernization, the Third World is also, in some measure, deeply involved in and committed to a process of de-Westernization.

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Appendix

Confidential

Dear Colleague

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide information for a qualitative research project that I am currently undertaking. The aim of the research is to gain insight into the "Employee perceptions of Diversity Management in the Western Cape Public Health Sector", which forms part of a dissertation on "Managing Diversity: A philosophical deliberation".

The questionnaire is based on "Suggestions for Managers" on how to deal with pertinent factors that can improve the understanding and acceptance of Diversity Management in the workplace.

If you prefer to express your opinion in bullet form please do so.

Please be honest in your answers, and feel free to make any suggestions that you feel could help to achieve a better "Diversity Management" within the PAWC Health Department, and learn more about other cultures.

All respondent's identities will be kept strictly confidential. Participants do not need to fill in any personal particulars.

Your input will be greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information.

Please forward completed questionnaires to the address below:

Cesar Alexandre
Chief Engineer, Hospital Engineering Services
Private Bag X21, PAROW 7499
Or Fax to (021) 918-1690

Thank you very much

CESAR ALEXANDRE

“WHAT DO YOU PERSONALLY SUGGEST MANAGERS SHOULD KNOW AND DO, IN ORDER TO ADDRESS, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES?:”

1. Sense of Self and Space

2. Communication and Language

3. Dress and Appearance

4. Food and Eating Habits

5. Time and Time Consciousness

6. Relationships

7. Values and Norms

8. Beliefs and Attitudes

9. Mental Processes and Learning

10. Work Habits and Practices

11. Eye Contact

12. The Handshake

13. To Sit or Not To Sit

14. Voice Volume

15. Gestures of Appreciation

16. Leaving and Entering a room

17. Ways to learn more about other cultures

Thank you very much for the time and effort taken to supply me with the above information.

Confidential

Dear Colleague

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide information for a qualitative research project that I am currently undertaking. The aim of the research is to gain insight into the "Employee perceptions of Diversity Management in the Western Cape Public Health Sector", which forms part of a dissertation on "Managing Diversity: A philosophical deliberation".

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Cesar Alexandre
Chief Engineer, Hospital Engineering Services
Private Bag X21, PAROW 7499
Or Fax to (021) 918-1690

Thank you very much

CESAR ALEXANDRE

Questionnaire

Please place a where you think it is appropriate.

1. NEVER 2. SOMETIMES 3. FREQUENTLY 4. ALWAYS

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>1. Sense of Self and Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you say good morning and good-bye to each employee every day. • Introduce new employees to their co-workers formally, taking the individual around to meet each new colleague. • Be careful in using first names, especially with older workers. • Ask people what they prefer being called. • Guard against being overly familiar with workers. • Learn to listen and create an atmosphere of trust where you can learn about each other's needs. 						
<p>2. Communications and Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is a language barrier, assume confusion. Don't take the nod or yes to mean the individual understands or agrees. Watch for tangible signs of understanding such as immediately beginning the task and doing it correctly. • Consider that smiles and laughter may indicate discomfort or embarrassment. See if you can identify what is causing the difficulty. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid smiling when giving directions or when having serious work-related discussions with employees, especially when giving feedback or when conducting performance reviews. • Be careful not to think out loud. Employees hearing you may take your off-the-cuff comments literally and may even act on them. • Watch for subtle clues that may be speaking volumes. A comment about another worker's frustrations may be telling you about a work-group complaint. Hints about family members moving in might be couching a desire for a raise. 						
<p>3. Dress and Appearance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before reacting to another's appearance, stop to consider the meaning attached to appearance by the individual. • When making assessments about job applicants, consider their cultural norms regarding dress. • Consider the job the individual will be doing and the people with whom he/she will be interacting when determining appropriate dress. • Teach individuals the cultural rules required in your organization regarding dress and grooming. • Remember that body scent is not necessarily a sign of uncleanness. • Consider uniforms as a way to eliminate differences and build common ground. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>4. Food and Eating Habits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When planning catered meals or snacks for meetings and group gatherings, include a variety of foods so there will be something edible and acceptable for all. • Avoid serving food that might be offensive to some staff members. • Have alternate dishes available (e.g. a vegetarian plate or fruit salad). • When choosing restaurants for business meetings, keep individual dietary restrictions and preferences in mind. • Provide well-ventilated or outdoor eating areas for staff where odors can be more easily dissipated. 						
<p>5. Time and Time Consciousness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that differences in time consciousness are cultural and are not a sign of laziness. • Allow time in your schedule for the development of relationships. • Make it a point to spend some time each week with each employee. • Explain the reasons for deadlines and schedules. • Explain the part promptness plays in assessment of performance and work habits. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>6. Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that family responsibility and loyalty to kin will be a prime value of many workers. Take this into consideration when identifying rewards and motivators for staff (e.g. hiring relatives and giving time off for vacations and holidays). • Allow employees time to discuss important decisions with family members before they give you a final answer. • Recognise the informal leadership older members may hold in the work unit. Consult with them and seek their cooperation. • Show respect to older employees by addressing them first and giving them formal authority when appropriate. • Recognise that, as the boss, you may be seen as the "head of the work family". Employees may come to seek your advice and counsel about problems in and out of work. 						
<p>7. Values and Norms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider giving rewards and feedback to the whole work group rather than to individuals. • Structure tasks to require teamwork rather than individual action. Give workers time to think about and formulate responses to input requests. • Consider the face-losing potential of any actions you are planning. Seek out ways to achieve your objectives while avoiding diminishing employees. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>8. Beliefs and Attitudes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what religious holidays staff members celebrate. Keep those in mind when planning work-group activities, holiday celebrations, and individual schedules. • Avoid scheduling meetings and training programs on any religious holidays. • Take advantage of the fact that employees want different holidays, days off, and vacation times (e.g. some people would be willing to work on Sundays or on Christmas day). • Help newcomers understand the reasons for shared decision-making and the need for suggestions and input from employees. • Educate employees about EEO and discrimination. Explain the legal liabilities as well as the principles of equality that, though not always adhered to, are foundations of this country. 						
<p>9. Mental Processes and Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain cause-and-effect relationships when getting staff members involved in problem solving. • Ask staff members what they suggest be done about the problems and complaints they express. • Use nonlinear problem-solving methods such as brainstorming that capitalize on lateral thinking and intuition rather than logical analysis. • Ask troubleshooting questions such as "What would happen if ...?" in order to get staff to think about possible consequences. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>10. Work Habits and Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know your employees and find out what place work plays in their lives. Find out what gives them satisfaction on the job. • Be sensitive to employees' perceptions about the status of certain kinds of work. Explain the reasons for each assignment and its importance in the whole scheme of things. • Talk to employees and find out what is rewarding to them. • Understand that taking initiative and making independent decisions may be difficult for some employees. Take time to coach them in this direction. 						
<p>11. Eye contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westerners generally make eye contact during conversation. • Traditional African people lower their eyelids so as to avoid the gaze of another for the sake of courtesy. 						
<p>12. The handshake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westerners generally offer a strong hand and shake hands firmly. • Traditional African people generally leave their hand in yours for a longer time & shake hands less firmly. • However, many orthodox Hindus, Jews and Muslims may choose not to shake hands with people of the other sex. Some may only offer fingertips as a token gesture. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p>13. To sit or not to sit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westerners generally expect an invitation to be seated. • Traditional African people, if in a junior position of authority, will generally sit first (or as soon as possible) as a sign of respect. • Westerners, if in a junior position, generally greet the more senior person first. 						
<p>14. Voice volume:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditionally, black Africans speak to each other in louder voices – so as to indicate that there are no secrets between the two participants. 						
<p>15. Gestures of appreciation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xhosa people cup one hand on top of the other (or cup them together), and bend knees quickly and slightly. • Zulu people give three gentle claps at chest height, then place their hands in a slightly cupped position next to each other. • Hindus generally offer a slight bow, with fingertips together. • Westerners may briefly dip their heads. 						
<p>16. Leaving and entering a room: <u>Gentlemen before Ladies?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matter how high in rank the man is, he should always offer a woman right of way through a doorway. This means not only stepping aside as she enters a room, but also holding the door open for her to pass through. 						

Statements of best practices	Do you agree this is a good practice?		Do you think that middle and senior management practice it in the work environment?			
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4
<p><u><i>The cultural difference</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, cultures do differ, and in some cultures it is customary for the man to precede the woman through a doorway. In traditional African cultures, men always precede women through doorways and into lifts – to protect them from possible danger that may await them. • In a restaurant or public place, a man should allow a woman to precede him to their table. • If he is hosting a large group of guests, he should take the initiative – be following the <i>maitre d'</i> in leading his guests to their seats. • This action should be accompanied by a brief explanation of his reason for doing so. 						
<p>17. Ten ways to learn more about other cultures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the employee to teach you. • Ask colleagues from other cultures. • Tap community resources. • Read about different cultures. • Observe without judgment. • Share in staff meetings what you have each found out and learned. • Conduct focus groups. • Use employee or customer survey information. • Experiment with new methods. • Spend time in other cultures. 						

Graphical representation of results

Legend (it applies for all questions)

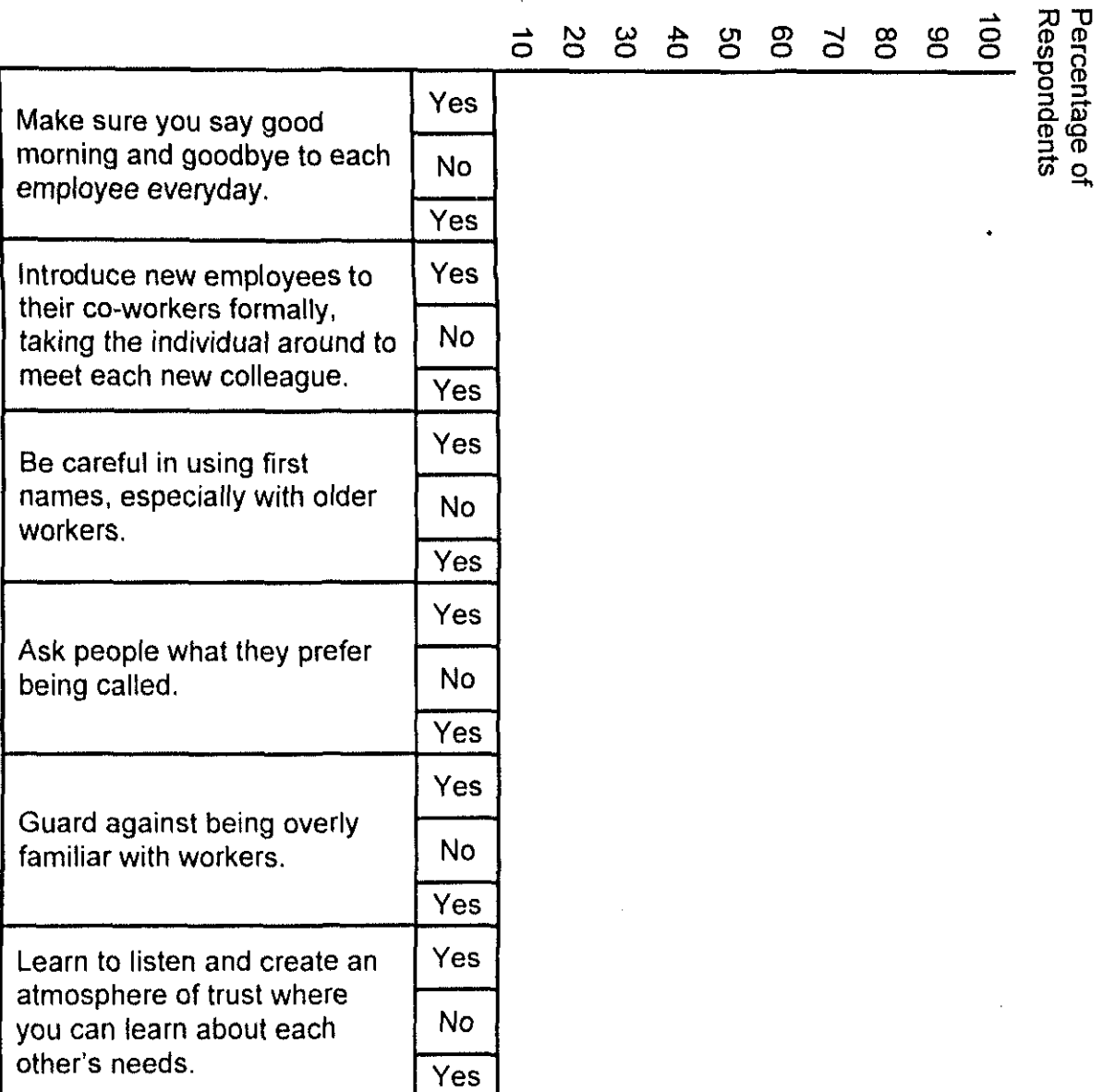
Do you agree this is a good practice?



Does middle and senior management always practice it?



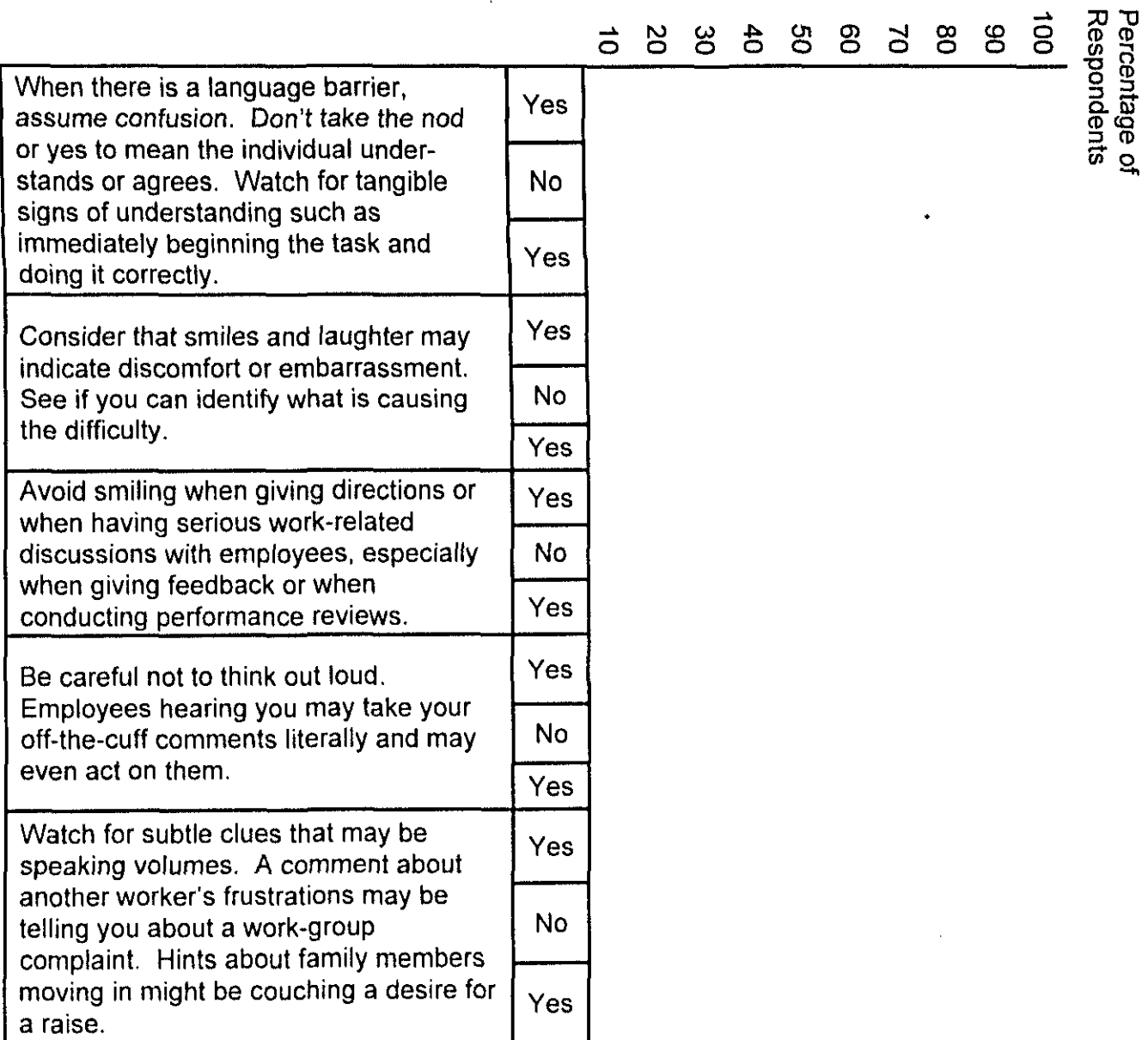
1. Sense of Self and Space



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

2. Communications and Language



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

3. Dress and Appearance

Percentage of Respondents

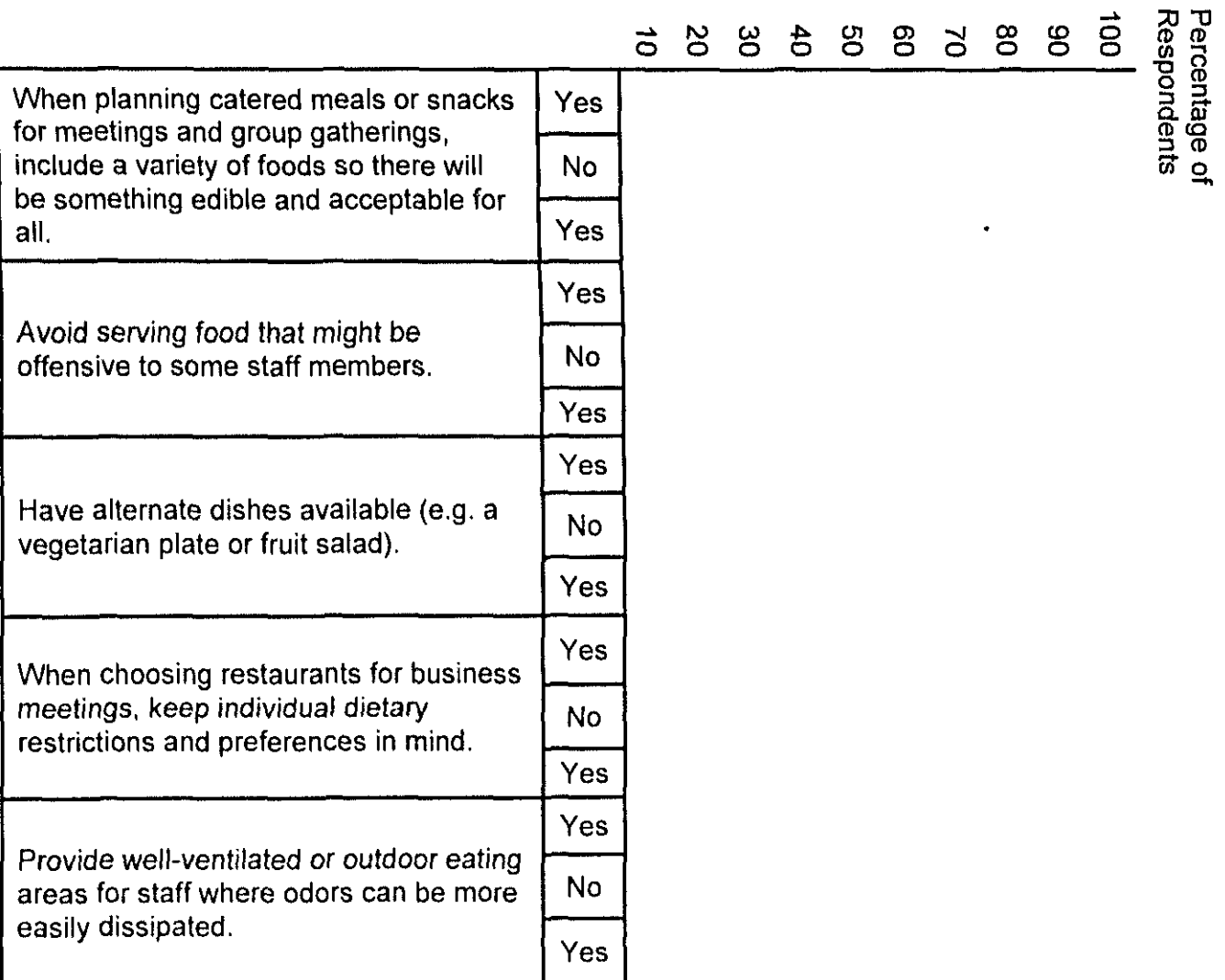
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Before reacting to another's appearance, stop to consider the meaning attached to appearance by the individual.	Yes
	No
When making assessments about job applicants, consider their cultural norms regarding dress.	Yes
	No
Consider the job the individual will be doing and the people with whom he/she will be interacting when determining appropriate dress.	Yes
	No
Teach individuals the cultural rules required in your organization regarding dress and grooming.	Yes
	No
Remember that body scent is not necessarily a sign of uncleanliness.	Yes
	No
Consider uniforms as a way to eliminate differences and build common ground.	Yes
	No
	Yes

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

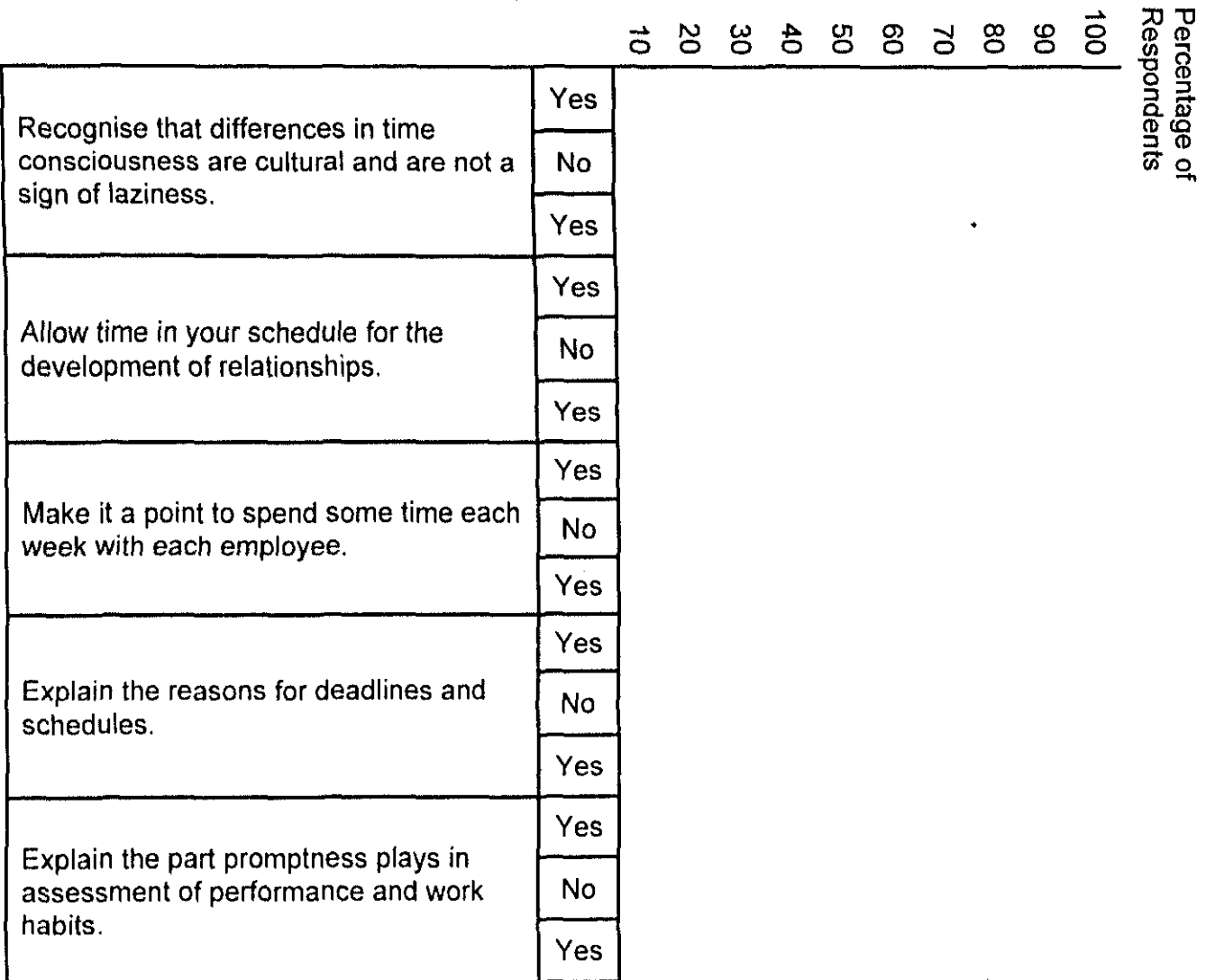
4. Food and Eating Habits



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

5. Time and Time Consciousness



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

6. Relationships

Percentage of Respondents

100
90
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Recognise that family responsibility and loyalty to kin will be a prime value of many workers. Take this into consideration when identifying rewards and motivators for staff (e.g. hiring relatives and giving time off for vacations and holidays).	Yes
	No
Allow employees time to discuss important decisions with family members before they give you a final answer.	Yes
	No
Recognise the informal leadership older members may hold in the work unit. Consult with them and seek their cooperation.	Yes
	No
Show respect to older employees by addressing them first and giving them formal authority when appropriate.	Yes
	No
Recognise that, as the boss, you may be seen as the "head of the work family". Employees may come to seek your advice and counsel about problems in and out of work.	Yes
	No
	Yes

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

7. Values and Norms

Percentage of Respondents

100
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Consider giving rewards and feedback to the whole work group rather than to individuals.	Yes	No	Structure tasks to require teamwork rather than individual action. Give workers time to think about and formulate responses to input requests.	Yes	No	Consider the face-losing potential of any actions you are planning. Seek out ways to achieve your objectives while avoiding diminishing employees.	Yes	No	Yes
	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes		

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

8. Beliefs and Attitudes

Percentage of Respondents

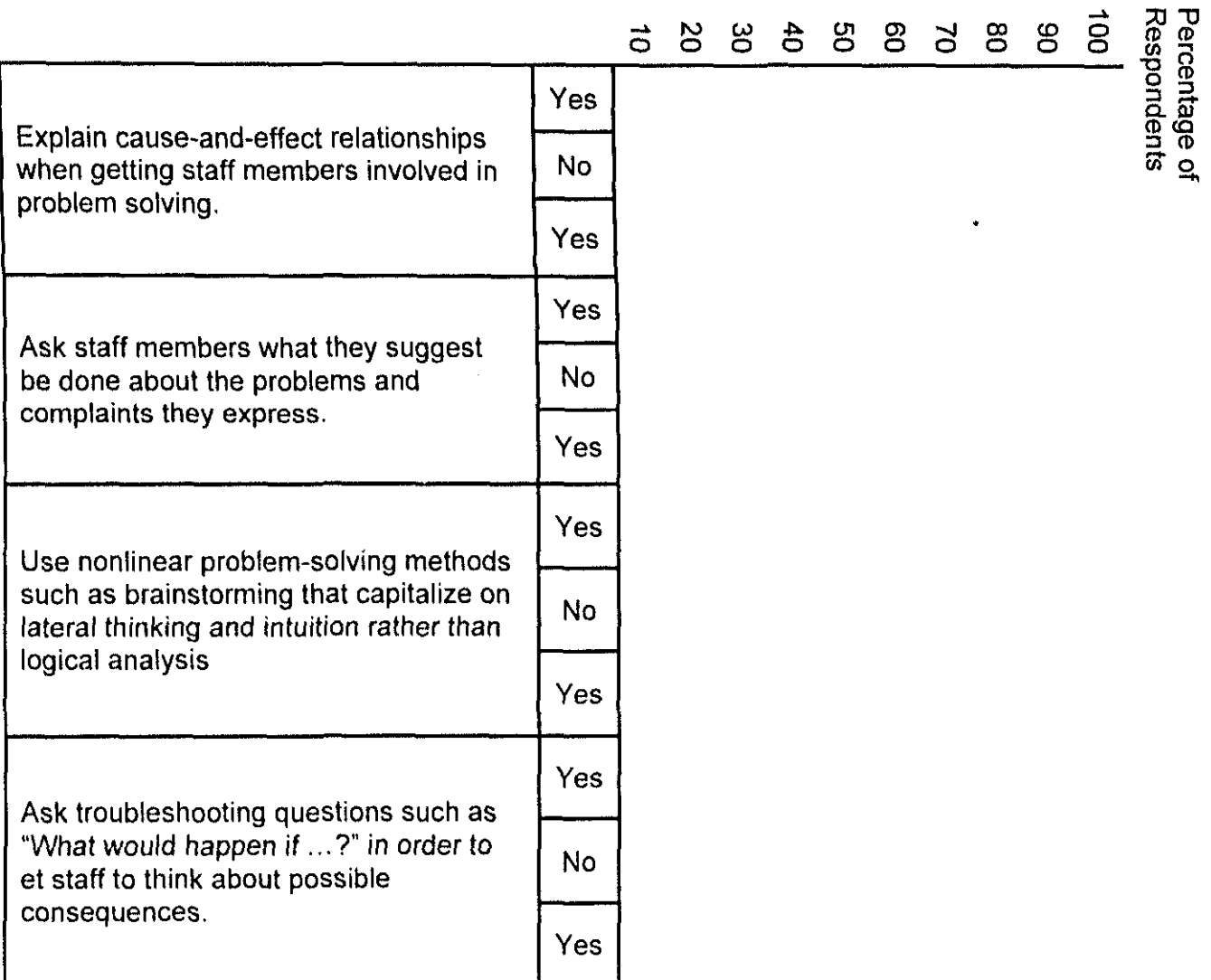
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Find out what religious holidays staff members celebrate. Keep those in mind when planning work-group activities, holiday celebrations, and individual schedules.	Yes	
	No	
Avoid scheduling meetings and training programs on any religious holidays.	Yes	
	No	
Take advantage of the fact that employees want different holidays, days off, and vacation times (e.g. some people would be willing to work on Sundays or on Christmas day).	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	
Help newcomers understand the reasons for shared decision-making and the need for suggestions and input from employees.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	
Educate employees about EEO and discrimination. Explain the legal liabilities as well as the principles of equality that, though not always adhered to, are foundations of this country.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

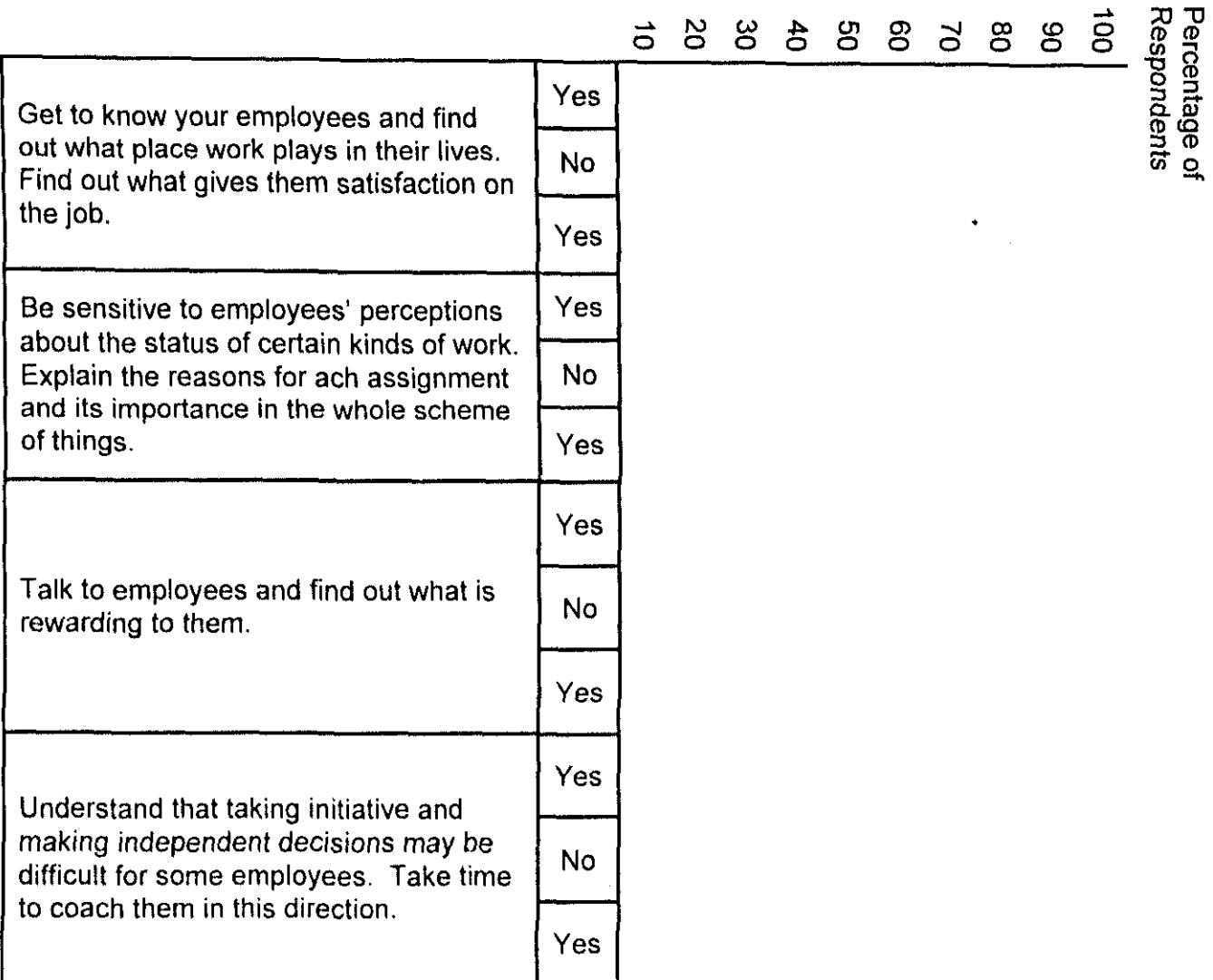
9. Mental Processes and Learning



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

10. Work Habits and Practices



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

11. Eye contact

Percentage of Respondents

100
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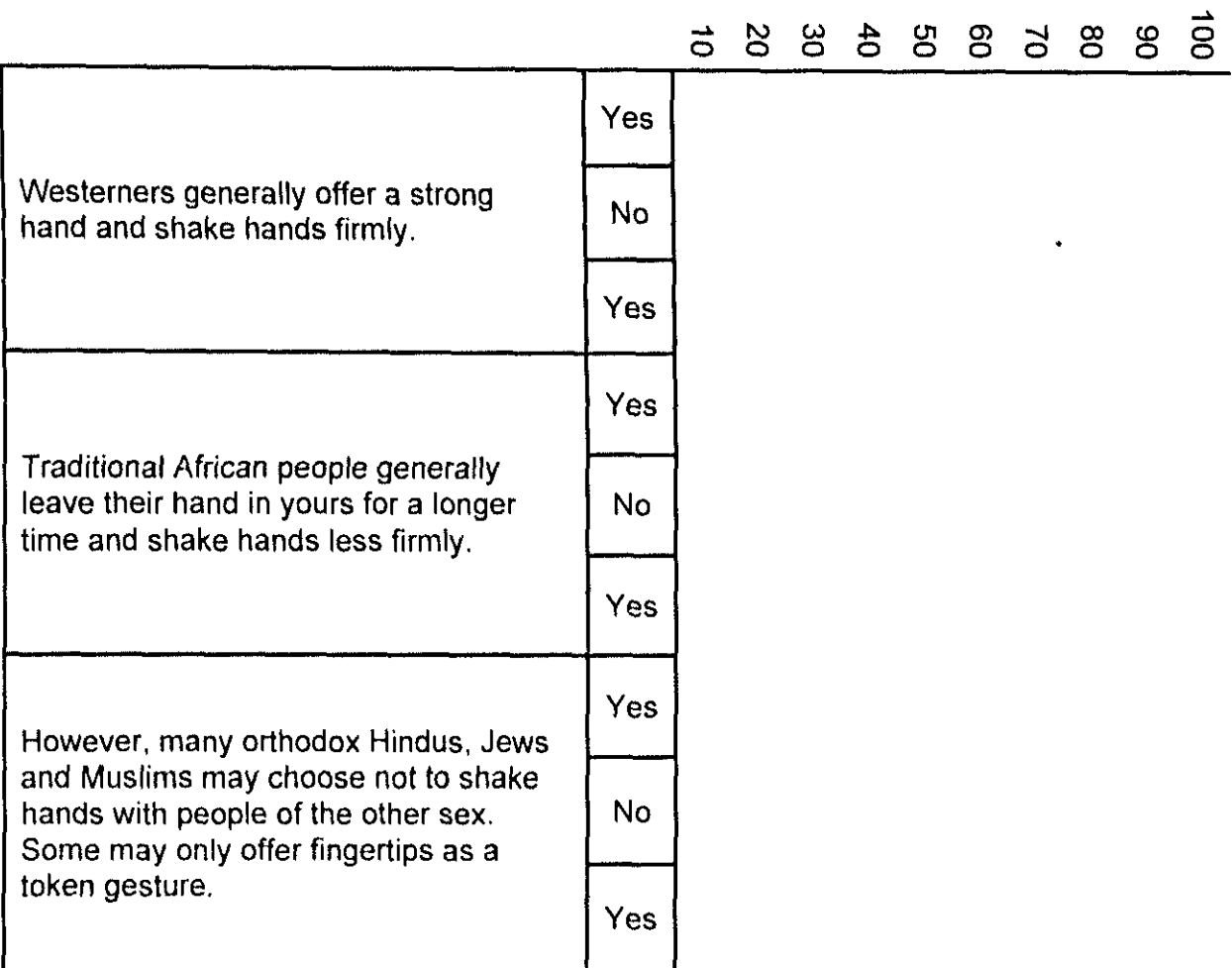
Westerners generally make eye contact during conversation.	Yes	No	Yes	No
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Traditional African people lower their eyelids so as to avoid the gaze of another for the sake of courtesy.	Yes	No	Yes	No
	Yes	No	Yes	No

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

12. The handshake

Percentage of Respondents

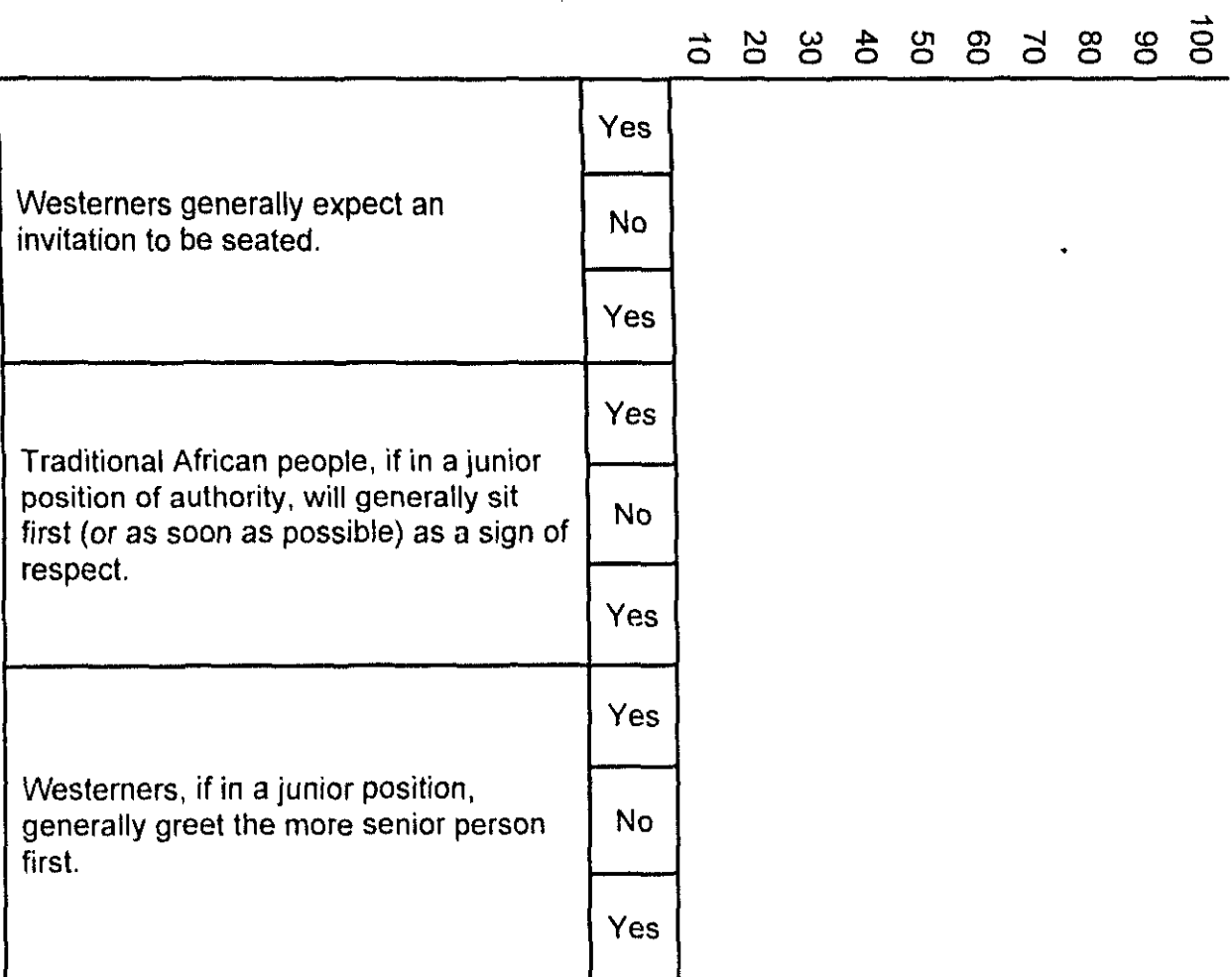


Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

13. The sit or not to sit?

Percentage of Respondents

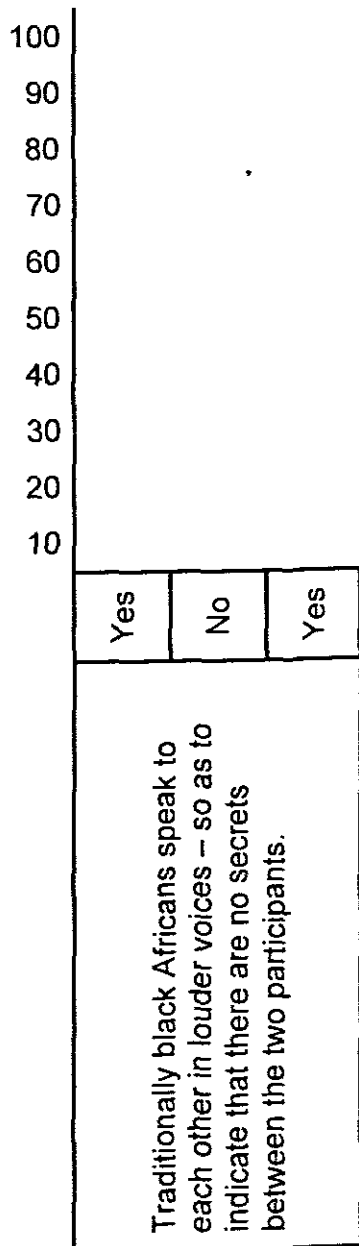


Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

14. Voice volume

Percentage of Respondents



Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

15. Gestures of appreciation

Percentage of Respondents

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10

Xhosa people cup one hand on top of the other (or cup them together), and bend knees quickly and slightly.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	
	No	
Zulu people give three gentle claps at chest height, then place their hands in a slightly cupped position next to each other.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	
	No	
Hindus generally offer a slight bow, with fingertips together.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	
	No	
Westerners may briefly dip their heads.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

16. Leaving and entering a room

Percentage of Respondents

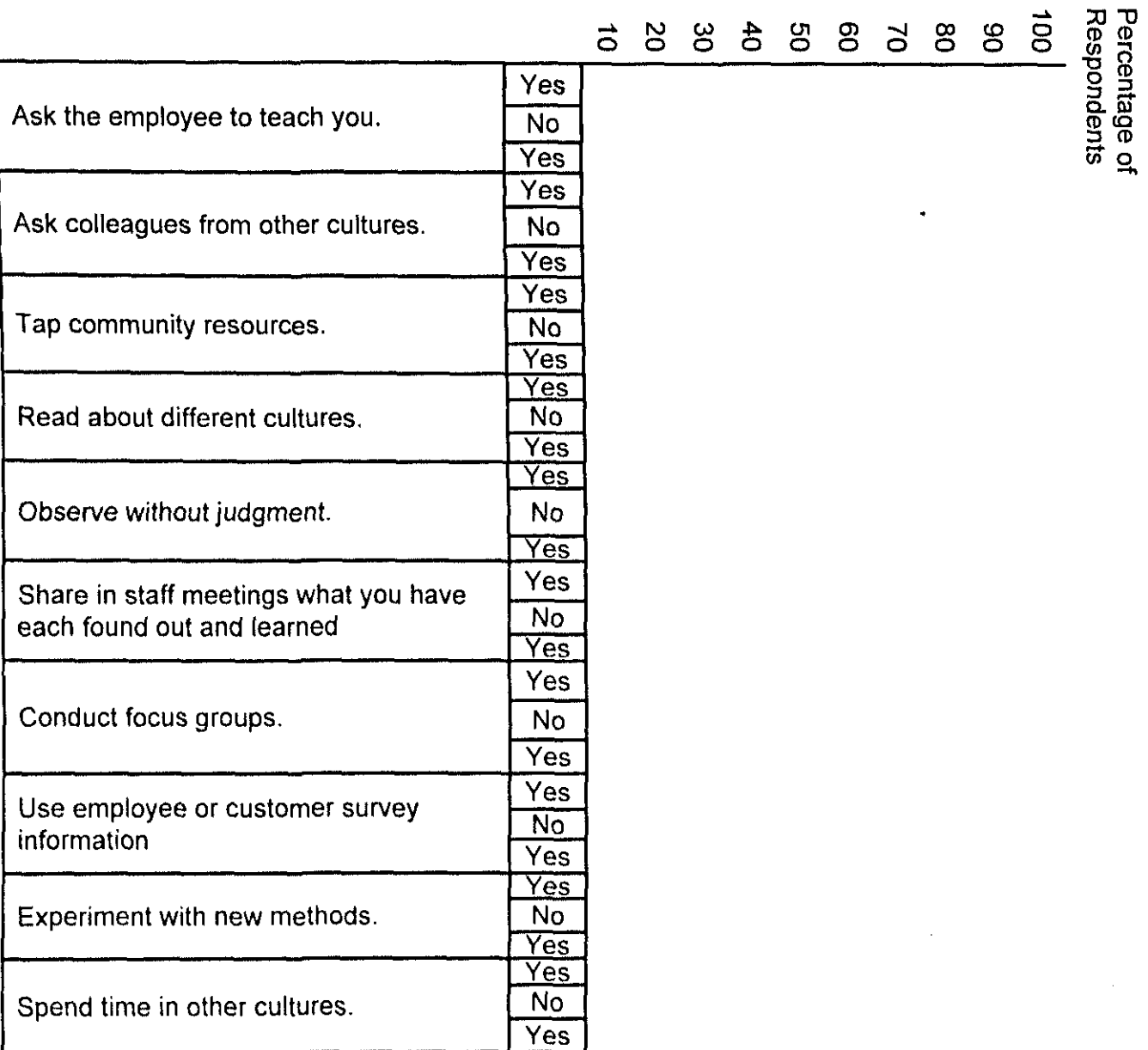
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<u>Gentlemen before Ladies?</u> No matter how high in rank the man is, he should always offer a woman right of way through a doorway. This means not only stepping aside as she enters a room, but also holding the door open for her to pass through.	Yes	
	No	
<u>The cultural difference</u> However, cultures do differ, and in some cultures it is customary for the man to precede the woman through a doorway. In traditional African cultures, men always precede women through doorways and into lifts – to protect them from possible danger that may await them.	Yes	
	No	
In a restaurant or public place, a man should allow a woman to precede him to their table.	Yes	
	No	
If he is hosting a large group of guests, he should take the initiative – be following the <i>maitre d'</i> in leading his guests to their seats.	Yes	
	No	
This action should be accompanied by a brief explanation of his reason for doing so.	Yes	
	No	
	Yes	

Do you agree this is a good practice?

Does middle and senior management always practice it?

17. Ten ways to learn more about other cultures



Diversity Lexicon**A**

- African** Refers to individual with African ancestry and heritage.
- Ageism** Discrimination of individuals based on their age, i.e. of the elderly b that they are incapable of performing certain functions such as driving, or o the notion that they are immature and therefore incapable of performing ce.
- Ally** . An individual that supports the struggles of a group; not part of the gro.

B

- Barrier** In the job situation, this term refers to the hidden, invisible and/or equity in work or promotional opportunities.
- Bias** An opinion, preference or inclination formed without any reasonable ju usually reflected in people's attitudes (towards other people of other races, ability, sexual orientation, social status, etc) and it makes it difficult for a pe evaluate particular situations and thus take action objectively or accurately.
- Bisexual** Individuals attracted to members of the male and female sex.
- Blacks** Is a generic term that means Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

C

- Class** Category of division based on economic status; members of a class a assumed to possess similar cultural, political and economic characteristics a
- Classism** Discrimination based on class.

D

Designated group	Means black people, women and people with disabilities.
Disadvantaged	1. A historically oppressed group having less than sufficient of basic needs; without expendable income. 2. A group characterized by disproportionate economic, social and political d
discrimination	A biased decision based on a prejudice against an individual by race, class, sexual orientation, age, disabilities etc.
diversity	A situation that includes representation of multiple (ideally all) gr prescribed environment, such as a university or a workplace. This word mos differences between cultural groups, although it is also used to describe diff groups. An emphasis on accepting and respecting cultural differences by re culture is intrinsically superior to another underlies the current usage of the

E

Emigrant	One who leaves his/her country of origin to reside in a foreign country.
Equity	
Ethnicity	A quality assigned to a specific group of people historically connects national origin or language. Ethnic classification is used for identification rat differentiation.
Essentialism	The practice of categorizing a group based on an artificial soc imparts an "essence" of that group, which homogenizes the group and effa difference.
Ethnocentrism	A practice of unconsciously or consciously privileging a cert others. This involves judging other groups by the values of one's own group

F

Feminism	Movement advocating equal rights, status, ability, and treatment the belief that women are not in any way inferior to men.
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G

Gay	A male homosexual.
Gender	System of sexual classification based on the social construction of "men" and "women", as opposed to sex that is based on biological and physical and the categories "male" and "female".

H

Heterosexual	Pertaining to individuals attracted to the opposite sex.
Homosexual	Individuals attracted to members of one's own sex.

I

Immigrant	A person who resides in a nation, country, or region other than
Indigenous	<i>Originating from a culture with ancient ties to the land in which</i>

L

Lesbian	Female homosexual.
Lesbian	Pertaining to female homosexuality.

M

Minority	Term used to describe a group that represents a relatively smaller overall <i>population of a nation/state/continent etc.</i> The term usually refers to although such may sometimes be larger at a national level.
Multiculturalism	The practice of acknowledging and respecting the various <i>races, ethnicities, attitudes and opinions within an environment.</i>

N

National origin	System of classification based on nation from which a person regardless of the nation in which he/she currently resides.
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O**P**

Prejudice Exerting bias and bigotry based on uninformed stereotypes.

Privilege Power and advantages benefiting a group derived from the historical exploitation of other groups.

R

Race

1. Classification of humans based on genetic characteristics.
2. Classification on common nationality, history, or experiences.

Racism An act of discrimination based on an ideology of racial superiority.

Religion

1. An organized belief system based on certain tenets of faith.
2. A belief in a supreme supernatural force of god(s).

Reasonable accommodation Changes in the job or work place which enable disabilities to perform the work. It also refers to adjustment made by the employer to accommodate employees whose religious beliefs forbid them to work on certain days.

S

Sex System of sexual classification based on biological and physical characteristics, forming the categories "male" or "female" gender which is based on the social construction of the categories "men" and "women".

Stereotype To categorize people based on an artificial construction of a group which imparts the "essence" of that group, which homogenizes the group, effacing difference.

Social constructionism A perception of an individual, group, or idea that is through cultural and social practice, but appears to be "natural", or "the way things are". For example, the idea that women "naturally" like to do housework is a social construction of this idea.

appears “natural” due to its historical repetition, rather than it being essential sense.

T

Tolerance Acceptance and open-mindedness to different practices, attitudes not necessarily mean agreement with the differences.

Source: University of the Free State. 2004.

Available: <http://www.uovs.ac.za/about/E>