



**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AMONGST EMPLOYEES AT THE  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WESTERN CAPE**

**By**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

**Master of Technology: Public Management**

**In the Faculty of Business**

**at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology**

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**Cape Town**

**September 2013**

## **DECLARATION**

I, SHAFIEKAH DAVIDS, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Over the past few decades the study of intercultural communication has expanded to cover a diverse set of variables deriving from the concepts "communication" and "culture" and the combination of communication and culture. As is the case for the communication discipline itself, the study of intercultural communication is influenced by traditional disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, psychology and sociology (Chen & Starosta, 2005:13). The development of a global mindset has become pivotal for further human progress. This mindset can only result from intercommunication among diverse people (Chen & Starosta, 2005:4).

Intercultural communication is essential to any organization or department as it is a process of sending and receiving messages between people whose cultural backgrounds could lead them to interpret verbal and non-verbal signs differently. The purpose of this study was to devise a communication strategy which will address intercultural communication, specifically designed to assist managers dealing with intercultural differences. The core objective of this study was to establish whether the existing Communication Policy of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD) adequately addresses intercultural communication in the work place and to verify the level of understanding of culture amongst employees of the DOJ&CD Western Cape Regional Office (WC RO) in order to determine whether a lack of cultural knowledge contributes to miscommunication in the department.

In order to reach its objectives, the study employed a quantitative research approach whereby a non-probability sampling design in the form of a convenience sampling method was adopted and considered appropriate for this study, with specific reference to the DOJ&CD (WC RO). In terms of collecting the data, the study made use of structured questionnaires as a data collection method whereby questionnaires were administered and distributed to 85 employees of whom 70 participated.

The results of the study reveal that cultural differences lead to misunderstandings, while lack of cultural knowledge is a major contributing factor of miscommunication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO). It is recommended that employees acquire knowledge about other cultures which will improve their understanding and reduce the chances of miscommunication in a multi-cultural environment to enhance intercultural communication and provide a harmonious working environment amongst employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) and the Public Service as a whole.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah the high, the merciful and the most gracious. To you all praise and honor must be rendered.

### **I wish to thank:**

- The Almighty Allah for granting me the health, strength, guidance and inspiration to thrive in this endeavour and thus enriching my knowledge.
- Dr Rozenda Hendrickse, my research supervisor, for her significant assistance, insight, guidance, positive criticism, encouragement and invaluable contribution towards the completion of this thesis.
- Ms Cheryl Thomson, for her guidance, invaluable assistance, late night responses and positive criticism during the proofreading and editing process of this thesis.
- Mrs Corrie Uys, for introducing me to the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences and assisting with the statistical analysis of the data of this research.
- Mr Nezaam Luddy, for his loyal assistance, guidance and willingness to help administer the distribution and collection of questionnaires.
- The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development for allowing me to conduct the research as well as the employees of the department for their willingness to participate in this research study.
- My brother, Yazeed Davids for showing support, interest and constant enquiries about the progress of the research.
- My sisters, Zaiboe Bruckner and Adielah Daries for their moral support, encouragement and willingness to always assist when needed.
- My brother-in-law, Marwaan Daries for his moral support and encouragement.
- My future sister-in-law, Mishkah Smith for encouraging and motivating me through tough times
- My nieces, Leylah Daries and Zuhayrah Bruckner for simply just being around to make me laugh in trying times.
- All those who assisted and took part in this study and whose names I have not mentioned, I wish to thank you all from the bottom of my heart.
- The financial assistance of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology towards this research is acknowledged. Opinion expressed in this thesis and the conclusions arrived at, are those of the author, and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my father Mr. Yusuf Davids and mother Mrs. Zainoenesa Davids.

I sincerely thank you for instilling remarkable values and morals and for guiding and supporting me throughout the years. May Allah reward you.

I can never repay you for what you have done for me and still do and for that reason I dedicate this thesis to you.

## GLOSSARY

Terms and Acronyms	Definition and Explanation
ANC	African National Congress
Communication	Sharing information to reach a common understanding.
Culture	Culture is a collective arrangement of symbols, principles, attitudes, beliefs, expectations and norms of behaviour.
DOJ&CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development Western Cape
DOJ&CD (WC RO)	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development Western Cape Regional Office.
Ethnocentrism	Negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one's own culture
GCIS	Government Communication and Information Systems
ICA	Intercultural communication apprehension
Intercultural communication	A process of sending and receiving messages between people of different cultures.
Intercultural competence	A process whereby people successfully adapt to various cultural settings to an extent that they are able to communicate effectively. The process requires that you have some information about the person with who you are about to communicate.
Intercultural conflict	An experience of emotional frustration on mismatched expectations between peoples values, norms, goals, scarce resources or outcomes during an intercultural exchange
Language	A series of sounds, which when combined as symbols, acquire meaning. Language is used as a means to communicate.
Miscommunication	Happens when a message sent is not necessarily the message received.
Organisational communication	Open dialogue between management and employees in a department that results in improved engagement and productivity of personnel.
Organisational culture	Communication climate, rooted in a common set of norms and interpretive schemes about phenomena that occur as people work towards a predetermined goal
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SSA	Statistics South Africa
Stereotype	Negative or positive judgement made about individuals based on any observable or believed group membership

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication is the transfer and understanding of meaning. Noteworthy about this definition is the emphasis that Robbins and Coulter (2007:63) place on the transfer of meaning. According to Boddy (2005:522) communication happens when people share information to reach a common understanding. This means, if no information or idea has been conveyed, communication has not taken place.

Similarly, managing communication depends on conveying and interpreting messages clearly so that people can work together. While speaking and writing are easy, achieving a common understanding is not. Different backgrounds and personal needs affect the way in which people absorb messages from those with different histories, but until those involved in the exchange reach a common understanding, communication has not taken place. Prior to communication taking place, a purpose expressed as a message to be conveyed, must exist which passes between a source (the sender) and a receiver (Boddy, 2005:522).

Culture is a collective arrangement of symbols, beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations and norms of behaviour. Cultural background influences the way people prioritise what is important in life, helps to define their attitude towards what is appropriate in any given situation and establishes rules of behaviour (Bovee & Thill, 2008:66). According to Jandt (2010:7), culture refers to a process of social transmission of thoughts and behaviours emanating from birth, in the family and schools over the course of generations.

According to Bovee and Thill (2008:74), communicating successfully from one culture to another requires a variety of skills, as communicating in a diverse business environment is not always an easy task. For this reason, intercultural communication is critical to any government department as it is a process of sending and receiving messages between people from different cultural backgrounds, leading them to interpret and understand verbal and non-verbal messages in a different way. Furthermore, intercultural communication can be a dynamic and creative event but due to the inability to interpret people correctly, it can become a major challenge. Building an understanding of other people's culture, their communication styles and behaviours can go a long way towards improving relationships and being more successful in an intercultural environment.

South Africa has a complicated web of cultures. It has 11 different languages; Black, Coloured, White, Asian and Indian population groups; the full spectrum of religions; very

diverse tribal customs and has large numbers of "international" communities (Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Nigerian, Portuguese and Zimbabwean to name but a few). All these different groups contribute traits and habits that affect intercultural communication amongst South Africans. Contextualising these different cultural groups within the South African apartheid legacy, the challenges of building trust to enhance intercultural relations in South Africa has become enormous, yet, peaceful transition to democracy in 1994 surprised the international community. Since then South Africa has addressed many social inequalities (Bowes & Pennington, 2004:5).

Considering the above, this study investigated the process of intercultural communication amongst employees at the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD) Western Cape Regional Office (WC RO), whose core business is to uphold and protect the Constitution and the rule of law and to render accessible, fair, speedy and cost-effective administration of justice, in the interests of a safer and more secure South Africa. Consequently, since the formation of the new non-racial and democratic government in 1994, the DOJ&CD has sought to promote the values enshrined in the Constitution adopted by Parliament in 1996.

As contained in the prelude of the Constitution, the DOJ&CD continues to strive towards:

- healing the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights
- laying the foundations for a democratic and open society in which Government is based on the will of the people
- ensuring that every citizen is equally protected by law
- improving the quality of life of all citizens and freeing the potential of each person
- building a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in a family of nations

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The Communication Policy of the DOJ&CD maintains that effective communication is imperative to overcome cultural differences across nationality, religion, cultures and behaviours of employees working at the DOJ&CD. In 2010, 58% of grievances were lodged as a result of cultural and racial differences experienced amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). This illustrates that the DOJ&CD (WC RO) is faced with a major challenge in respect of matters relating to intercultural communication (South Africa. Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2010).

The core problem which the study addresses is the cultural, religious, social, policy and instructional issues that contribute to miscommunication when people from different cultural backgrounds do not always understand and agree upon these cultural differences. These misunderstandings often result in conflict and tension, which in turn leads to disagreements amongst employees who are in an interdependent relationship in which they try to meet each other's differing social needs while still pursuing the same instrumental goal (Chen & Starosta, 2005:140).

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- How effective is the current communication strategy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) in addressing intercultural communication?
- What are the causes and effects of poor intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO)?

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

- To provide a theoretical overview of intercultural communication in a globalised environment and in South Africa, to learn lessons from experiences and to devise a sound theoretical framework for the study from which key variables pertaining to intercultural communication can be formulated.
- To analyse the level of understanding of culture amongst employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) to determine whether a lack of cultural knowledge contributes to miscommunication in the department.
- To analyse to what extent the existing Communication Policy of the DOJ&CD adequately addresses intercultural communication.
- To provide a set of sound recommendations and conclusions aimed at enhancing intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

### **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to devise a new communication strategy for the DOJ&CD (WC RO) which will address intercultural communication and significantly assist managers in dealing with intercultural differences.

### **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Research involves the application of various methods and techniques to achieve scientifically obtained knowledge by using objective methods and procedures. Research is also referred

to as the process in which scientific methods are used to expand knowledge in a particular field of study (Welman & Kruger, 2001:2).

According to Mouton (2001:55), research design is a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct the research. Also, a research design is the plan according to which the researcher obtains its participants (subjects) and collects its information. In the research design it should be described what is required from the participants to draw conclusions about the research problem or questions (Welman & Kruger, 2001:46).

Having explained what research design is, researchers often confuse research design with research methodology but these are two very different aspects. According to Mouton (2001:55), research methodology focuses on the research process and the kinds of tools and processes that are to be used, whereas research design is a plan of action.

A quantitative research approach was employed for this study, as quantitative research is considered more objective and scientific than its qualitative counterpart and is therefore associated with the more traditional scientific approach to research (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009:75). This approach aims to provide a set of working methods to understand the process of intercultural communication amongst the employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO). In addition, Sanchez (2006:08) claims that quantitative research generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey research, using methods such as structured questionnaires or structured interviews. The quantitative approach enables the researcher to make use of structured questionnaires and allows the researcher to separate the data easily so that they can be counted and modelled statistically. It also allows for the removal of factors that may distract from the intent of the research and enables the researcher to have a clear idea of what is being measured before starting to measure it (McGuigan & Harris, 2010:12).

### **1.6.1 Data collection and research participants**

The data collection technique that was utilised for the study is a structured questionnaire. Structured questionnaires are amongst the most widely used and valuable means of data collection. The range and types of questionnaires that can be used (their design, uses and implementation) vary enormously. Collecting data through questioning involves a wide range of possible approaches and techniques, some of them technically complex and all of them encompassing a range of high level skills and knowledge (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009:51).

Consequently, this study used structured questionnaires as the data collection method. This method was most suitable for the following reasons:

- It is a quick and efficient way to obtain information from a large number of individuals.
- It is less costly than doing telephonic interviews with a number of individuals.

- Questionnaires secure participants' anonymity if administered properly.

Questionnaires were administered to all employees at the Regional Office of the DOJ&CD Western Cape. The Regional Office of the DOJ&CD Western Cape consists of directorates namely: Human Resource, Finance, Legal Services and Court Operations. A total of 100 employees are working here. These employees who form part of various job classifications, participated in this study (Western Cape, 2010).

For the purpose of this study a non-probability sampling design in the form of a convenience sampling method was adopted and considered to be appropriate for the study to gather the data. The rationale for adopting this method was due to the respondents being easily accessible, their availability, as well as being less time-consuming and inexpensive to gather the research information.

### **1.6.2 Ethical considerations**

This study considered the following ethical factors when conducting research at the DOJ&CD (WC RO):

- Permission needed to be granted from the Regional Head whether the study could be conducted at the Regional Office or not.
- All participants in the research were to be treated with respect and with sensitivity.
- Participants were to be assured that participation in the research was voluntary.
- The researcher was to respect the human rights, values and religious denominations of the participants.
- The research was to be transparent and not misleading or deceiving to the participants.
- The participants were to be assured by the researcher of anonymity by keeping their identities a secret.
- Confidentiality and anonymity was to be maintained throughout the stages of the study.

### **1.6.3 Data analysis**

This study analysed the data by means of statistical techniques and coding, utilising a soft-ware programme called SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences 2012 version 12.0). The data was collected in the form of a structured questionnaire. The data was then coded and captured to proceed with the analysis process.



## **1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relevance of literature review is described by De Wet (1981:39) as a means to help determine the actuality of research on a particular topic and to improve the interpretation of the researcher's own research results. The advantage of reviewing literature is that the activities of the participants in the research are not disturbed, therefore data can easily be obtained because everything is in writing. Furthermore, the literature review must make clear theoretical context of the problem under investigation and how it has been studied by others (Singleton & Straits, 2005:551).

Over the past few decades the study of intercultural communication has expanded to cover a diverse set of variables deriving from the concepts of "communication" and "culture" and the combination of communication and culture. As is the case for the communication discipline itself, the study of intercultural communication is influenced by traditional disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, psychology and sociology (Chen & Starosta, 2005:13). Therefore, as the world populace grows more aware of its interdependence, it confronts the ever-shifting cultural, ecological, economic and technological realities that define modern life. The development of a global mindset has become pivotal for further human progress. However, this mindset could only result from intercommunication among diverse people (Chen & Starosta, 2005:4).

The literature study includes books, journals, legislation and articles to identify key aspects pertaining to the research topic.

## **1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

### **Chapter One: Introduction and Background**

Chapter 1 provides an introduction and background of the study. An explanation of the problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, research methodology and literature review is provided.

### **Chapter Two: A theoretical overview of intercultural communication within a globalised environment including South Africa**

This chapter gives a theoretical overview of intercultural communication within a globalised environment including South Africa. Furthermore, this chapter serves as the foundation of this study and informs the researcher and readers further on intercultural communication in a globalised as well as local environment.

### **Chapter Three: Research methodology**

Chapter three contains a detailed discussion on the research methodology and research design employed in the study.

**Chapter Four: Data analysis and results**

This chapter critically analyses the research data collected. It also determines the effectiveness of intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Data will be reflected in tabular form to reveal the frequency and cumulative percentage. Data will also be presented in graphs for visual ease of interpretation.

**Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations**

Conclusions are drawn and recommendations made regarding intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

## CHAPTER TWO

### A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN A GLOBALISED ENVIRONMENT INCLUDING SOUTH AFRICA

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Intercultural communication is an important form of human interaction which occurs when people from different cultures communicate with each other. Cultural diversity is recognised as a crucial factor when the communication process involves people from different cultures. Intercultural contacts have also become a normal occurrence for most people, along with cultural diversity being a fact of life (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2006:1). Consequently, as the world populace grows more aware of its interdependence, it confronts the ever-shifting cultural, ecological, economic and technological realities that define modern life. Therefore, the development of a global mindset has become pivotal for further human progress and this mindset can only result from intercommunication among diverse people (Chen & Starosta, 2005:4).

Culture and communication mutually influence each other, producing different behavioural patterns in different contexts. Culture not only conditions people's perceptions of reality but also programmes people's language patterns. What, where and how people should talk are regulated by culture. Culture not only shapes people's communication patterns, but communication in turn influences people's culture. Indeed the two are inseparable (Chen & Starosta, 2005:20).

Intercultural communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between people whose cultural backgrounds could lead them to interpret verbal and non-verbal signs differently. Subsequently, every attempt to send and receive messages is influenced by culture. To communicate successfully people need a basic grasp of the cultural differences they may encounter and the way it should be handled (Bovee & Thill, 2008:64). Therefore, intercultural communication can be a dynamic and creative affair but occasionally due to the inability to interpret people correctly it can be a challenge (Dodd, 1991:2). Furthermore, building an understanding of other people's cultures, their communication styles and behaviours can greatly enhance relationships in an intercultural environment. Dodd (1991:2) states that intercultural communication has become a truly exciting field of study.

According to Mulaudzi (2005:2), ineffective communication is often a contributing factor in conflicts between groups and nations and therefore understanding cross-cultural communication is a particularly important task for a country such as South Africa who is still

in the process of national integration and nation-building. Considering the above, this chapter provides a theoretical overview of intercultural communication in a globalised environment and South Africa.

## **2.2 COMMUNICATION CONCEPTUALISED**

Communication is a term that is used in many ways, for diverse purposes. For the purpose of this study, communication is defined as a mutually dependent relationship which is developed by exchanging symbols as an inter-determining process (Chen & Starosta, 2005:21). Communication happens when people share information to reach a common understanding. Managing depends on conveying and interpreting messages clearly so that people can work together (Boddy, 2005:524). Hence, communication is the management of messages with the objective of creating meaning. While speaking and writing are easy, achieving a common understanding is not (Samovar *et al.*, 2006:1). The following division will discuss the nature of human communication followed by understanding and defining communication as well as illustrate the structure of communication.

### **2.2.1 The nature of human communication**

To understand intercultural interaction we must first understand human communication. Understanding human communication means knowing about something that happened during an encounter, why it happened, what could have happened, the effects of what happened and finally, what can be done to influence and maximise the results of that event (Samovar *et al.*, 2006:15). Humans are profoundly affected by communication. Through communication, people conduct their lives and define themselves via their communication with others. Communication is a mode whereby people initiate, maintain, persuade and terminate their relations with others. It is also a means of managing and resolving conflict situations across the board (Neuliep, 2000:6).

According to Samovar *et al.* (2006:16), it is assumed that communication has something to do with human behaviour and the satisfaction of a need to interact with other human beings. In fact, all people need social contact with other people and this need is met through the exchange of messages that serve as bridges to unite otherwise isolated individuals. Messages come into effect through human behaviour. When people talk, they are behaving, but when they wave, smile, frown, walk, shake their heads or indicate by other means, they are also behaving. Frequently these actions are messages; they are used to communicate something to someone else.

### **2.2.2 Understanding and defining communication**

Communications' universal nature makes it very difficult to define. It has been argued and attempted to demonstrate that communication is instrumental to daily life,

something that cannot readily be avoided or escaped (Samovar *et al.*, 2006:8). Although there are many definitions of communication, all definitions are important because the way people define communication influences how they think and theorise about communication. Although communication does not have a universally fixed definition, communication scholars such as: Crag, Verderber, Boddy, Bennet and Schlesinger are in agreement with certain properties that describe its nature (Neuliep, 2000:7). The following are dimensions to communication:

### **Dimension 1: Process**

According to Neuliep (2000:7), communication is an uninterrupted process which is incomplete, ever-changing without a beginning or ending. It is not static and neither does it stand still. It is always moving, developing and growing same as the process of the human body which undergoes a continuous process of development (aging). For that reason, communication is a process that cannot be reversed as it affects future communication. Hence, communication is a process of sending and receiving messages or transferring information from one part (sender) to another (receiver) (Crag, 1999).

### **Dimension 2: Dynamic**

In conjunction to the view that communication is a process, is that communication is dynamic, making the two closely related. Part of what makes communication a process is its dynamic nature whereby communication is considered to be active or forceful. People are always sending behavioural messages from which others draw conclusions or meaning. Even silence communicates if another person concludes meaning from it (Verderber, Verderber & Sellnow., 2010:11). For that reason communication, as a dynamic process, is seen to be flexible, adaptive and fluid (Schlesinger, 2005).

### **Dimension 3: Interactive/transactive**

Communication is a two-way process when people consciously direct messages to one another making communication interactive and transactive. Moreover, communication is transactional since one person sends a message to another person, at the same time the other person responds through non-verbal messages such as facial expressions, body language and gestures which determines how the message has been received and interpreted (Neuliep, 2000:8). According to Boddy (2005:522) communication happens when people share information to reach a common understanding. This means, if no information or idea has been conveyed then communication has not taken place.

### **Dimension 4: Symbolic**

According to Neuliep (2000:9), symbols are regarded as both verbal and non-verbal cues. It is a randomly selected and learned stimulus that represents something

different. Symbols can be used to demonstrate thoughts and ideas of one person to another in order to create meaning. Therefore, communication is assumed to be symbolic as messages are constructed with verbal and non-verbal symbols to create meaning. In comparison to non-voluntary and non-symbolic communication, communicating via symbols, must be learned and shared by sender and receiver. Symbolic communication involves language and verbal communication (Buck & Van Lear, 2002:525-526).

#### **Dimension 5: Intentional**

Intentionality is regarded as one of the most disputed issues regarding the communication process. Intentional communication occurs when two people consciously interact with each other for a reason. Hence, it is further assumed that communication may also be unintentional in some instances depending on the situation (Neuliep, 2000:11). Therefore, prior to communication taking place, a purpose expressed as a message to be conveyed, must take exist which passes between the sender and receiver (Boddy, 2005:522).

#### **Dimension 6: Contextual**

Communication is reliant on the setting in which it occurs. Determining the outcomes of the; communication occurrence, style, fashion and the resulting meaning all depends on the cultural, physical, relational and perceptual environment in which communication happens as these aspects define the meaning of messages (Neuliep, 2000:11). In any communication setting, additional to sharing content meaning, messages also reflect two important aspects of relationships: immediacy and control. Verderber *et al.* (2010:11) explain that immediacy refers to the degree of liking or attractiveness in a relationship and control refers to the degree to which one participant is perceived to be more dominant or powerful.

#### **Dimension 7: Ubiquitous**

Communication is universal as it is everywhere, indulged by everyone all the time. Verbal and non-verbal symbols are constantly used by humans to convey messages and create meaning as it will be impossible not to communicate (Neuliep, 2000:12). Furthermore, Samovar *et al.*, (2006:16), explains that communications' universal nature makes it very difficult to define for it has been argued and attempted to demonstrate that communication is instrumental to daily life.

#### **Dimension 8: Cultural**

Communication and culture is inseparable as culture has a profound effect on communication, which in turn causes people from different cultures to communicate differently with each other. Language is seen to be the most noticeable communication variance across cultures. Even though people across cultures speak the same

language, they have different meanings for different symbols. Furthermore, difference in non-verbal symbols, gestures, perceptions of personal space and time varies extensively across cultures (Neuliep, 2000:12). Communication is guided by culture whereby messages are formed and interpreted through the cultural backgrounds of the participants involved in the communication process (Verderber *et al.*, 2010:12).

Samovar *et al.* (2007:13) add that a “number of cultural components are particularly significant when people engage in intercultural communication. In light of this view, Verderber *et al.* (2010:12) affirm that cultural concerns permeate all of communication.

As a result to the above, Neuliep (2000:14) claimed that “communication is the dynamic process of encoding and decoding messages within a defined cultural, physical, socio-relational and perceptual environment”. While people communicate intentionally, many other messages such as non-verbal symbols can unintentionally affect others (Neuliep, 2000:14).

### **2.2.3 The structure of communication**

Communication is made up of various components to manage and create messages. According to Samovar, Porter and Mc Daniel (2009:8), the eight major structural components used in managing messages to create meaning are the sender, the message, the receiver, the response, the feedback, the environment and the noise factor. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below:

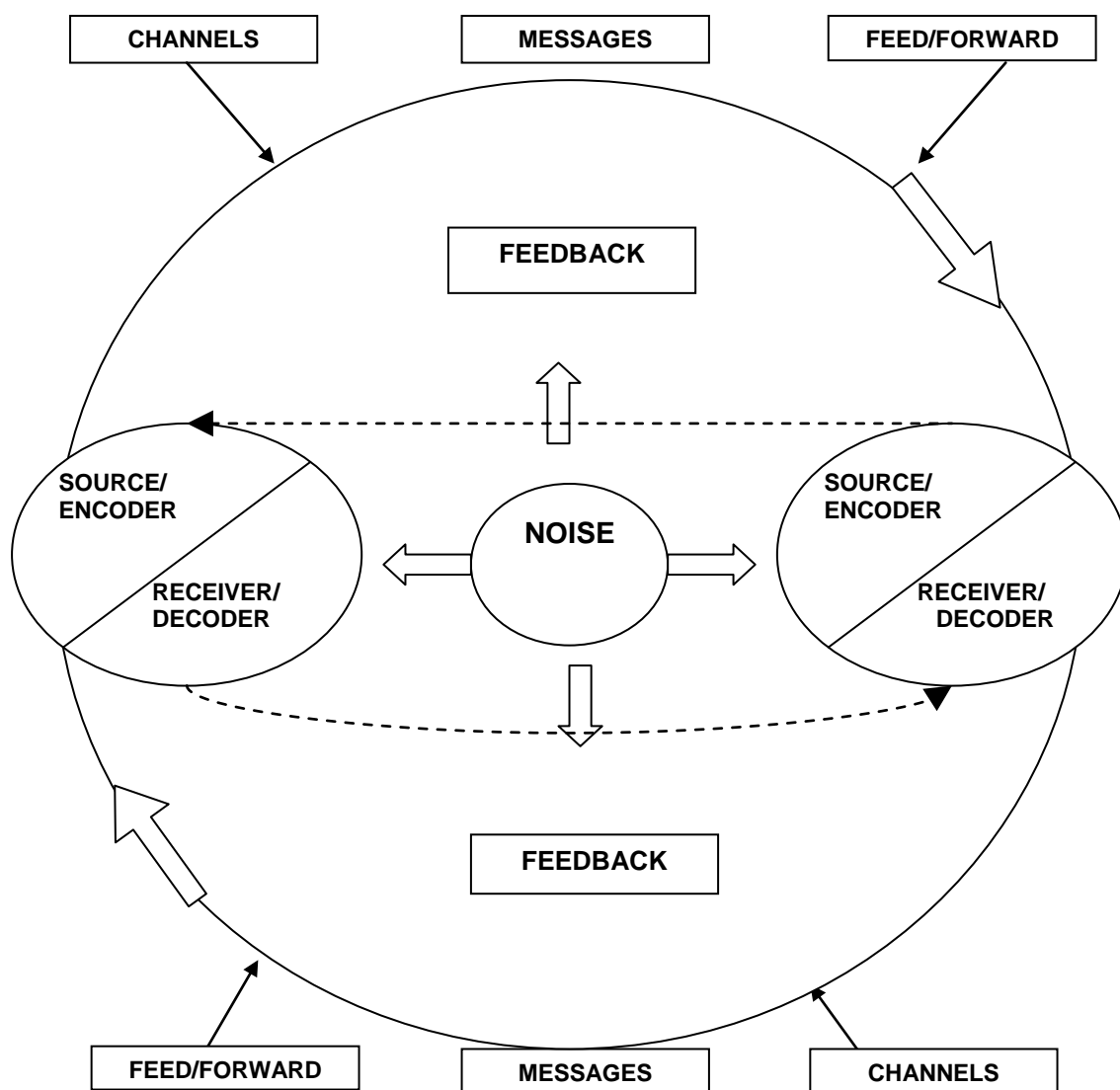


Figure 2.1: Model of communication (Source: Samovar et al., 2009:9)

The first and most obvious is the **sender**, the individual or group originating the message. A sender is someone with a need or desire, be it social, occupational or information driven, to communicate with others. To state this motivation, the sender formulates and transmits the message via a channel to the **receiver(s)** (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9).

The **message** which consists of the information the sender desires to have understood, which is used to create meaning. Messages characteristically take the form of verbal or non-verbal behaviours, which are encoded and transmitted via a **channel** to the receiver. The channel is any means that provides a path for moving the message from the sender to the receiver (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9). The message includes the symbols (words and phrases) one uses to communicate ideas, as well as facial



expressions, bodily movements, gestures, touch, tone of voice, and other non-verbal codes (Pearson *et al.*, 2006:11).

The **receiver(s)** is the intended recipient of the message and the locus where meaning is created. Because the receiver interprets the message and assigns a meaning, which may or may not be what the receiver intended, communication is often characterised as receiver-based. After interpreting the message and assigning a meaning, the receiver will formulate a **response**. This is the action taken by the receiver as a result of the meaning he or she assigns to the message. A response can be benign, such as simply ignoring a provocative remark, or, at the other extreme, a physically aggressive act of violence (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9).

The communicator (sender or receiver) is the individual who attempts to communicate with another individual or group (Skinner *et al.*, 2007:76). The receiver is the person to whom the message is intended. People communicate interpersonally by both sending and receiving messages. DeVito (2001:11) define these messages as signals that serve as stimuli for a receiver together with auditory (hearing), visual (seeing), tactile (feeling), olfactory (smelling) and gustatory (tasting) stimuli. The message is the verbal and non-verbal form of the idea, thought or feeling that the communicator wishes to convey to another individual or group of people (the receivers).

**Feedback** is an important component of communication related to, yet separate from, the response. Feedback allows for the evaluation of the effectiveness of a message. Perhaps the receiver smiles, or frowns, after decoding the message. This provides a clue as to how the message has been interpreted and helps people to adjust their behaviour to the developing situation. Depending on the feedback, people may rephrase or amplify their messages to provide greater clarity, ask whether the message was understood, or perhaps even retract the statement (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9). Upon receiving a message, the receiver decodes or interprets it, or the message is translated into a form that can be understood. The receiver responds to the message or provides feedback and in the process conveys whether the message has been understood. However, meanings are relative and open to subjective interpretation. Meanings are in people, not in the message. Words in themselves are meaningless; the source and the recipient assign meaning to words. The message can therefore be distorted. Misrepresentation of messages can occur by different forms of meddling (noise, disturbance, or barriers). Interference refers to anything that distorts the information transmitted to the receiver, causes a distraction, or prevents receipt of the message (Skinner *et al.* 2007:76).

Additionally, every communicative interaction takes place within a **physical and contextual environment**. The physical environment refers to the location where the communication occurs. The contextual or social environment is more abstract and exerts a strong influence on the style of communication employed. People vary their communicative style in response to the occasion and the receiver – the contextual environment (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9).

The final component of communication, **noise**, relates to the different types of interference or distraction that plague every communication event. Physical noise is separate from the communication participants and can take many forms, such as a squeaky air-conditioner fan in an office, someone talking loudly on the telephone, the sounds of traffic coming through the windows or feedback static from the manager's microphone. Noise that is inherent to the people participating in the communication episode can take a variety of forms. Physiological noise relates to the well-being of the people engaged in the communication activity (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9). Noise frequently occurs during intercultural communication and can cause misunderstandings.

Smith (2005:118) affirms that noise is any stimulus that interferes with the encoding and decoding process of interpreting messages from sender to receiver. According to Smith (2005: 118), noise can be broken down into external, internal and semantic noise. External noise refers to the stimuli in the environment that distract one's attention such as a bad odour, a cold room, an uncomfortable chair, or even the static on a telephone line. These stimuli can hinder the transmission and reception process of messages (Steinberg, 2007:49).

According to Du Plooy-Cillers & Louw (2003:20) internal noise consists of the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, attitudes and stereotypes that distort the message. An example of internal noise is how our perceptions and stereotypes influence and distort messages. Internal noise plays an important role in intercultural communication as it can be a major barrier. Individuals entering a conversation with preconceived perceptions, attitudes and stereotypes about another culture are considered dangerous as it is bound to lead to a breakdown in communication. Steinberg (2007:49) adds that an individuals' bias might avoid the accurate reception of the message intended.

For effective communication in an intercultural interaction, participants must rely on a common language, which usually means that one or more individuals will not be using their native tongue. Native fluency in a second language is difficult, especially when non-verbal behaviours are considered. People who use another language will often have an accent or might misuse a word or phrase, which can adversely influence the

receiver's understanding of the message. This type of distraction, referred to as semantic noise, also encompasses jargon, slang and even professional terminology (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9).

Collectively, these eight components provide an overview of factors that can facilitate, shape and hamper communication encounters. However, there is yet another influential factor that can play a role in communicative interactions. Culture provides each individual with a set of standards that govern how, when, what and even why they communicate. To appreciate culture's impact on communication, individuals must first have an understanding of culture itself (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:9).

## **2.3 CULTURE CONCEPTUALISED**

The word culture has numerous meanings. Culture can be a set of fundamental ideas, practices and experiences of a group of people that are symbolically transmitted generation to generation through a learning process. Culture may as well refer to beliefs, norms and attitudes that are used to guide our behaviours and to solve human problems (Chen & Starosta, 2005:21).

Culture is a collective arrangement of symbols, principles, attitudes, beliefs, expectations and norms of behaviour. People's cultural background influences the way they prioritise what is important in life. Another study suggests that people from different cultures even look at the world, literally, in different ways (Bovee & Thill, 2008:66). Culture is the form or pattern for living. People learn to think, feel, believe and strive for what their culture considers proper. Language habits, friendships, eating habits, communication practices, social acts, economic and political activities and technology all follow the patterns of culture (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 1988:19). The nature, elements, components, characteristics and dimensions of culture will be outlined in the following division.

### **2.3.1 The nature of culture**

Similar to communication, culture is worldwide and difficult to define. Although there is no universally accepted definition of culture, there are a number of properties that most scholars agree describes its nature. Culture has a profound effect on humans and at the same time is prevalent and obscure, having a major impact on the physical, relational and perceptual environment (Neuliep, 2000:14). Culture refers to a process of social transmission of thoughts and behaviours emanating from birth, in the family and schools over the course of generations (Jandt, 2010:7).

Furthermore, Neuliep (2000:14) defines culture as “an accumulated pattern of values, beliefs and behaviours shared by an identifiable group of people with a common history and a verbal and non-verbal system.

- **Culture as an accumulated pattern of values, beliefs and behaviours**

A culture can be defined by its values and belief systems and by the activities of its members. People from the same culture generally share similar values and beliefs. The principles of a specific culture lead to a set of values and rules that recommend how people should behave in that specific culture (Neuliep, 2000:15). It is therefore apparent that communication is heavily influenced by the culture in which we are raised; culture is extremely significant to communication, and having a cultural perspective serves numerous essential purposes (De Vito, 2011:19).

- **Culture as an identifiable group of people with a common history**

Members of a specific culture share similar values, beliefs and behaviours; they are recognized as a distinct group. In conjunction to their shared values, beliefs and behaviours, the members of a specific culture share a common background. Any culture's history intimately binds it to the present and determines its future. At the centre of any culture are traditions that are accepted by future generations. In many cultures, history is an important component of the formal and informal learning systems. In order to learn a culture's history it is important to learn its values too (Neuliep, 2000:16). Schaefer (2002:55) explain that a society comprises of individuals who share a common heritage and culture. Members of the society learn a specific culture and pass it on from one generation to another. Distinctive culture is also preserved through literature, art, video recordings, and other means of expression.

- **Culture as a verbal and non-verbal symbol system**

One of the most significant elements of any culture is its communication system. The verbal and non-verbal symbols communicated by members of different cultures are culture-bound. Seeing the difference between verbal codes of two different cultures is easy to describe as these two cultures share the same verbal code and may have intensely different verbal styles (Neuliep, 2000:17). Although a communicator and recipient may speak the same language, they may speak it with different accents and meanings based on their cultural backgrounds. Speakers of the same language may have many different meanings for the same terms resulting from their different cultural experiences (De Vito, 2011:67). On the other hand, non-verbal coded systems also differ considerably across cultures whereby non-verbal codes may include the use of body language, gestures, facial expressions, the voice, smell, personal and geographical space and time. An excessive deal of one's culture can also be conversed through the usage of body language (Neuliep, 2000:17). Schaefer (2002:61) affirm that like other forms of communication, non-verbal communication is not the same in all cultures. People from different cultures have different cultural rules that

govern which non-verbal behaviours are suitable and which are unsuitable in a public environment.

### **2.3.2 The elements of culture**

Before one can comprehend what makes other people different, one must first understand the basic elements of culture. These elements include beliefs, values and attitudes that serve as the basis for the norms and rules of social interaction, all of which translate into behaviour. Knowing something about other cultures will help individuals to understand another person's worldview and the most basic assumptions he or she holds regarding others who are different. The main goal is to have more successful cross-cultural interactions, to become more culturally literate (Tuleja, 2005:5).

- **Beliefs**

According to Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel (1991:15), beliefs in a general sense can be viewed as individually held subjective probabilities that some object or event possesses certain characteristics. A belief involves a link between the belief object and the characteristics that distinguish it. The degree to which people believe that an event or an object possesses certain characteristics reflects the level of their subjective probability and consequently, the depth or intensity of their beliefs.

Furthermore, culture plays an important role in belief formulation and belief depends on cultural backgrounds and experiences. In matters of intercultural communication, there are no rights or wrongs as far as beliefs are concerned. According to Samovar *et al.* (1991:15), if someone believes that the voices in the wind can guide one's behaviour along the proper path, we cannot throw up our hands and declare the belief wrong (even if we believe it to be wrong). We must be able to recognise and to deal with that belief if we wish to obtain satisfactory and successful communication.

- **Values**

Jandt (2010:15) explains that values are the views not open for discussion within a culture about what is right or wrong, good or bad, and acceptable or unacceptable in a particular culture. Kendall (2001:77) affirm that values do not dictate which behaviours are appropriate and which ones are not, but they provide people with the criteria by which they evaluate other people, objects, and events. Since people use values to justify their behaviour, they tend to defend their values as well. Furthermore, values are the valuative aspect of people's belief/value/attitude systems. Valuative dimensions include qualities such as usefulness, goodness, aesthetics, need satisfaction and pleasure. Although each of us has a unique set of values, there are also values called

cultural values that tend to permeate a culture. Culture values are set or organised rules for making choices, reducing uncertainty and reducing conflicts within a given society. These values are generally normative in that they inform a member of a culture what is good and bad, right and wrong, true and false, positive and negative and so on. Cultural values define what is worth dying for, what is worth protecting, what frightens people, what are considered to be proper subjects to study or ridicule and what types of events lead individuals to group solidarity. Cultural values also specify which behaviours are important and which should be avoided within a culture. Additionally, values express themselves within a culture as rules that prescribe the behaviours that members of the culture are expected to perform. These are called normative values. Normative values also extend into everyday communicative behaviour by specifying how people are to behave in specific communication contexts. This extension acts as a guide to individual and group behaviour that minimises or prevents harm to individual sensitivities within cultures (Samovar *et al.*, 1991:16).

- **Attitudes**

Beliefs and values contribute to the development and content of attitudes. An attitude may be defined formally as a learned tendency to respond in a consistent manner with respect to a given objective of orientation. This means that people avoid those things that they dislike and embrace those things that they do like. Attitudes are learned within a cultural context. Whatever cultural environment surrounds us helps to shape and form our attitudes, our readiness to respond and ultimately our behaviour (Samovar *et al.*, 1991:16).

### **2.3.3 Components of culture**

According to both Kendall (2001:72) even though the details of an individual culture differ comprehensively, all cultures have similar non-material cultural components such as verbal and non-verbal symbols, language styles, value systems, norms of behaviour, religion types, social organisations and history. These components contribute to both harmony and conflict in a cross-cultural environment.

- **Symbols**

As a component of culture, a symbol represents something different. Signs and symbols can substitute spoken messages when they are used to recognise and direct attention to the things they designate. Symbols are often based on resemblance and comparison. Symbols are not dependent on a language; it can be used to communicate across linguistic barriers (Gamble & Gamble, 2010:95). In these days, international travel is simplified by symbols to both literate and illiterate people, alike on highways, in hospitals, at airports, schools, packaging and even clothing labels.

Practically anyone can function independently at international airports due to symbols resembling restaurants, restrooms and telephones which allow them to easily find these places when needed (Jandt, 2010:108).

New symbols are continuously introduced into society. At the Tony Awards held in 1992, Jeremy Irons was the first celebrity to attire the red ribbon to the event. This red ribbon is symbolic to the awareness of AIDS. Later that year, during the Emmy Awards broadcast, Jamie Lee Curtis clarified the meaning of the symbol and by the following year the red AIDS ribbon had become one of the most known symbols across the board. Soon thereafter the symbols of pink ribbons for breast cancer and lavender ribbons for abused women were also introduced (Jandt, 2010:108).

- **Norms**

Norms are culturally fixed principles of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours that, if disobeyed, carry a form of obvious penalty (Chaney & Martin, 2004:10). Froemling, Grice and Skinner (2011:188) emphasise that groups or cultures cultivate norms, or informal rules, for common behaviour and individual expectations. Norms are identified directly by members of a group, but expressed as rules. Members become conscious of group norms when someone makes a comment about or disobey these norms. Verderber and Verderber (2008:228) add that norms are developed at the early stages of a cultural generation. Members of specific cultures generally comply with set norms that are normally passed from one generation to another, if these members do not comply with set norms; they are usually disciplined by the rest of the group. Norms grow, change and solidify as people get to know one another. However, norms are subject to change based on the political, economic and social transformation cultures are exposed to. For example, in some societies, a woman is expected to marry, rear children and stay at home if her husband could provide for the family without her assistance. However, in other societies, these norms have been varying in recent decades, as part of the modern feminist movement. As the support for traditional norm weakens, it is acceptable for people to violate these norms more frequently and openly and is less likely to be punished for doing so (Schaefer, 2002:62).

- **Values**

Jandt (2010:15) explains that values concerning what are; right or wrong, good or bad, desirable or undesirable are not always open for discussion amongst people of different cultures. Kendall (2001:77) states: "Values do not dictate which behaviours are suitable and which ones are not, but they provide people with the criteria by which they evaluate other people, objects and events." Since people use values to validate their behaviour, they tend to defend their values as well. However, Froemling et al.

(2011:238) confirm that most people across cultures “share values of equality, freedom, honesty, fairness and justice”. These values represent the standards individuals use to judge and develop beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. While people's actions may not always be reliable on their values, yet standards guide their actions (Froemling *et al.*, 2011:238).

- **Language**

Kendall (2001:73) states that language is used as a means for people to communicate whereby a set of symbols transfers ideas allowing people to think and communicate with each other. Both verbal (spoken) and non-verbal (written or gestured) language help people to describe reality. The ability to use language to share experiences, feelings and knowledge with others are regarded as one of the most significant human qualities. Language on the other hand has the ability to generate visual images in a person's head, such as "her face is as red as a tomato". Language also allows people to differentiate between themselves and others and to maintain group or cultural boundaries and solidarity. Furthermore, language and its association with culture and communication will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

- **History**

History provides a sense of direction in daily life. Every culture believes in the idea that history is a map that offers direction about how to live in the present. The most appealing part of a culture's history is that, like most of the other important essentials of culture, it is passed on from generation to generation and helps to maintain a culture's worldview. Stories of the past shape part of a culture's identity, values and norms of behaviour. History gives insight into the culture's origin, informs its members what is considered important and recognise the accomplishments of the culture of which the members can be proud of. However, while all cultures pass on a history that helps shape their members, each history is unique to a specific culture and brings exact cultural messages (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:25).

- **Religion**

Religious beliefs are very important to a culture, thus making it a way of life. Religion is defined as a set of beliefs, practices and ethical claims, often coded as prayers, rituals and religious laws, all of which are shared within cultures. Religion educates people to search for an external God and often dictates behaviour, as in the case of the Five Pillars of the Islamic faith and the Ten Commandments of the Christian religion (Reisinger, 2009:92). Samovar *et al.* (2010:25) add that since the influence of religion serves as a vital function, it is regarded as the entire culture framework. These functions consist of; social control, conflict resolution, reinforcement of group solidarity,



explanations of the unexplainable and emotional support. Furthermore, these functions impact both consciously and unconsciously on aspects of people ranging from business practices to politics, to individual behaviour. Religion is seen as a powerful and persistent element of culture that controls the way people have to live their lives.

- **Social organisations**

Jandt (2010:205) defines social organisations as a cultural outline that focuses on the manner society is structured. Samovar *et al.* (2010:26) emphasise that these social organisations, signifies the various social units contained within the culture. These social organisations can also be referred to as social institutions, social systems or social structures that consist of families, government, schools and even tribes. These social structures establish communication systems and implement norms of personal, domestic and social conduct. The manner in which each social structure functions and the norms they advance are distinctive to every culture.

From the above literature, it is obvious that the components of culture have a significant role in the development of culture. Being familiar with the above-mentioned components, people from different cultural backgrounds would understand that all cultures share a common set of attributes that often differentiates between cultures.

### **2.3.4 Characteristics of culture**

While there are many different definitions of what culture is and does, there is a community of agreement on what constitutes the major characteristics. An examination of these characteristics will provide increased understanding of the unstructured, multifaceted concept and also offer insight into how communication is influenced by culture (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:11). According to Haviland (2002:34), cultures around the world share four common characteristics: culture is shared, it is learned, it is based on symbols and it is integrated. The members of a culture share a set of ideals, values and standards of behaviour. These elements give meaning to their lives and bind them together as a culture.

- **Culture is shared**

Culture is shared by social interaction and it can take many forms to transmit the beliefs, values and expectations of human society. The exchange of social ideas may provide understanding and learning of the human culture and tradition. Culture-sharing occurs by social dynamism, using language, communication technologies and commercial trade, the use of language as a form of social communications such as group communication, informal communications, discussion and public speaking. The sharing of information is done through the transmission of knowledge. The use of

language or dialect may transmit information to a group of people that may later learn and understand the culture, tradition, beliefs and expectations of a given society. Culture may be shared during common human activities such as the grapevine information, social occasions and public debates. Furthermore, the traditional concept of shared culture emphasises the ethnic traditions, beliefs, norms and other social activities that may be transmitted by the elders and parents in the family and the tribe. However, the modern life has changed many things in the sharing of the universal culture for all (Haviland, 2002:41).

- **Culture is learned**

At birth individuals have no knowledge of the many social rules they will ultimately need to function in their culture. Through interaction, observations and imitation, the proper ways of thinking and behaving are communicated to them. Being taught to eat with a fork, a pair of chopsticks, or even one's fingers, is learning cultural behaviour. Culture is also acquired from art, proverbs, folklore, history and a variety of other sources. This learning, commonly referred to as enculturation, is both conscious and subconscious and has the common objective of teaching one how to function properly in their cultural milieu (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:11).

Therefore, culture is not an innate sensibility but a learned characteristic. Likewise, Haviland (2002:40) notes that children begin learning about their cultures at home with immediate family and how they interact with each other, how they dress and the rituals they perform. When children are older and venture out into the community, their cultural education is advanced by watching social interactions, taking part in cultural activities and rituals in the community, forming their own relationships and taking their place in the culture. Culture is learned through perception and perceptions are formed in various ways, for example, where we are born and raised, the language we are taught, the people and environment in which we live, and the psychosomatic stimuli we encounter (Chaney & Martin, 2011:6).

- **Culture is transmitted inter-generationally**

According to Samovar *et al.* (2009:11), the Spanish philosopher George Santayana wrote, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Clearly he was not referring to culture, which exists only if it is remembered and repeated by people. People learn their culture from family members, teachers, peers, books, personal observations and a host of media sources. The appropriate way to act, what to say and how to value things, were all communicated to the members of previous generations by these many sources. People are also sources for passing on these cultural expectations, usually with little or no variation, to succeeding generations.

Culture represents people's links to past and future generations and communication is the critical factor in this equation.

In order for culture to be transmitted successfully from one person to the next and from one generation to the next, a system of symbols needs to be created that translates the ideals of the culture to its members. This is accomplished through language, art, religion and money. Ultimately, to retain the culture, all aspects of the culture must be integrated. For instance the language must be able to describe all the functions within the culture in order for the ideas and ideals to be transmitted from one person to another. Without the integration of language into the fabric of the culture, confusion and dysfunction would reign and the culture would fail (Haviland, 2002:41). Therefore, sharing a similar culture helps people define the group or society to which they belong. A large number of people are said to have constituted a society when they live in the same territory, are relatively independent of people outside their space, and participate in a common culture (Schaefer, 2002:55).

- **Culture is symbolic**

According to Gamble & Gamble (2010:95) a symbol stands for, or represents, something else. Signs and symbols can replace spoken messages when they are used to identify and to direct attention to the things they designate. Words, gestures and images are merely symbols used to convey meaning. It is the ability to use these symbols that allows people to engage in the many forms of social intercourse necessary for constructing and conveying culture. People's symbol-making ability enables learning and facilitates transmission from one person to another, group to group and generation to generation. In addition to transmission, the portability of symbols creates the ability to store information, which allows cultures to preserve what is considered important and to create a history. The preservation of culture provides each new generation with a road map to follow and a reference library to consult when unknown situations are encountered. Succeeding generations may introduce new behaviours or values, but the accumulation of past traditions is what is known to be culture (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:11).

- **Culture is dynamic**

Despite its historical nature, culture is never static. Within a culture, new ideas, inventions and exposure to other cultures bring about change. One has only to look at discoveries such as the stirrup, gunpowder, the nautical compass, penicillin, or nuclear power to understand culture's vulnerability to innovation and new ideas. Diffusion or cultural borrowing is also a source of change. Most of the changes affecting culture, especially readily visible changes, are somewhat topical in nature, such as dress, food

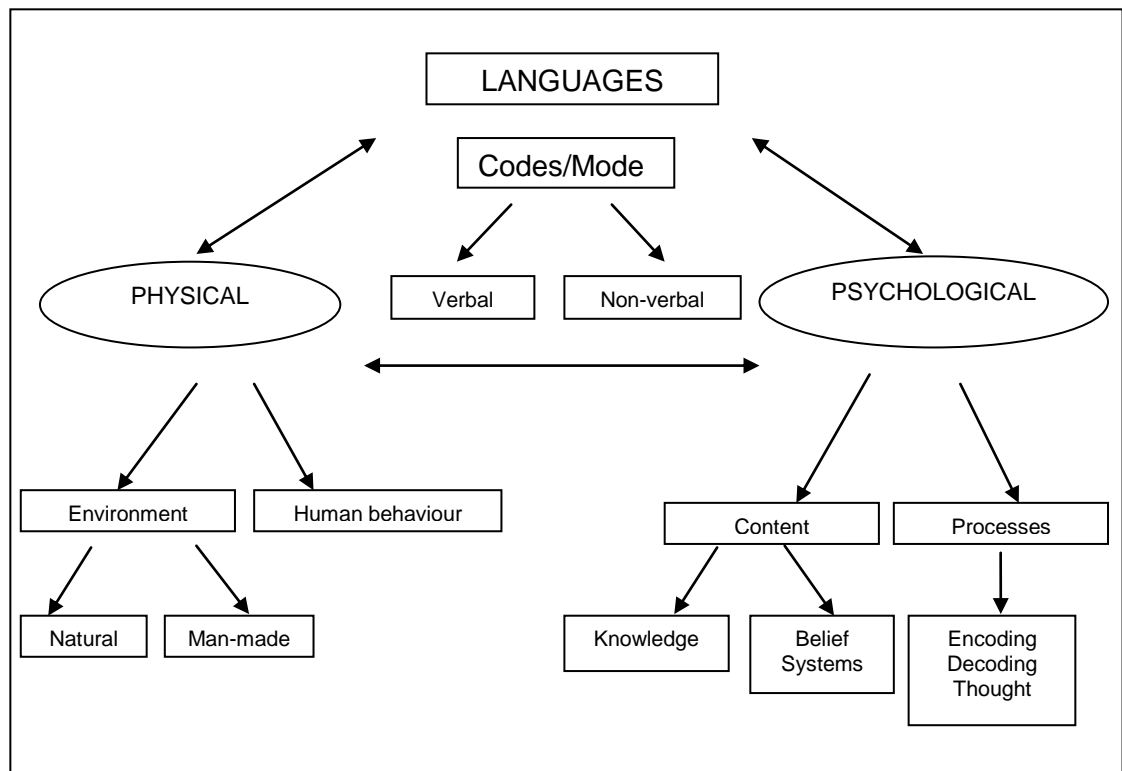
preference, modes of transportation or housing. Values, ethics, morals, the importance of religion, or attitudes towards gender, age and sexual orientation, which constitute the deep structures of culture, are far more resistant to major change and tend to endure from generation to generation (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:12).

- **Culture is ethnocentric**

The strong sense of group identity, or attachment produced by culture can also lead to ethnocentrism, the tendency to consider one's own culture as being superior to other cultures. Ethnocentrism can be a product of enculturation. Being continually told that you live in the greatest country in the world or that your way of life is better than those of other nations or ethnic groups can lead to feelings of cultural superiority, especially among children. Ethnocentrism can also be a result of underexposure to other cultures. An ability to understand or accept other ways and customs can also provoke feelings of ethnocentrism. It is quite natural to feel at ease with people of the same culture as you, who adhere to the same social norms and protocols as you. On the contrary, it is also normal to feel uneasy when confronted with new and different social values, beliefs and behaviours. However, to view or evaluate those differences negatively simply because they are different from your expectations is a product of ethnocentrism. It should be self-evident that an ethnocentric disposition would be especially detrimental to effective intercultural communication (Samovar *et al.*, 2009:12).

### **2.3.5 Cultural dimensions**

Chaney and Martin (2011:6) elucidate that to communicate effectively in an intercultural environment, it is essential to be familiar with the cultural elements that affect the situation. Individuals need to be familiar with the three primary dimensions of culture when communicating. These three dimensions of culture includes: language, physical environment and psychological content (Borden, 1991:171). These dimensions are illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.



**Figure 2.2: Dimensions of culture (Source: Chaney & Martin, 2011:6)**

The languages, physical and psychological dimensions of culture are reliant on each other. As people are born into a society, no individual dimension is more important than the other. Instead they develop in agreement with each other. The language dimension is used to communicate with other people who have similar values and beliefs. According to Samovar *et al.* (2010:225) language is simply a set of shared symbols that a co-operative group of individuals have equally agreed to use towards the creation of meaning. The physical dimension of culture relates to the physical truth of a person's environment and the cultural happenings of all humans. This dimension is measured accurately to determine the communication context. The psychological dimension relates to people's awareness, beliefs and mental activities and is measured subjectively. Although people can adapt to these characteristics and their way of communicating with others, they need to first realise their personal dimensions and understand why they are the way they are (Chaney & Martin, 2011:6).

Through perception culture is learned whereas through culture perceptions are formed in various ways. Such as where a person is born and raised, the language taught the people and environment in which a person lives and the psychosomatic stimuli people encounter all depends on an individual's perception of culture (Chaney & Martin, 2011:6). Therefore, it is evident that various dimensions of culture have an impact on each other. However, to communicate effectively in an intercultural setting, it is

important to have a basic understanding of all cultural elements to which you may be exposed and that may affect a specific situation.

## **2.4 COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE**

According to Samovar *et al.* (1991:230) communication does not occur in a void, hence it is not resistant to external influence. It is, therefore, evident that all human communication is to some degree influenced by the cultural, social and physical settings in which it occurs. The connection between culture and communication is complex. A dialectical approach assumes that culture and communication are interconnected and reciprocal, making culture influential on communication. Cultures influence the communication process and it recognises communication by which the awareness of reality is created and sustained.

Verderber and Verderber (2008:103) emphasise that communicating across cultures often lead to misunderstandings, due to the difference in people's attitudes, values, beliefs, customs and behaviours. Interaction using verbal and non-verbal communication has shown difficulty amongst most people of different cultures when having to understand or interpret messages. However, challenges are not likely to occur amongst people from the same culture as they share a common background. Therefore, it is clear that communication influences culture and culture in turn influences communication. The following section will further explain the relation between communication and culture.

### **2.4.1 The linkage between culture and communication**

Culture is an all-inclusive form or pattern for living. It is complex, abstract and pervasive. Numerous aspects of culture help to determine communicative behaviour. The study of culture can be said to be the study of communication. Samovar *et al.* (1991:56) note that communication is said to be the glue of society. In a planetary metaphor, communication is the gravitational force that keeps the planets in a certain relation to each other. Culture, in a parallel fashion, is the mechanism that allows human beings to make sense of the world and to deal with it. Culture is a social product and is the result of humans originating interaction, that is, communication processes (Samovar *et al.* 1991:56).

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers and Louw (2003:9), communication and culture are interconnected and reciprocal. However, when involved in an intercultural encounter, an important characteristic to keep in mind is cultural differences. What may be understood as effective communication and acceptable behaviour in one culture may not be accepted in another. Similarly, Martin and Nakayama (2000:62) maintain that communication is socially based and has an impact on cultural identity. Cultural

procedures and structures such as terms, rituals, myths and social drama are approved through shaping norms of communication.

Risager (2006:1) states that the combined interpretation of language and culture is also necessary both for the theoretical understanding as well as for the development of the various areas of practice where language plays a crucial role. Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth and Harter (2006:61) add that culture and language are connected in two ways: firstly, transmission of culture happens through language. Secondly, culture generates a lens through which the world is perceived and meaning is created. Thus, language is developed in response to the needs of the culture or the perceptions of the world.

#### **2.4.2 Communication as an element of culture**

It has often been said that communication and culture are inseparable for culture is a code we learn and share and learning and sharing require communication. Communication requires coding and symbols that must be learned and shared. Jandt (2007:27) claims that every cultural pattern and every single act of social behaviour involve communication. To be understood, the two must be studied together. Culture cannot be known without a study of communication and communication can only be understood with an understanding of the culture it supports. Culture and communication mutually influence one another, producing different behavioural patterns in different contexts. Culture not only conditions one's perceptions of reality but also programs one's language patterns. Culture not only shapes one's communication patterns, but communication in turn influences the structure of one's culture. Indeed, the two are inseparable (Jandt, 2007:27).

Gamble & Gamble (2010:11) affirm that messages are formulated and interpreted based on the grounds of an individual's culture. Cultural diversity influences the significance one attributes to communication. Cultural differences exist amongst people who speak the same language and amongst those who communicate in different languages. Each cultural group has its individual rules and preferences for interaction. When these rules and preferences are ignored or unknown, individuals are likely to misinterpret the meaning of the message and get the wrong idea about the importance of the message.

#### **2.4.3 Communication and the language of a culture**

The importance of language as an indicator of culture is well illustrated in the numerous occurrences of creating unintended meanings through the usage of language. For instance, an insurance company discovered that fires inadvertently occurred because warehouse employees acted carelessly around "empty" barrels of gasoline, although

they previously had exercised great caution around "full" drums of gasoline. The terms full and empty seem to mark the real danger in working with gasoline drums as empty drums are extremely combustible, whereas full drums pose far less threat. Yet, empty drums seemed harmless, from the linguistic perception of that word to the workers (Dodd, 1991:123).

Language is not only a part of culture, language shapes perception. Also language usage is a function of the cultural context. According to the hypotheses of Whorf and Bernstein cited by Dodd (1991:123), it suggests the active roles that language and social context play in determining perceptions and also the behaviours of people. Furthermore, language functions not only to report information but actually to shape people's perception of reality. However, this idea revolutionised linguistic science and therefore language plays a large and significant role in the totality of culture. Far from being a technique, communication is a way of directing the perception of its speakers and it provides for them habitual modes of analysing experience into significant categories (Dodd, 1991:124).

According to Klopff and McCroskey (2007:178), language is a sequence of sounds, which when combined as symbols, obtains meaning. Generally, language is used as a means for people to communicate with each other. However, the nature of language is dependent on the involvement of people with various features of language. For example, *linguists* study the phonetic division of language and define language by the sounds communicators create and listeners receive. *Semantics* on the other hand study the meanings of words and where and how they are developed. Though, a *grammarian* learns how to administer a language and determines its grammatical forms, roots and endings (Chaney & Martin, 2011:101).

Furthermore, Chaney and Martin (2011:109) identify both the joining and contentious nature of language. A common native language ties people together, yet the existence of many different native languages in a small environment can cause problems. The usage of language and culture in creating political, social, economic and educational development has an effect on favouring certain ideals over the others. Accepting culture without understanding language is complex. Language determines people's understanding and awareness and therefore, if they are removed from their linguist environment, they no longer have the conceptual framework to clarify their ideas and opinions. According to Gamble and Gamble (2010:104-105) culture also influences people's usage of words whereby both the dominant cultures and co-cultures have different languages. Language usage vary from one culture to another. If a concept is important to one culture, there will be numerous expressions to describe it. For example, in South Africa money is very important and people have many words to



depict it, for example, wealth, capital, assets, resources and finances all resembles money.

In relation to the above literature, cultural differences varies in the way people apply language, each language has its own grammatical rules and some seem unusual to different speakers using that language. Anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1976) stated that people are limited to the language they speak. Therefore, the link between culture and communication is crucial to understanding intercultural communication as it is through the influence of culture that people learn to communicate. Cultural similarity in perception makes the sharing of meaning possible. The ways in which people communicate, the circumstances of their communication, the language and language style they use as well as their non-verbal behaviours are primarily all a response to and a function of their cultures. As cultures differ from one another, the communication practices and behaviours of individuals reared in those cultures will also be different (Samovar *et al.*, 1991:14).

## **2.5 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONCEPTUALISED**

Once the meanings of communication and culture are understood it becomes clear that intercultural communication refers to the communication between people from two different cultures. The potential for miscommunication and disagreement is great because of cultural differences. Thus, the study of intercultural communication aims to understand the influence of culture on one's attitudes, beliefs and behaviours to reduce misunderstandings that result from cultural variations (Chen & Starosta, 2005:33). Hence, this study aims to establish the level of understanding of culture amongst employees of the DOJ&CD to determine whether a lack of cultural knowledge contributes to miscommunication in the department.

Over the past few decades the study of intercultural communication has expanded to cover a diverse set of variables derived from the concepts of communication and culture and the combination of communication and culture. As is the case for the communication discipline itself, the study of intercultural communication is influenced by traditional disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, psychology and sociology (Chen & Starosta, 2005:13). The following section will unfold the topic of Intercultural Communication

### **2.5.1 Theories of intercultural communication**

According to Chen and Starosta (2005:120), scholars from different disciplines have provided a number of theories to examine the development of human relationships.

The following three theories can be applied to intercultural relationship development and the field of communication. These theories are namely: social penetration theory, uncertainty reduction theory and constructivism theory.

- **Social penetration theory**

Social Penetration Theory was developed by Altman and Taylor (cited by Chen & Starosta, 2005:121). Social penetration theory holds that the development of human relationships is determined by the information they disclose to their partner. The information can be categorised into two dimensions: depth and width. The depth of the information represents the hierarchical structure of the messages they exchange in the interaction.

The four stages of the relationship development explicated by the social penetration theory exhibit three characteristics, namely:

- The relationship is developing from a casual or superficial level to a personal or intimate level as intimacy cannot be reached overnight;
- The movement of the relationship is determined by the degree of self-disclosure; and
- Messages exchanged in a casual or superficial mode have low degree of depth but the topics may be broad. However, both depth and width are high in the personal or intimate level of relationships.

- **Uncertainty reduction theory**

Uncertainty reduction theory, developed originally by Berger and Calabrese, according to Dodd (1991:25), has been extended and applied to intercultural communication settings. In fact, the broad range of applications of this theory have been so prolific that it may well be described as one of the most highly visible theories to explain intercultural communication. It is an extension of existing communication theory that helps us understand intercultural interactions.

The theory centres on the key metaphor of *stranger* and works like this. A new person enters a new culture. The stranger is not quite sure how to behave (cognitive uncertainty) and he or she feels insecure (anxiety). The stranger often has little accurate information concerning the group membership and thus tends to overestimate the groups behaviour.

The theory posits methods by which interrelationships between the stranger and the new cultural group can be improved or heightened. Those ways basically involve a change in personal expectation, reducing cognitive uncertainty and altering anxiety. Consequently, intercultural communication is said to influence adaptation and effectiveness.

- **Constructivism theory**

Constructivism theory developed by Applegate and Sypher (cited by Dodd, 1991:27), represents an extension of interpersonal research into intercultural concerns. Constructivists' conceptions of communication assume that some people have a cognitive system by which they can interpret the meanings and actions of others in an accurate, differentiated but sensitive way. Culture influences the organising scheme that a person develops, thus leading one to conclude that different outlooks and interpretation are culturally variable.

### **2.5.2 Understanding intercultural communication**

Bovee and Thill (2008:64) state that intercultural communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between people whose cultural backgrounds could lead them to interpret verbal and non-verbal signs differently. Every attempt to send and receive messages is influenced by culture, so to communicate successfully people will need a basic grasp of the cultural differences they may encounter and how they should handle it.

Chen and Starosta (2005:13) explain that intercultural communication is an ambiguous concept whereby it's content can be classified into five forms:

- Firstly, intercultural communication focuses on the study of interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds;
- Secondly, international communication focuses on the study of interaction between representatives of different nations;
- Thirdly, interracial communication focuses on the study of interaction between members of the numerically or politically dominant culture and co-culture in the same nation;
- Fourthly, interethnic or minority communication focuses on the study of interaction among co-cultures in the same nation; and
- Lastly, contra-cultural communication focuses on the study of the development process linking intercultural communication to interracial communication.

According to Dodd (cited by Chen & Starosta, 2005:28), successful intercultural communication is based on three factors:

- The positive feeling we possess at the affective level, including affirmation, self esteem, comfort, trust and safety;

- The beliefs we bring into the intercultural encounter at the cognitive level, including expectations, stereotypes, uncertainties and misunderstandings of rules or procedures; and
- The action or skills we possess at the behavioural level, including verbal and non-verbal communication skills in intercultural settings.

### 2.5.3 Assumptions of intercultural communication

Intercultural communication is a complicated blend of the cultural, micro-cultural, environmental, perceptual and socio-relational settings between people who are encoding and decoding verbal and non-verbal messages.

Schlesinger (2005:32) avers the following are fundamental assumptions about intercultural communication as a result to the complexity it serves:

- During intercultural communication it is assumed that the **message sent is normally not the message received**. Whenever people from different cultures come together and communicate, they tend to bring along a whole host of opinions, principles, emotions and behaviours that were cultivated by culture. Intercultural communication is a symbolic activity where opinions and concepts of people are encoded into a verbal or non-verbal message presentation, and then communicated through some channel to another person who must interpret it and respond to it. This process of encoding, decoding and interpreting messages is filled with cultural noise of which ethnocentrism often occurs resulting in miscommunication followed by conflict;
- Intercultural communication is assumed to be primarily a **non-verbal act** between people, which results in a fundamentally non-verbal process. The appearance of intimacy, control and status among communicators is naturally accomplished through non-verbal cues such as proxemics, haptics, oculosics and olfactics. According to Hall, (cited by Schlesinger, 2005:32) people from different cultures live in different worlds and therefore engage in a selective screening of sensory information that ultimately leads to different perceptions of experience. For example, olfactics which is related to smell, most cultures establish norms for acceptable and unacceptable scents associated with the human body. Understanding the idea of olfactics cultural acceptability, is when a person's odour serves as an indication to others that something is wrong with their physical, emotional, or mental health. Muslims believe that cleanliness of the body and purity of the souls are related and therefore Muslim women are known to cleanse themselves after menstruation;
- It is assumed that intercultural communication automatically involves a **clash of communicator style**, whereby people are regularly evaluated by the way they

speak. Yet silence is a fundamental prerequisite for linguistic and cultural competence. The use of silence varies dramatically across cultures. In many communal cultures, such as Japan and Korea, being silent can be more meaningful than words, particularly in the continuation of intimate; (Schlesinger, 2005:32-33).

- Intercultural communication is assumed to be a **group phenomenon** practised by individuals. When communication across cultures people tend to bring along assumptions and impressions of the next person. The specific verbal and non-verbal messages that they exchange are usually modified for the person based on those assumptions and impressions. Often, such assumptions and impressions are based on characteristics of the other person based on his or her group membership such as his or her culture, race, sex, religion and occupation. In other words there is a tendency to see categorise people into groups and not as individuals with unique thoughts, ideas and goals, but rather as an "Asian," or a "woman," or an "old person," or "a cab driver". Overall, people do not see the person; they rather see the group in which the person belongs; (Schlesinger, 2005:32-33).
- Intercultural communication is assumed to be a **cycle of stress and adaptation** for when people of different cultures come together they feel uncertain, apprehensive and anxious. Such feelings are traumatic and nerve-racking, which in turn causes intercultural communication to be stressful. On the other hand, people can learn and adapt to certain stressful situations and eventually overcome its difficulties. During intercultural communication, people need to be aware that communication strategies used amongst people from the same culture may not be as effective amongst people from other cultures. Therefore, adapting and adjusting of communication styles has to be taken into account. Therefore, the first thing to note is that people from diverse cultures are different, instead of superior or inferior (Schlesinger, 2005:32-33).

#### **2.5.4 Barriers to intercultural communication**

Today's competitive global economy results in frequent cross-border movements of staff that results in a growing diversity in the workplace. As the inevitable happens between cultures, breakdowns in communication are a common occurrence. That is certainly costly to the multinational enterprise in terms of workplace relations, returns and revenues and customer relationship, not to mention the firm's competitive advantage (Teo, 2011:33).

A list of intercultural barriers has been developed. These barriers are as follows:

- **High anxiety**

When a person is anxious because of not knowing what they are expected to do, it is only natural for that person to focus on that feeling and not be totally present in the communication transaction. For example, a person would experience anxiety on the first day in a new job and will be so conscious of being new and feel out of place at the same time. Hence, they will focus so much on that feeling that they make common mistakes and appear awkward to others (Barna, 1997 cited by Jandt, 2007:71).

- **Ethnocentrism**

Ethnocentrism is negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one's own culture. To be ethnocentric is to believe in the superiority of one's own culture. Another name for ethnocentrism is the anthropological concept of cultural relativism. It does not mean that everything is equal. It means that one must try to understand other people's behaviour in the context of their culture before it can be judged. Ethnocentrism leads to a rejection of the richness and knowledge of other cultures. It impedes communication and blocks the exchange of ideas and skills among people (Barna, 1997 cited by Jandt, 2007:71).

To obey the rules of societal norms and values, ethnocentrism can create a positive function in societies by encouraging group solidarity and loyalty. However, it can also be challenging and depressing for societies. Ethnocentrism is counter-productive when it blinds cultures to what other cultural groups have to offer or when it leads to conflict and aggression. Ethnocentrism can also be difficult across cultures when it leads to social isolation, prejudice, discrimination and oppression of one culture by another (Kendall, 2001:91).

- **Stereotypes and prejudice**

Stereotypes and prejudice are a pernicious stumbling block to intercultural communication. The term stereotype is the broader term commonly used to refer to negative or positive judgement made about individuals based on any observable or believed group membership, whereas prejudice refers to the irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group, race, religion or sexual orientation. The terms are related in that they both refer to making judgements about individuals based on group membership (Barna, 1997 cited by Jandt, 2007:71).

According to Verderber and Verderber (2008:43), stereotyping leads to prejudgment. In a communication context, the negative feelings and attitudes held by those who prejudice mental are often showed through the use of group labels, intimidating humour

or speech that alleges the power of one group over another. Alberts, Nakayama and Martin (2010:97) add that although stereotyping may be a usual intellectual activity, it can cause complications. Stereotyping often leads to differing understandings of the world as "us and them", "Blacks and Whites" and "females and males". Subsequently, difference in thinking often leads to a rigid, prejudiced view of certain behaviours as either correct or incorrect. This type of thinking is guaranteed to generate a distressing communication challenge.

- **Assuming similarity instead of difference**

When one assumes similarity between cultures, one can be caught unaware of important differences. When one has no information about a new culture, it makes sense to assume there are no differences. However, each culture is different and unique to some degree. For example, if a person assumes that display of emotions is similar to their culture, they might see people of different cultures in a certain circumstances as lacking emotion and others in other circumstances as displaying emotions inappropriately. The inverse can be a barrier as well. Assuming difference instead of similarity can lead to one not recognising important things that cultures share in common (Barna, 1997 cited by Jandt, 2007:71).

Beebe, Beebe and Redmond (2011:102) affirm that it is incorrect to assume that all people who belong to a different social group are worlds apart from each other. Subsequently, it is also incorrect to assume that similar cultural groups act and think the alike. Cultural differences do exist, even though some cultures may value the same things as another culture, upholding a self-focused viewpoint instead of another-orientated one.

Another barrier, although it may appear opposing to resemblances in cultures, is their differences. It can be unfavourable to communicate with an assumption that another person is different from us because of their cultural identity. It is a true reflection that all human beings do share common experiences, while at the same time there are differences. The rationale for understanding that humans have resemblances and differences is not to reduce the function of culture as an influencing element of communication, but to understand that regardless of cultural differences, people are all members of humanity. When engaging in intercultural communication, it is therefore important for individuals to take time to explore the other person's background and cultural values before one can define their cultural resemblances and differences (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:103).

- **Different communication codes**

When travelling abroad, individuals are likely to come across people who do not speak the same language. This type of intercultural difference poses a distressing communication challenge. In some cases, even when individuals speak the same language, due to their different cultures, the words and gestures may have different values. It is therefore important to understand various cultures during the communication process in order to communicate effectively and properly across cultures (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:100).

### **2.5.5 Problems and consequences related to intercultural communication**

Beebe *et al.* (2011:97-98) explain that intercultural communication happens when individuals or groups from different cultures communicate. However, the transactional process of listening and responding to people from different cultural backgrounds can be challenging. The greater the diversity in cultures between people, the greater the possibility for misunderstandings, distrust, anxiety and doubt.

Misinterpretation and miscommunication happens when people from different cultures make use of different coding rules and cultural norms, which play a key role in determining patterns of interaction, thereby causing difficulties to effective intercultural communication (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:97-98). However, the first step in identifying differences between cultures is to determine what hampers effective communication. When people of different cultural backgrounds meet, all differences between them can possibly lead to misunderstanding. A way of grasping the problems that can arise in intercultural communication is to examine the ways in which communication patterns can vary between different linguistic and cultural communities. This may be achieved by utilising a model in which one takes into account different communication behaviours and its influences (Allwood, 1985:4).

Furthermore, there are different kinds of problems that can arise during intercultural communication. As in all communication settings, an essential problem is to accurately understand meaning. It is assumed that two persons with different cultural backgrounds start to communicate because one of them has a need to do so. Having different cultural backgrounds probably verifies the lack of pre-understanding of a particular culture than two persons with the same cultural backgrounds. If the perceived meaning is applicable to a cross cultural setting, the outcome may lead to several consequences which are addressed below:



- **Lack of understanding**

Lack of understanding is when a person fails to interpret parts of or all of what the other person is saying or doing. The lack of understanding may be conscious or unconscious whereby you may or may not notice that you have not understood. The lack can, if it is conscious, lead to an attempt to be resolved, such as saying or indicating that you have not understood. The lack of understanding can also be allowed to pass, in spite of the fact that you are aware of it, due to lack of time or to an inferior status, you do not consider yourself in a position to ask for help or to admit that you have not understood (Allwood, 1985:16).

- **Misunderstandings**

Own lack of understanding of the other's cultural background. Assuming difference in a message before it is accepted can also lead to misunderstanding, whereby one actually makes an alleged interpretation of something that is later interpreted as incorrect. The possibility that poor understanding will lead to misunderstanding is reliant on factors such as strong expectations regarding communicative contents, inadequate awareness of your motivation, or perhaps a complete need to try to understand the language used for the communication and the occurrence of something that gives confirmation alongside the explanation about to be made (Allwood, 1985:16).

Furthermore, Teo (2006:11) identifies further obstacles to intercultural communication:

- **Language**, along with its slang, jargon, dialects, pidgin and accents is also known as a major barrier to intercultural communication. For example, the English language is the most common language across the globe and yet has many variations and the degree of fluency differs from country to country and individual to individual, which opens up possible misinterpretation and communication failure.
- **Modern technology** consisting of emails, SMS text messaging, video and teleconferencing, as well as the Internet, has made access easier and cheaper to people worldwide, such that it has helped speed up globalisation. Similarly, the pervasive use of technological tools like SMS and e-mail amongst local peoples does not mean that cultural mishaps will not occur. The difficulty that comes with the aforesaid tools is gauging the recipients' expressions. Their responses could be not what the assignee expects or least anticipates. On the other hand, the ease of communicating electronically removes formality and business etiquette that can not only be misconstrued but also leads to a breakdown in communication. Hence, it is significant on the assignee's part to convey himself as clearly and plainly as possible to avoid any misunderstandings that may arise.

## **2.6 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT**

### **2.6.1 Defining intercultural conflict**

Intercultural conflict is defined as the involvement of emotional frustration on mismatched expectations between people of different cultures' values, norms, goals, scarce resources, or outcomes during an intercultural exchange (Neuliep, 2009:324). Furthermore, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) assert that intercultural conflict happens when cultural factors influence how an individual approach, avoid and manage conflict.

As previously stated, intercultural communication is assumed to be a group phenomenon experienced by individuals. Likewise, during intercultural conflict, an individual's culture becomes a contributing factor in how conflict is perceived, managed and solved. Certain cultural factors may be unconscious, such as the degree of one's individuality or socialism. Other cultural factors are probably more conscious as people of different cultures have incompatible goals and desire different outcomes (Neuliep, 2009:324).

Additionally, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) maintain that "intercultural conflict involves a certain degree of ethnocentric perceptions and judgements". Ethnocentric persons hold attitudes and behaviours about their in-group. Ethnocentric people also foster co-operative relations with in-group members while competing with and perhaps even battling, out-group members. Hence, by virtue of their cultural upbringing, they think they are correct.

### **2.6.2 Conflict, communication and culture**

Conflict is an inescapable aspect of all relationships. If managed improperly, conflict can lead to irreparable breakdowns. Two of the major components, being communication and culture, come into play when conflict occurs (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:318).

With regard to communication and conflict, Pepper (1995:199) writes, "Communication is the dominant characteristic of conflict, for it serves as the vehicle of conflict transmission and the source of conflict management." As expected, culture determines how conflict is viewed and managed. Although conflict is a part of nearly every aspect of the working environment, each culture's way of perceiving and dealing with conflict reflects its value system. It is often assumed that conflict is part of competition and self-expression and therefore can be useful. This perception of conflict is also seen in other cultures. In the Middle East, people perceive conflict as a natural way of life. People are expected to have intense feelings on many issues and to express feelings in an animated and confrontational manner.

Furthermore, collectivistic cultures have an aversion to open, direct conflict, which is seen as a threat to organisational accord and stability and to the relationships among group members. For the Japanese, conflict is seen as interpersonally embarrassing and distressing since it potentially disrupts social harmony. Moreover, they believe disputes should be resolved privately and prefer reaching an agreement without confrontation, especially in the case of parties engaged in a long-term relationship. To make sure conflict is not part of the environment, most Japanese companies use programs to socialise employees so they view the organisation as part of their professional and personal fulfilment. As the individual's identity is derived in part from the organisation, there is little incentive to engage in disruptive organisational activities. Japanese companies also incorporate small-group discussions and use trusted intermediaries to help preclude or resolve conflicts. Criticism, a potent source of disagreement and conflict, is expressed indirectly, in passive, accommodating styles. Since conflict carries the potential of loss of face, the Japanese are likely to remain silent or use non-verbal behaviours to express disapproval (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:318).

In addition, almost all communication problems give rise to conflict situations, as both a cause and an effect. Misunderstandings, resulting from poor communication, can easily cause conflict or exacerbate the situation. Further, once conflict starts, communication problems often develop because people in conflict do not communicate with each other as frequently, as openly and as accurately as they would if relationships were not strained. Thus, communication is central to most conflict situations (Anon, 1998). As stated before, communication involves at least two parties, the speaker and the listener. Sometimes there are third parties: in-between people who relay messages from one person to another or the media, for example, which has such transmission of information as its primary goal. Problems can develop at all three these sources (Anon, 1998).

Speakers often are not clear themselves about what they mean, which almost ensures that what they say will be unclear as well. Even when people know what they mean, they often do not say it as clearly as they should. They may hide their true feelings or ideas intentionally or unintentionally. Either way, people often get confused about other people's messages. This is especially common when people from different cultures try to communicate. Even if their languages are the same, culture acts like a lens through which people see and interpret the world. If their cultures are different, it is easy for the same statement to mean one thing to one person and something different to someone else. Thus, intercultural communication is especially open to misinterpretation (Anon, 1998).

Listeners also are sources of communication problems. People often fail to listen carefully. They may assume they know what the other person is saying because they have heard it before, or they assume that one person is "just like" another person from the same group. Also, when people are in conflict, they often concentrate more on what they are going to say in response to their opponent's statement, rather than listening to their opponent's words with full attention. The result, again, is misunderstanding and often unnecessary escalation of conflict (Anon, 1998).

### **2.6.3 Managing intercultural conflict**

According to Samovar *et al.* (2010:322), perceiving and handling conflict is rooted in culture. However, some skills for responding to conflict can be employed regardless of the culture with which one is interacting. The following are skills should be utilised when managing intercultural conflict:

- **Identify the contentious issues**

Whether the conflict is over personalities, specific points in a contract or a verbal misunderstanding, one needs to begin by discovering what is at the core of the disagreement. It does not make sense to argue over a particular point only to discover later that your counterpart did not even understand the central point of the controversy. This desire to isolate the agreement shows your willingness to negotiate in good faith (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:322).

- **Keep an open mind**

Asking one to keep an open mind while engaged in a conflict is easier to suggest than actually carry out. When people speak of trying to keep an open mind, they are not talking about giving blind allegiance to the other person's arguments and abandoning their own principle. Rather, they are pointing out the advantage of trying to see things from another point of view and remaining open to the other person's position. Therefore, one should approach conflict with openness. Recognise that there is much to learn about the other participants as persons and the worldviews that shaped their positions (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:322).

- **Do not rush**

Do not rush to solve a conflict when interacting with members of a collective culture. In other words, you must learn to slow down the entire negotiation process when conflict arises. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001:396) note: "Be sensitive to the importance of quiet, mindful observation." Furthermore, use deep-level silence, deliberate pauses and patient conversational turn-making in the conflict interaction process with collectivists (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001:396).

- **Keep the conflict centred on ideas, not people**

Regardless of the culture, no one likes feeling threatened or being placed in an uncomfortable position. Hence, it is important to separate the positions from the people. This keeps the negotiation focused on solving the problem that created the conflict instead of having the parties defend their egos. Particularly in collective cultures, people attempt to preserve their image. If you attack another person, their esteem is threatened and can be diminished. Therefore, to avoid having a person lose face you need to keep focus on the content of the conflict and not on the individual (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:323).

#### **2.6.4 Developing techniques for avoiding intercultural conflict**

There are a number of techniques you can employ that might help resolve conflict before it reaches the point of being irresolvable. Samovar *et al.* (2010:323) suggest the following:

- Using collective pronouns can help defuse conflict. Although at times you may have to refer to people by name, when you are with a group of people, try to develop the practice of using group pronouns as a way of focusing on content rather than people. Notice how words such as "we" and "our" focus the conversation on everyone instead of on one person, as is the case with "I", "me" and "you";
- Repeat the other person's comments as objectively as possible so that you can determine if you actually heard what they meant to communicate. Often something is read into a comment that was not actually intended by the sender of the message; and
- Try to state as many points of agreement as possible. Often the areas of agreement can outweigh the differences and therefore conflict can be avoided. This can be done by using something as simple as a sentence that states, "We all can agree that this contract would be beneficial to both our departments."

In addition, it is of utmost importance to be aware of the significant influence culture has on the conduct of a business, both internationally and domestically. Part of the awareness is realising that one may be unfamiliar with significant aspects of the business context as it relates to culture (Samovar *et al.*, 2010:324).

#### **2.7 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE**

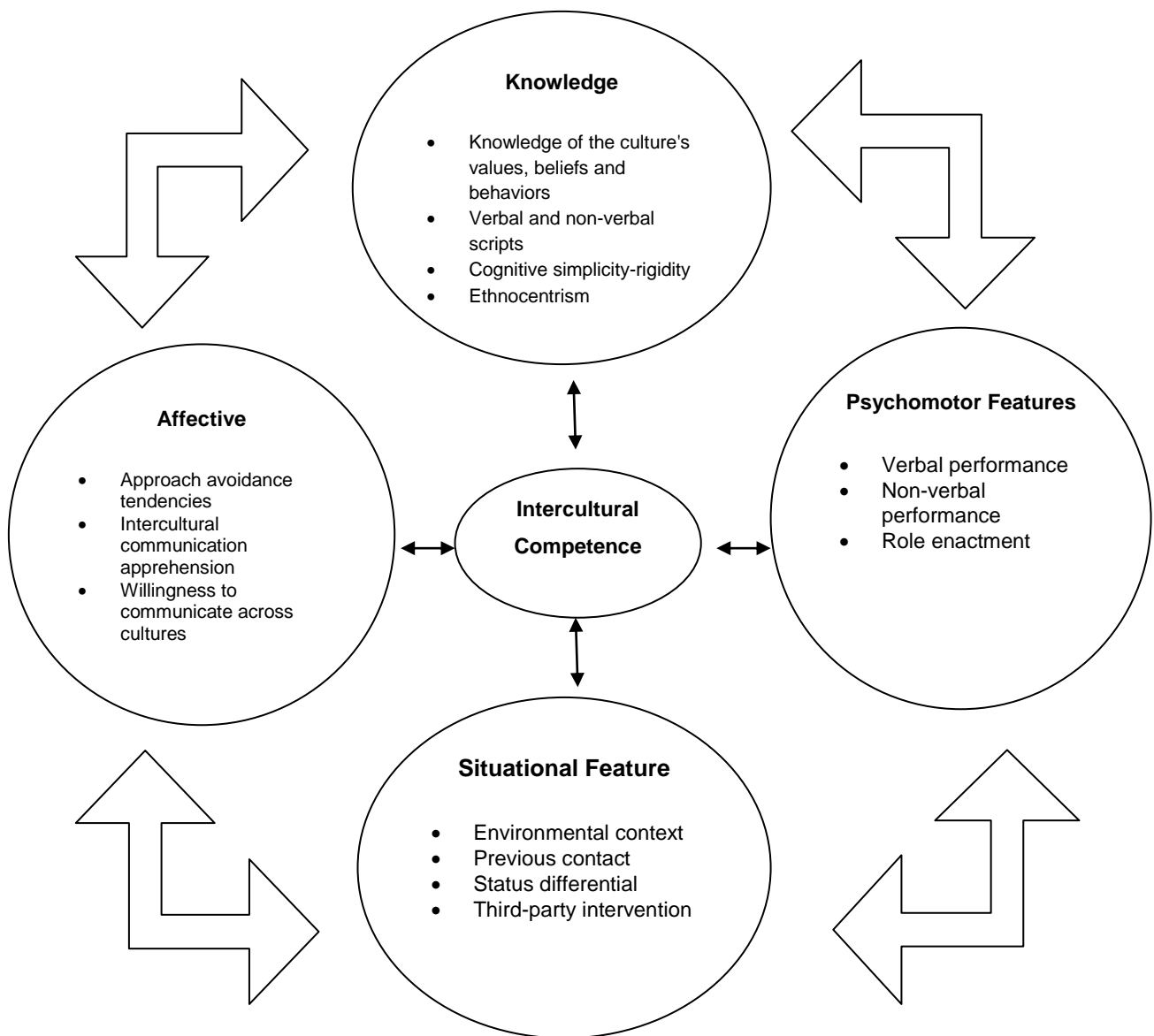
Intercultural communication competence is defined as the extent to which people successfully adapt their verbal and non-verbal messages to the appropriate culture context.

When communicating across cultures, to be interculturally competent, you will have to adjust to the kinds of verbal and non-verbal messages you send. This process involves that you have knowledge about the person with whom you are communicating, that you are motivated to communicate with him or her and that you have the appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills to encode and decode messages (Neuliep, 2009:394).

According to Neuliep (2009:394), interculturally competent people successfully adapt their verbal and non-verbal messages to the suitable cultural context. Mainly, competence is something that is perceived about another person, instead of something an individual naturally has. In other words, an individual may appear competent to one person but not to the other. Moreover, intercultural competence differs from situation to situation. Verbal and non-verbal suitability are two significant qualities for intercultural competence. According to Spitzberg and Cupach (1997:394), appropriate behaviours adapt to the rules, norms and expectations of the cultural context. Effective behaviours are those that successfully perform and accomplish the rules and norms. Therefore, the appropriateness and effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal messages varies considerably across cultures. Behaviours considered appropriate in one culture may not be wholly appropriate in another culture.

### **2.7.1 Components of intercultural communication**

Spitzberg and Cupach (1997:394) argue that there are three necessary and interdependent ingredients of communication competence being knowledge, motivation and behaviour. The model of intercultural competence presented hereunder includes these three dimensions along with a fourth component being situational features. In this model, intercultural communication is the potential outcome of four interdependent components of the intercultural communication encounter. Each component influences and is influenced by the other three. Figure 2.3 illustrates this concept.



**Figure 2.3: Model of intercultural communication competence (Source: Neuliep, 2009:394)**

The knowledge component of intercultural competence determines how much one knows about the culture of the person with whom one is communicating. To the extent that people have knowledge about other cultures, they are more likely to be perceived as competent. To be perceived as culturally knowledgeable, one should at least have some comprehension of the other person's dominant cultural values and beliefs. Additionally, one should know whether the person is from an individualistic or collectivistic, high or low context, large or small power distance and high or low uncertainty avoidant culture. In the model of intercultural competence, verbal and non-verbal scripts are also a part of the knowledge component. It is argued that verbal and non-verbal scripts (or plans) guide communication action. Scripts are written plans or

drafts for communication that provide people with possible expectations for future dialogue (Neuliep, 2009:394).

According to Berger and Jordan (1992:130), when anticipating interaction with others, communicators establish goals. They search their long-term memory for instances when they have tried to accomplish similar goals and they access a script or plan that were successful in achieving these goals in the past. The more plans one has, the better equipped one is to enact them. The extents to which individuals process information about others are handled in a simple and rigid manner. Furthermore, people with simplistic and rigid cognitive systems tend to engage in gross stereotyping which influences intercultural conflict (Kim, 1990:396). Moreover, such individuals may have very narrowly defined and inflexible categories. Narrow categorisers tend to make more negative and more confident judgements about other people, particularly those from other cultures. This however, brings us to ethnocentrism whereby it is perceived that one's own culture is superior and the centre of everything and judges other cultures as less important. Ethnocentric people tend to create and reinforce negative attitudes and behaviours towards out-groups (Berger and Jordan, 1992:130).

- **The affective component**

The affective component of intercultural communication is the degree to which one approaches or avoids intercultural communication, that is, one's level of motivation to interact with others from different cultures. A crucial feature would be intercultural communication apprehension (ICA). Intercultural communication apprehension is defined by Neuliep (2009:396) as the fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated interaction with persons from different cultures. Persons high in ICA tend to avoid interacting with others from different cultures. Because they are seen as strangers, people from different cultures may seem unusual and novel. This difference can create tension and anxiety, which, in turn, can lead to avoidance. On the other hand, some people may be positively predisposed to initiate intercultural interactions even when they are completely free to choose whether or not to communicate. This predisposition is called intercultural willingness to communicate (Neuliep, 2009:396).

Additionally, one's ability to deal with stress also affects one's willingness to communicate. As a result to intercultural communication uncertainty, anxiety levels are bound to increase which in turn leads to tension. Some people handle stress well, whereas others do not. To be an effective intercultural communicator, one needs to tolerate ambiguity to a certain degree. The more that one is able to manage stress and endure ambivalence, the more likely one is to initiate intercultural communication and to be an effective and competent intercultural communicator. The knowledge



component and the affective component of intercultural competence are interdependent in that the more knowledge one has, the more likely one is to approach situations involving intercultural communication. The increase in knowledge generally leads to an increase in motivation. Likewise, the more motivation one has, the more likely one is to pursue interaction with people from different cultures, thereby learning more about them and their culture and increasing one's knowledge. Therefore, in order to cultivate ICC we should foster attitudes that motivate us, discover knowledge that informs us, and develop skills that enable us (Bennett, 2009: 127).

- **The psychomotor component**

The psychomotor component of intercultural competence is the actual enactment of the knowledge and affective components. The elements of the psychomotor component are (a) verbal and non-verbal performance and (b) role enactment. Verbal recital is how people use language. A person may know a great deal about the language of the host culture but not be able to engage in a conversation. Knowing and being able to use a second language certainly increases one's perceived competence when interacting interculturally. Language scripts and plans that reduce uncertainty are of particular importance. The psychomotor function is where one puts the scripts and plans into action. If one does not speak the language of the host culture, then at the very least one should know some of the basic greetings, requests and routines used frequently in that language (Neuliep, 2009:396).

Non-verbal performance is also an important part of the psychomotor component. At this stage the individual needs to be familiar with the level of kinesics, paralinguistic, haptic, olfactory and proxemic symbols of the other culture. As with verbal knowledge and performance, one may have knowledge of a particular culture's non-verbal mannerisms but may not be able to execute them. Hence, before travelling to a foreign country, it might be wise to polish and refine your repertoire of non-verbal skills (Neuliep, 2009:397).

- **Situational features**

The fourth component of intercultural competence is the actual situation in which intercultural communication occurs, whereas, a person is perceived to be competent in one situation and not in the other. Seeming competent depends on the situational structures that may affect intercultural competence which include, but are not limited to, the environment, prior communication, and change in status and difference in third-party interventions. Some situations may have higher information loads than others, which may affect your motivation and ability to enact appropriate verbal and non-verbal

behaviours. Highly loaded situations may increase anxiety and reduce your motivation to approach another (Neuliep, 2009:397).

Furthermore, one should have some knowledge of the host culture's perception of time and space when being in contact with them. Due to the dynamic nature of competence, any previous contact you may have had with a person from another culture may enhance your perception of competence. Competence and trust take time to establish and build and your competence will grow as you interact more with people of your host culture. Conversations with persons from other cultures provide a particularly rich source of data. The more contact an individual can have with these people, the more likely they are to learn about them (knowledge) and feel comfortable (affective) interacting with them, thus enabling you to master your verbal and non-verbal skills (psychomotor) (Neuliep, 2009:397). Effective communication is related to one's ability to minimise misunderstandings with members of other cultures based on different cultural settings, language usage and level of understanding of different cultures to the extent that misunderstandings arise due to uncertainty. This uncertainty subsequently evokes anxiety within us, which in turn, creates a drive to reduce our uncertainty and increase our mindfulness (Langer, 1989).

Although you may have sufficient knowledge about another culture and be motivated to interact, status differences may require you to take on multiple modes of behaviour. Certain verbal and non-verbal strategies may be more or less appropriate depending on whether you are interacting with someone of lower, equal or higher status. Because your status may be high in one situation and low in another, you should be mindful in understanding how the communication will vary accordingly. The addition to a third-party may noticeably change the dynamics of the situation and hence your competence develops through stages, in much the same way as does cognition or ethicality. With descriptions of the stages of development, interculturalists who are responsible for facilitating cross-cultural encounters are able to diagnose people's levels of development and thus design their interventions more effectively (Neuliep, 2009:397). The most effective way to develop other-knowledge is by direct and thoughtful encounters with other cultures. Developing self- and other-knowledge is an on-going process that will continue to adapt and grow as we encounter new experiences (Deardoff, 2009:69).

### **2.7.2 Cultivating intercultural communication competence**

Competent intercultural communicators should adopt the correct attitudes towards other cultures, increase their motivational levels and acquire accurate information about other culture's values and practices in order to overcome cultural barriers and

develop specific skills needed to communicate successfully across cultures (Verderber & Verderber, 2008:116).

- **Adopting the correct attitudes**

According to Neuliep (2006:399) an individual's correct attitude when communicating across cultures is being motivated and flexible when interacting with people from different cultures. Verderber and Verderber (2008:116) add that individuals need to discover new behaviours, rather than expecting the other person to adapt to their behaviours. When people allow ambiguity, are open-minded and act genuinely and considerately towards the well-being of others, it enables them to effectively communicate across cultures.

- **Increase motivation**

Alberts *et al.* (2010:188) emphasise that motivation is the most important component in effective intercultural communication. No other skill will be applicable if lack of motivation to be an effective communicator is apparent. Therefore, an honest desire to improve one's intercultural communication skills is required as the initial step towards effective communication. However, motivation makes intercultural communication a voluntary, rewarding and lifelong learning process (Martin & Nakayama, 2010:465).

- **Acquire knowledge about other cultures**

Reducing the impact of intercultural communication challenges requires that a person increases its knowledge by actively pursuing information about how other groups or cultures are likely to communicate. Therefore, people engaging in intercultural communication are urged to absorb facts about other cultures and the way they operate (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:102-103).

- **Tolerance for uncertainty**

Tolerance for uncertainty refers to an individual's attitude and level of comfort in certain situations. Some people perform better in uncertain situations than others and intercultural encounters often create uncertainty. Whether communicating with someone of a different gender, race or nationality, people often wonder what they should or should not do or say. Situations of uncertainty usually become more clear as they progress but the anxiety that an individual with low tolerance for uncertainty feels may lead them to leave the situation or otherwise communicate in a less competent manner (Martin & Nakayama, 2010:465).

- **Develop culture-specific skills**

To be skilled is to be capable of implementing what one knows and wants to achieve. The skills to be flexible, other-orientated and capable of adjusting one's communication to others are critical for effective intercultural competence (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:109). Verderber and Verderber (2008:120) identify and discuss three specific skills that are required for efficient intercultural communication, namely listening, empathy and flexibility.

- **Practise listening**

To listen carefully and signify that one is listening, can improve one's communication with people from other cultures.

- **Practise intercultural empathy**

Intercultural empathy refers to when a person imaginatively places themselves in the other person's cultural environment, thereby attempting to understand what the other person is experiencing.

- **Develop flexibility**

Flexibility refers to the ability to adjust one's communication to fit the other person and the communication setting. Being flexible allows one to use a variety of communication skills during an interaction and adapt and adjust one's behaviour within and cross-cultural situations. Flexibility means assessing a situation, making good judgments about how to communicate in that situation and then adapting one's communication were needed (Verderber & Verderber, 2008:120).

## **2.8 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION SENSITIVITY**

It is crucial for individuals to develop intercultural communication competence due to the fact that almost everyone deals with intercultural situations every day and everywhere. According to Chen and Starosta (2000), intercultural communication competence has two prerequisites: intercultural communication awareness and intercultural communication sensitivity. Although intercultural communication sensitivity may be related to many cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of one's interactions with others, it focuses primarily on the individuals affective abilities, such as managing and regulating emotions. Cultural awareness provides the foundation for intercultural communication sensitivity, which in turn, leads to intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta, 2000).

### **2.8.1 Cultural adaptation**

In many ways, the foundation of intercultural communication is in how people adapt to other cultures. Yet the intercultural concept of adaptation is frequently misunderstood. To clarify the idea, it is useful to distinguish adaptation from assimilation. Assimilation is the process of resocialisation that seeks to replace one's original worldview with that of the host culture. Assimilation is substitutive. Adaptation, on the other hand, is the process whereby one's worldview is expanded to include behaviour and values appropriate to the host culture. Furthermore, the assumed end result of assimilation is becoming a bicultural or multicultural person. Such a person has new aspects, but not at the cost of his or her original socialisation. The identity issues around adaptation are quite complex and understanding them is one of the new frontiers of intercultural communication (Bennett, 1998:24).

According to Bennett (1998:25), cultural adaptation is not an on/off phenomenon. Like many other human abilities, it appears that cultural adaptation develops through stages, in much the same way as ethicality or cognition does (Piaget, 1954:25). With the descriptions of the stages of development, interculturalists who are responsible for facilitating cross-cultural encounters are able to diagnose employees' levels of development and thus design their interventions more effectively (Bennett, 1998:25).

## **2.9 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN ORGANISATIONS**

One of the greatest challenges experienced by the corporate world is the ability to manage and work with people from different cultures. Due to the dramatic cultural transformation in today's global market place, the relevance of intercultural communication competence is crucial. Moreover, it is of utmost importance that managers have power over the skill to interact with people who are different from themselves (Neuliep, 2000:309).

### **2.9.1 Organisational culture**

According to Dodd (1991:150), organisational culture is an important metaphor to describe the norms, feelings and shared interaction patterns of groups. Organisational culture refers to the communication climate rooted in a common set of norms and interpretive schemes about phenomena that occur as people work towards a predetermined goal. It includes how a group think about, interprets and organises its actions. However, organisational culture also includes the organisation's structures, which are its customs and rules. This structure and the mindset of organisational members profoundly influence the way people interact among themselves and how they communicate with people from other organisational cultures. An organisation that emphasises task and performance above people factors will likely experience some frustration in communicating with an organisation that emphasises personal relations,

even at the expense of time and productivity. Furthermore, it can be detected that organisations themselves are cultures and therefore stand as symbols of communication (Dodd, 1991:150).

According to Boddy (2005:326), organisation culture is the collection of relatively uniform and enduring values, beliefs, customs and practises that are uniquely shared by organisations members and which are transmitted from one generation of employees to the next, whilst Robbins and Coulter (2007:60) describe organisational culture as the shared values, principles, traditions and ways of doing things that influence the way organisational members act. In most organisations, these important shared values and practices have evolved over time to determine to a large degree what employees perceive about their organisational experiences and how they behave in the organisation. The organisational culture influences what employees can do and how they view, define, analyse and resolve problems and issues by means of communication.

In addition, as people work together they develop a distinctive culture, reflecting what they perceive to be the correct way to approach and deal with organisational problems. Culture develops as group members share enough experiences to form a view of what works and what does not. This then shapes how members expect each other to behave and these common assumptions and beliefs can exert a profound influence on how a group performs (Schein, 1985 cited by Boddy, 2005:326).

### **2.9.2 Organisational communication**

The study of the role of organisational communication is part of communication studies. The definition of effective organisational communication is that this is open dialogue between the management and employees in a company or department that results in improved engagement and productivity of the personnel (Anon, 2010).

The organisational communication study originates from the business information, business communication and early mass communication studies published from the 1930s to the end of the 1950s. There are two main views on organisational communication, either that it is an aspect of the organisation or an underlying basis of the organisation itself. In the context of the globalisation effective communication is considered to be a major factor with significant impact on the success of the organisation or department, thus the second view is accepted as the more appropriate (Anon, 2010).

The organisational communication study has three theoretical perspectives: the technical, the contextual and negotiated. The technical view shows the communication

as a mechanistic system. It focuses on the ways that a message can be delivered with minimum distortions and errors. The contextual approach to communication focuses not just on content but on the broader context. It pays attention to non-verbal cues as well as verbal content. It also looks at context between the sender and receiver within the larger social, organisational or cultural context. It sees words as symbols interpreted in context. Discourse analysis is an extension of the contextual perspective. Rather than looking at a particular interpersonal exchange or sequences of exchanges, this analysis looks at an overall body of communication, including formal and informal, oral and written communication. The negotiated view of communication and meaning examines how the communication context itself is negotiated. Communication can be divided into several layers: interpersonal, group, organisational, inter-organisational and mass communication (Anon, 2010).

Although interpersonal and group level communications rank lower than organisational communication, they are very important for organisations. As organisations become more communication-based, improvement of the interpersonal communication skills of all employees is attracting greater attention. Depending on its audience, organisational communication can be internally or externally oriented. As organisations increase the range and centrality of their actions with clients, the communication competencies and resources of the organisation become more important. Furthermore, organisational communication has several key functions: gaining compliance, leading, motivating and influencing, making sense of issues, solving problems and making decisions, managing conflict, negotiating and bargaining (Anon, 2010).

In addition, new communication technologies and possibilities, combined with new challenges confronting organisations, are encouraging a whole new approach to organisational communication that challenges the very nature of organisations themselves. Consequently new communication technologies can enable almost every aspect of organisational management and effectiveness, including change management, knowledge management, participative management, innovation and organisational partnerships and alliances (Anon, 2010).

### **2.9.3 Intercultural communication within the working environment**

As previously mentioned, the ability to manage and co-ordinate people from different cultures represents one of the greatest challenges for organisations. Organisations from virtually every culture have entered into the global market. Therefore, in order for managers to survive and function effectively, they will need a thorough understanding of the subtleties and complexities of managing others in a multicultural and globalised working environment (Neuliep, 2009:376).

Neuliep (2009:376) states: "Managing other people is the responsibility of people, who like everybody, have been cultivated and mixed into a cultural set of values and beliefs that guides their thinking, emotions and behaviours." Similar to communication, management is culture-bound. Moreover, managerial perceptions regarding factors that lead to organisational success vary across cultures.

## **2.10 BENEFITS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Even though there are a great deal of challenges existing in an increasingly diverse world, the benefits are even greater. These benefits include communicating and establishing relationships with people to increase international, national and local commerce, promote healthier communities, reduce conflict and enhance personal growth through increased tolerance (Schlesinger, 2005:4).

A **healthier community** is a condition of togetherness in which people have lowered their defences and learn to accept and celebrate differences. These communities are made up of individuals working collectively for the benefit of everyone, not just their own group. Regardless of cultural orientation, effective intercultural communication allows people to work together in order to achieve goals that may benefit all cultures, not just their own culture. Therefore, the ability to interact and communicate with persons from different cultures and across the board, has immense economic benefits (Schlesinger, 2005:5).

Schlesinger (2005:5) avers that conflict is inevitable; it will always exist as conflict stems from people's inability to see another person's point of view, especially if that person is from a different culture. However, conflict can be reduced and managed through co-operative intercultural communication. Hence, as one communicates with people from different cultures one learns more about them and their way of life, including their values, history and habits and the substance of their personality.

As the relationship develops you start to understand them better, perhaps even empathising with them. One of the things you will eventually learn is that although cultures are different, people have much in common. All people have the same basic desires and needs, even though everyone has different ways of achieving them. In this way one develops personal growth through increased tolerance (Schlesinger, 2005:6).

## **2.11 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

South Africa is known as the rainbow nation, merely because of its mixture of inhabitants. South Africa's population is one of the most complex and diverse in the world as it is home to both South Africans and various people from around the world known as foreigners. In South Africa, people exist amongst diverse groups which are culturally distinctive and which allows



people to communicate in different ways. This makes people in South Africa to be multicultural. South Africa endorses eleven official languages of which any particular language of choice can be used as a means to communicate effectively. The 11 official languages are; English, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Sepedi, Xhosa, Venda, Tswana, Southern Sotho, Zulu, Swazi and Tsonga (GCIS, 2007:1-2).

South African traditions are derived from different cultures within the country. The general division of the South African population can be traced back to the old apartheid system which divided the population into racial groups, namely, white, black, coloured and Asian. However, in April 1994, The African National Congress (ANC) emerged as the new state of power that brought about change. A programme to promote transformation in the country was established by the ANC government which ensured the immediate pursuit of democratisation and socio-economic change, plus reconciliation and construction of consensus as initiated on the commitment to improve the lives of all South Africans. This required the integration of South Africa into a rapidly changing global environment. In search of these objectives, government consistently focused during the first decade of freedom on seeking the unity of a previously divided society in working together to overcome the legacy of a history of division, exclusion and neglect (GCIS, 2007:41-44).

Changing democratic ideals into practice required initiating; a radical renovation of mechanisms used by government at every level, working towards service delivery, openness and transparency and a culture of human rights. A more integrated approach for planning and implementing is needed to ensure that the many different aspects of transformation and socio-economic improvement come together for maximum impact. GCISA (2007:42) notes: "The significant milestone in the democratisation of South Africa was the exemplary Constitution-making process, which in 1996 delivered a document that has induced worldwide admiration." The structure of South African culture is continually changing, creating not only new challenges, but also greater stability and peace and laying the foundation for a society in which the individual and collective human prospective of the nation can come to fulfilment (GCIS, 2007:41-44).

Due to the preceding, South Africa is a multicultural society owing to the diverse cultures people belong to. Du Toit (2004:3) explains that multiculturalism is not only the expression of cultural diversity, it also concerns communication. He adds that meaningful communication is required in order for multiculturalism to succeed and peaceful coexistence to be stimulated. Similarly, Meier (2007:660) agrees that people communicate within and between people from different cultures tending to arise from their use of language to communicate with others.

According to Samovar *et al.* (2006:16) education regarding multiculturalism is essential to achieve greater social peace in a society and world currently affected by cultural

incompetence which may possibly lead to intercultural conflict. Being culturally diverse does not mean that people must reject their ethnic identities but rather compromise between cultural adaptation and independence to eliminate the ideology of cultural segregation of the past. Multiculturalism further leads to an increased perception of equality amongst all humans regardless of cultural status (Samovar *et al.*, 2006:16).

In multicultural countries such as South Africa it is imperative that the education system encourages learners to become interculturally competent at school level so that once they reach tertiary level and enter the job market, they will already be familiar with intercultural settings. Hence, the process of becoming interculturally competent is a personal transformation of growth beyond one's original cultural condition. This does not mean that a competent person's identity is culture-free or cultureless, instead it is not strictly bound by membership to any one particular culture (Lindsay & Dempsey, 1983:267). Furthermore, for workers to become interculturally competent in the working environment, it is essential that all employees become aware of their own cultural background and how their own beliefs and values influence their interaction with co-workers of different cultural back grounds (Lustig & Koester, 2006).

According to Teng (2005), communicating across cultures is not only a need, but a requirement for success in today's pluralistic society. Intercultural studies have gained popularity in a country such as South Africa. This popularity can be credited to the need for resolution and peaceful living of different racial and cultural groups, whereby the importance of multiculturalism and multilingualism in South Africa is acknowledged. The post-apartheid era in South Africa requests that all racial and cultural groups live in harmony and work together to build a country that is economically, politically and socially stable. Increasing intercultural competence improves; self-reflection, collecting information about your own and other cultures, appreciating cultural similarities, accepting cultural differences and acknowledging the equality and worth of all cultures (Klein & Chen, 2001). The ability to interpret cultural styles of communication is demonstrated among other things such as language, signs, gestures, body language and customs which differ across cultures (Bennett, 2003:32).

Fielding (1996) reports on fundamental patterns of cultural differences and concludes that the following are barriers to effective intercultural communication in a multiculturalism country such as South Africa: "different world views, different values and beliefs, prejudices, different languages, different ways of using and interpreting the non-verbal code, different ways of constructing messages, unequal power and the failure to allow for individual cultural differences within a group". These descriptions emphasise on the recurring causes of intercultural communication difficulties in a multicultural working environment. As people enter into multicultural interchange, they are often faced with these generalised differences.

These differences need to be identified and people need to realise how their culture may shape their own reactions. It is important that people attempt to see the world from others points of view and not just their own.

### **2.11.1 Legislative overview of culture, language and communication in South Africa.**

Chapter 1 (Founding Provisions), Section 6 (Languages) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is the basis for government language policy. It gives credence to 11 official languages: Afrikaans, English, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitshonga, Ndebele, Xhosa and Zulu (South Africa, 1996).

The most common language spoken by South Africans is Zulu (23 %), followed by Xhosa (16 %) and Afrikaans (14 %). English is the fourth most common home language in the country (9.6%), but is understood in most urban areas and is (mainly for political reasons) the dominant language in government and the media (Anon, 2011:58).

Afrikaans, a language derived from Dutch is the most widely spoken language in the western half of the country (Western and Northern Cape). It is spoken as the home language by approximately 61 % of Whites and 76 % of Coloured (multi-racial) people in the country. Afrikaans is also spoken widely across the centre and north of the country, as a second (or third or even fourth) language by Black South Africans living in farming areas (SSA, 2012).

Having said all of the above, it is important to note that the national government and provincial governments may use any particular official languages for the purposes of government, taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in the province concerned. The national government and each provincial government must use at least two official languages (South Africa, 1996).

Whilst the Constitution underpins policies which govern language in general and in the South African public sector in particular, culture and language goes hand in hand. The Bill of Rights in the Constitution (South Africa, 1996) encourages cultural, religious and linguistic communities and emphasises that everyone has the right to use the language and participate in the cultural life of their choice. No one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

The promotion of culture is further entrenched in the Culture Promotion Act (Act 35 of 1983). Its core aims are: to provide for the preservation, development, fostering and

extension of culture in the Republic of South Africa by planning, organising, co-ordinating and providing facilities for the utilisation of leisure and for non-formal education; for the fostering of educational and development and promotion of cultural relations with other countries and for the establishment of regional councils for cultural affairs.

## **2.12 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided sources of literature pertaining to intercultural communication in a globalised environment, as well as South Africa. It has been illustrated that intercultural communication is an important form of human interaction. From the moment people from different cultural backgrounds come into contact and communicate, intercultural communication takes place. Hence, this interaction could lead to a challenge whereby people with cultural differences interpret verbal and non-verbal signs differently. This in turn could lead to miscommunication and disagreements due to cultural variations.

Furthermore, the above literature review has shown that having an understanding of other people's cultures and communication styles can greatly improve the management of intercultural conflict, improve relationships and becoming more successful in an intercultural environment. Therefore, to communicate successfully people need a basic understanding of the cultural differences they may encounter and how they should conduct themselves.

The following chapter three will describe the research methodology that was used to gather the necessary data to establish the level of understanding of culture amongst employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) and to determine whether a lack of cultural knowledge contributes to miscommunication and ineffective intercultural communication.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter defines research methodology and provides detailed clarification on the differences between the two types of research approaches, as well as an explanation of the most suitable approach utilised for the study. This chapter introduces the applied research design and also elucidates the population, sample selection and data collection methods used. A sound foundation is laid for the analysis of data to attain results which are interpreted and presented in Chapter Four.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Mouton (2001:55), research design is a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct the research. Also, a research design is the plan according to how the researcher obtains participants (subjects) and collects information. In the research design it should be described what will be done with the participants, with the view of reaching conclusions about the research problem or questions (Welman and Kruger, 2001:46).

For the purpose of this study a non-probability sampling design in the form of a convenience sampling method was adopted and considered to be appropriate for this study. The rationale for using this sampling method was due to the respondents being easily accessible, their availability, as well as it being less time-consuming and inexpensive to gather the research information. Moreover, the nature of this study lends itself to quantitative research methodology in that it intended to establish, confirm and validate relationships and develop generalisations that contribute to theory. It further examined the facts or causes of a social phenomena as in this case, intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD.

#### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Mouton (2001:56), research methodology focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used; it also focuses on the point of departure in terms of the data collection and sampling methods. The term research refers to the process in which scientific methods are used to expand knowledge in a particular field of study. Research involves the application of various methods and techniques to create scientifically obtained knowledge by using objective methods and procedures. As in many other spheres

of human endeavours, research provides a key basis for developing knowledge (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009:75).

Additionally, different methods of research are utilised for different studies based on the aim, purpose and objectives of the study. For example, in physical sciences physicists, biologists, mathematicians, and chemists have long relied on research and used it as a way of helping them to define knowledge in their specific subject areas. The different methods of research are quantitative and qualitative research (Welman & Kruger, 2001:2). The following section will discuss the two research methodologies. In this way, the best approach for this particular study will be elucidated.

### **3.4 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Quantitative and qualitative data are the two leading approaches used in research. These two approaches to research data have not only been seen as essentially different types of data but also essentially different perspectives or approaches with regard to data and research methodology. Leedy & Ormrod (2001:101) states: "quantitative research answers questions regarding relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting, and controlling phenomena." This approach is also known as the traditional, experimental or positivist approach (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101). On the contrary, qualitative research is a means of searching for answers from participants regarding the complex nature of phenomena. The qualitative approach is also known as the interpretive point of view (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101).

Furthermore, Oakley cited by Crowther and Lancaster (2009:75) suggests that qualitative and quantitative research and data are essentially different paradigms. He compares and differentiates between the two paradigms as follows:

- Quantitative seeks the facts or causes of social phenomena, whereas qualitative paradigms are concerned with understanding behaviour from an actor's own frame of reference.
- Qualitative is the means of naturalistic and uncontrolled observation whereas quantitative is a more obtrusive and controlled means of measurement.
- Quantitative is removed from the data, being the outsider perspective, while qualitative is close to the data, being the insider perspective.
- Qualitative is process-orientated while quantitative is outcome-orientated.
- Quantitative assumes a stable reality and is particularistic, whereas qualitative assumes a dynamic reality and is holistic.

Additionally, there is a plethora of definitions for the two approaches. For example, Crowther and Lancaster (2009:75) note that quantitative data is often thought of as being more objective and scientific than its qualitative counterpart and is therefore associated with the more traditional scientific approach to research, whereas Sanchez (2006:08) asserts that qualitative research is a much more subjective form of research whereby the researcher introduces their own bias to help form a more complete picture; by doing this it also explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences through methods such as interviews or focus groups while attempting to get an in-depth opinion from participants. The following section will focus on the research methodology applied for this study.

### **3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY APPLIED**

The research methodology of this study aimed to provide a set of working methods to understand and become acquainted with the process of intercultural communication and also to establish what the causes and effects of poor intercultural communication are amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

This study adopted the quantitative research method as the emphasis is on collecting and analysing data in the form of numbers by collecting scores that measured distinct attributes of the employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO). The quantitative data gathered and represented in the form of numbers and statistics, made it easier for the researcher to separate the data so that they can be counted and modelled statistically (McGuigan & Harris, 2010:12).

Consequently, the quantitative approach was selected as it allowed questions to be answered regarding intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling the phenomena being intercultural communication. It allowed the researcher to objectively measure the variable of interest (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:102). The following section introduces the research participant and sampling method employed for this study.

### **3.6 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING METHOD**

#### **3.6.1 Research participants**

Research participants, also known as human subjects or study participants, are people who participate in human subject research. These research participants are usually targeted by the researcher to be participants of a particular study (Coleman, 2005).

For the purpose of this study, 100 employees of the Regional Office of the DOJCD WC were selected as the research participants (See page 5 chapter 1). These 100 individuals are employed across four directorates namely: Human Resource

Directorate (25 employees); Finance Directorate (23 employees); Legal Service Directorate (22 employees) and Court Operations Directorate (30 employees).

### **3.6.2 Sampling**

The researcher decided that the most suitable sampling method for this study was that of a non-probability sampling approach, in particular convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was utilised because the research participants were easily and conveniently available and it was the most inexpensive means of gathering a quick approximation of the truth (Maree, 2007:177).

The following section of this chapter explains the data collection method used for this study.

## **3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

To carry out a research study it is crucial to select a data collecting method appropriate to the research problem, taking into account the population in question. Factors such as the purpose of the study, the researcher's skills and expertise, time constraints and costs were taken into consideration when deciding on the most suitable technique for this study. Inaccurate data collection can impact the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009:75). Quantitative researchers identify one or more variables that they intend to investigate and then collect data specifically related to those variables. Data is collected from a population, or from one or more samples that represent the population, in a form that is easily converted to numerical indices (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101).

According to Mouton (2002:67), data collection is when the measuring instrument is applied to the sample selected for the study in order to analyse the visual, audio and physical interpretation and perceptions, responses of people, actions and events of the phenomenon. Research aims to achieve truthful representation of the social world, whereby valid measuring instruments such as scales, questionnaires and observation schedules are utilised to ensure validity and reliability (Mouton, 2002:67).

There are various ways of gathering information. The most suitable method of data collection for this study was the use of a questionnaire. Questionnaires are documents that contain questions and items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. Questionnaires are used primarily in survey research but also in experiments, field research, and other modes of observation (Babbie, 2007:246). Therefore, as a means of data collection, a questionnaire was adopted to achieve the objectives of this study. The following section explains questionnaires and the motivation for using this form of data collection.



### **3.7.1 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are among the most widely used and valuable means of data collection. The range and types of questionnaires that can be used (their design, uses and implementation) vary enormously. Collecting data through questioning involves a wide range of possible approaches and techniques, some of them technically complex and all of them encompassing a range of high level skills and knowledge (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009: 51).

Further reasons for using a questionnaire was:

- A questionnaire was a practical option;
- Large amounts of information was to be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost-effective way;
- The results of the questionnaire would be quickly and easily quantified by either the researcher with the use of a software package;
- The questionnaire would be analysed in a more scientific and objective manner compared to other forms of data collection tools; and
- Once the data has been quantified, it may be used to compare and contrast other research studies and measure change (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1981).

### **3.7.2 Questionnaire design**

According to Maree (2007:158), designing a questionnaire is an extremely important part of the research process since this is where the data is generated. Different types of surveys require different types of questionnaires. When the questionnaire is designed, the researcher has to keep in mind what type of data will be generated by the questions and the statistical techniques that will be used to analyse it. The designing of a questionnaire requires the researcher to give attention to the following:

- Appearance of questionnaire
- Instructions
- Wording of questions
- Response categories
- Completion time of questionnaire
- Question sequence
- Types of questions

The above aspects of a questionnaire create an opportunity for the researcher to select different opinions which best suit the particular survey and these aspects were considered when the questionnaire was formulated. While carefully considered and

applied, the questionnaire construction was aimed at being a natural, ready-to-use instrument to elicit information and was ordered in such a way as not to confuse the respondent. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, a self-administered questionnaire was designed by the researcher to best obtain information so that the objectives of the study could be met (Maree, 2007:158).

Based on this study, the first part of the questionnaire provided a short introduction to the respondents, explaining the survey and giving instructions on how to complete the questions. Thereafter, a few easy, non-threatening questions such as biographical information of race, gender, age and religion was posed in the first section with the intention of putting the respondents at ease. These were followed in the second section by closed-ended questions relevant to the topic, providing a set of responses from which the respondents had to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with its content on a five-point Likert scale being strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree and strongly disagree. In some instances a statement was represented in a positive attitude, whereas in other instances it was reflected in a negative attitude.

A set of 23 closed-ended questions were designed to obtain an overview of the perceptions employees have pertaining to intercultural communication in the workplace. According to Maree (2007: 158), data obtained from closed-ended questions makes the data easier to analyse, which also makes coding and statistical analysis easy.

Respondents were asked questions that specifically related to working across cultures, intercultural communication problems, intercultural communication conflict, intercultural communication competence, the communication policy of the DOJ&CD and promoting intercultural communication in the workplace. These questions were formulated based on the objectives of the study.

### **3.7.3 Questionnaire distribution**

Prior to conducting this study permission was obtained from the Regional Head of the DOJ&CD Western Cape to have access to departmental information essential for the research. To induce interest in the study, all four Directors of the different Directorates were initially informed via email regarding the purpose and objectives of the study and provided details of when and where the study was to be conducted. Confidentiality, anonymity and the voluntary nature of the study were addressed and assurance was given that the information acquired would be used only for research purposes.

Whilst 100 individuals are employed within the four directorates as explained in earlier text, only 85 employees were available to participate in the study on the day the

questionnaire was disseminated. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, participants were requested to return the completed questionnaire to the researcher within one week after its dissemination, in a sealed envelope. A contact person employed within each Directorate was identified to assist with the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. Of the 85 questionnaires distributed, 70 were returned, representing a response rate of 82%. This according to CPU's in-house statistician proved adequate for this study and sufficient to draw meaningful inferences from the data and results generated.

#### **3.7.4 Limitations of design**

The researcher used a questionnaire to assess the participants' perception of intercultural communication. The questionnaire did not allow the researcher to obtain the original opinion of the respondents as the questions were closed-ended, offering limited choice answers. Further limitations of the design were apparent in that:

- There was no guarantee how truthful the respondents were;
- There was no way of determining how much thought a respondent had put in to answer a particular question; and
- Respondents may have interpreted each question differently and answered according to their own understanding.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES FOR ANALYSING QUANTITATIVE DATA**

Welman and Kruger (2001:194) state that: "To analyse data the researcher should choose an appropriate statistical procedure to analyse the data that will be obtained." There are various techniques in which data can be analysed for both quantitative and qualitative designs. For qualitative data, content analysis would have been considered whereas for quantitative data analysis, statistical techniques and coding were used.

According to Babbie (2007:405), quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. Furthermore, in terms of quantitative analysis and for the purpose of this study, data has been collected whereby sense was made of it so that it could be coded by means of identifying the variable that needs to be analysed statistically (Welman & Kruger, 2001:200).

A computerised statistical software programme known as SPSS 2012 version 21.0 was used to analyse the data acquired from the questionnaires. The programme used is a Statistical Package for Social Sciences, designed for the analysis of quantitative research data. SPSS offered the researcher a widespread of options to analyse data. Moreover, SPSS enabled the data to be presented in a logical format and reduced time spent on calculating scores

and limited human error (Bailey, 2007:12). Furthermore, SPSS provided the researcher with an opportunity to learn different statistical techniques for future use.

### **3.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter comprehensively detailed the research design, the composition of the sample and the procedure used to collect the data. It further addressed issues regarding confidentiality, the description of the measuring tool utilised and the statistical techniques employed to analyse the data.

The following chapter four analyses the data gathered from the questionnaires, supported by tables, graphs, and discusses findings and results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the data obtained from structured questionnaires. Data is shown in tabular form to reflect the frequency and the cumulative percentage. Data is also presented in graphs for visual ease of interpretation.

To analyse the collected data, the researcher used an appropriate statistical procedure. The views of the respondents were determined from a range of statements pertaining to intercultural communication using a Likert scale format. The researcher used quantitative data analysis whereby statistical techniques and coding were used.

#### **4.2 RESEARCH DATA PROCESSING**

The data collected were analysed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 2012 version 21.0 (SPSS). The rationale for using SPSS is that it is designed for the analysis of quantitative data. It further enabled the data to be presented in a logical format and reduced time spent on having to calculate scores and eliminated human error.

The frequency of responses is measured and presented in tabular and graphic form, followed by an interpretation of findings. The response rate was 70 from the 85 questionnaires distributed (82%) which was considered good for the study.

#### **4.3 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

##### **4.3.1 Biographical information**

An overview of the available demographics of the study group is summarised. This data was required to obtain the respondents composition in terms of gender, age, race, religion, language, length of service with the DOJ&CD (WC RO), directorate, job classification and qualification level.

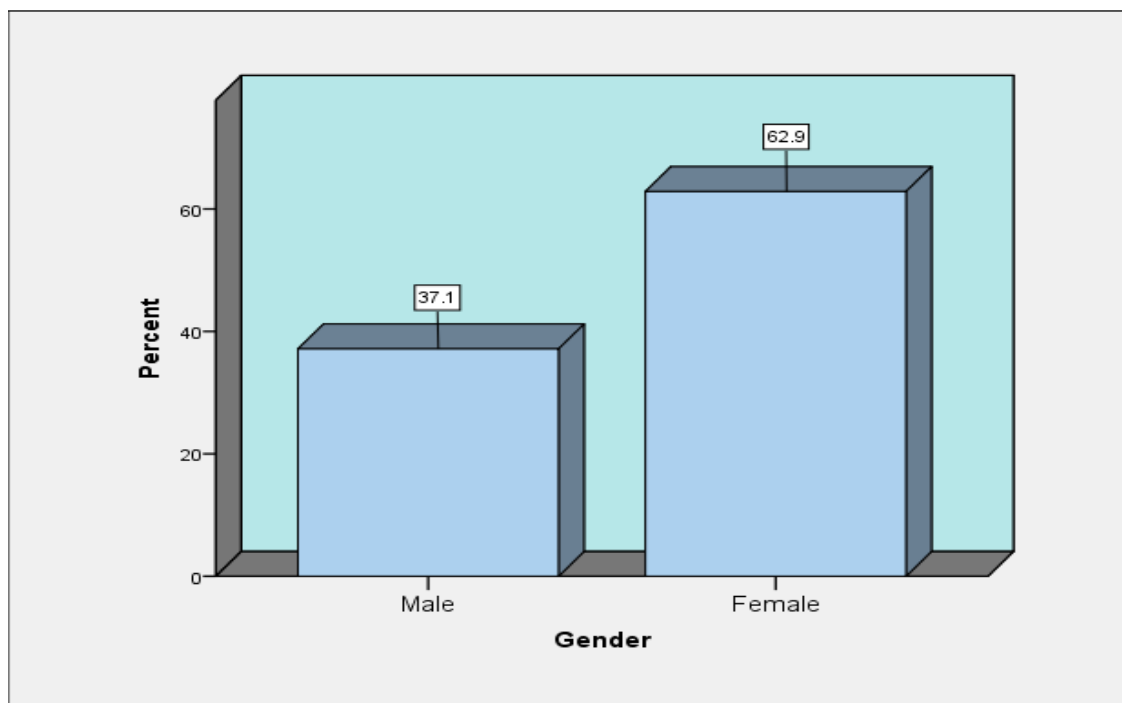
##### **QUESTION 1: RESPONDENTS' GENDER**

##### ***Response***

Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 show that the majority of respondents are female, representing 62.9% of the respondents, while the balance of 37.1% consists of male respondents.

**Table 4.1: Respondents' gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	26	37.1	37.1	37.1
	Female	44	62.9	62.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.1: Respondents' gender**

***Interpretation***

The dominant gender type in this sample is female, followed by the less dominant gender type of male. The relevance of gender to the study is that men and women respond differently as they possess different levels of attitudes and behaviour.

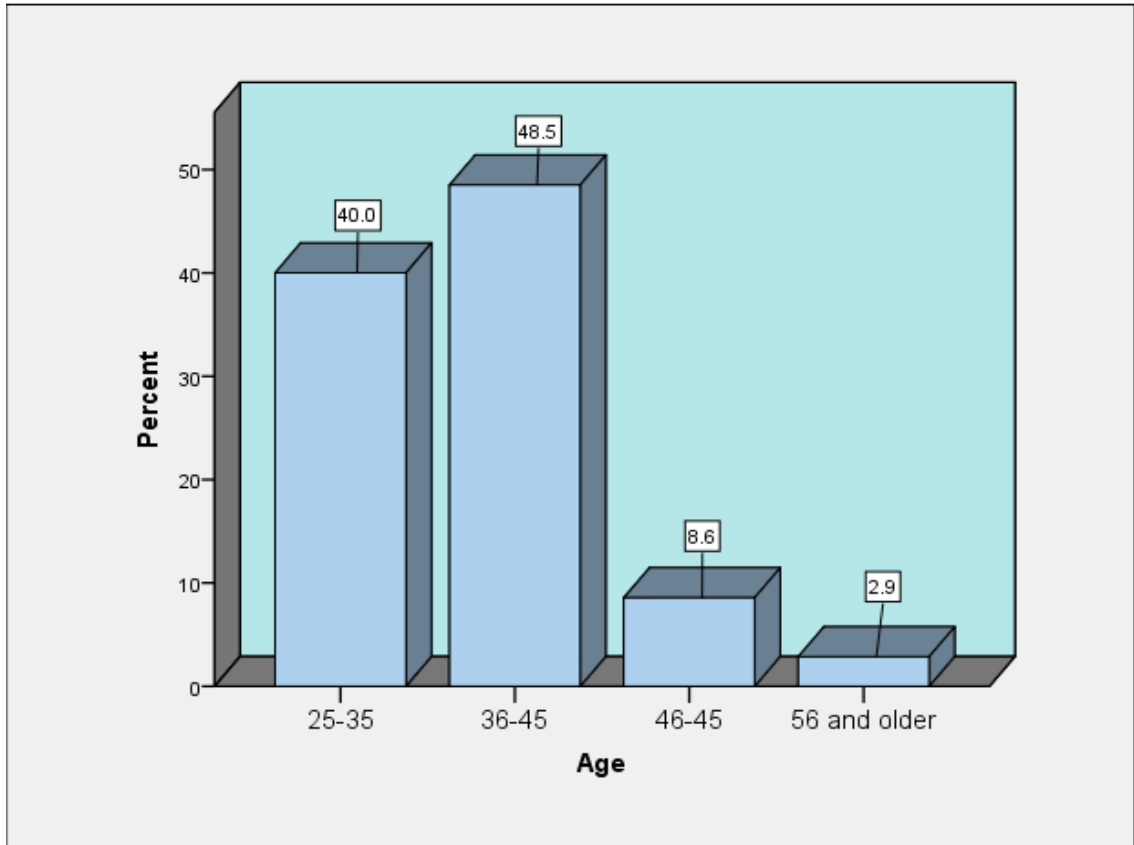
**QUESTION 2: RESPONDENTS' AGE**

***Response***

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 show that 40% of the respondents fall within the age group of 25 to 35 years, while 48% of the respondents are within the age group of 36 to 45 years and 8.6% of the respondents are in the age group 46 to 55 years. Respondents of 56 years and older constitute 2.9% of the respondents.

**Table 4.2: Respondents' age**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	25-35	28	40.0	40.0	40.0
	36-45	34	48.5	48.5	88.5
	46-55	6	8.6	8.6	97.1
	56 and older	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.2: Respondents' age**

***Interpretation***

48.5% of the respondents in this study are between the ages of 36 and 45 years, being at the peak of their careers. The minority of respondents are in the age group 56 years and older, being near retirement age. The relevance of age to the study is to determine how people of different age groups respond to different situations based on their level of knowledge and experience of the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

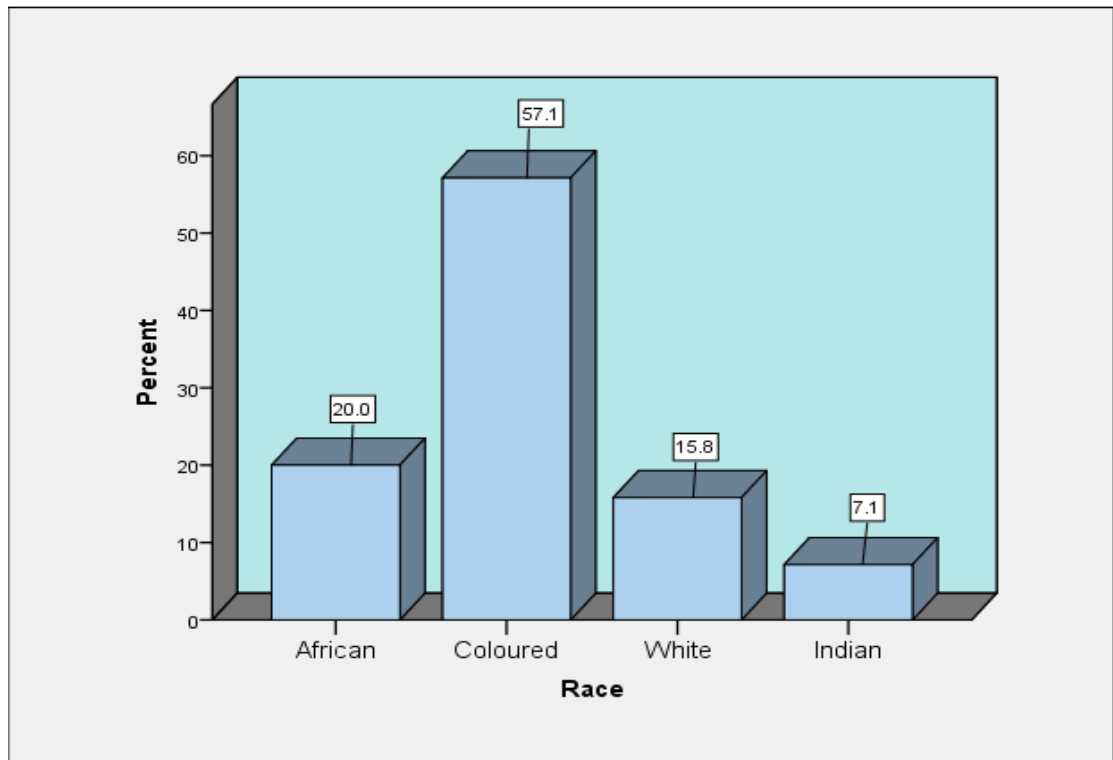
**QUESTION 3: RESPONDENTS' RACE**

***Response***

As illustrated in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3, the racial composition of respondents is 57.1% Coloureds, 20% Africans, 15.7% Whites, followed by the minority racial group being Indians which constitute 5% of the respondents.

**Table 4.3: Respondents' race**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African	14	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Coloured	40	57.1	57.1	77.1
	White	11	15.8	15.8	92.9
	Indian	5	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.3: Respondents' race**

### ***Interpretation***

The majority of respondents fall within the Coloured racial group, followed by the African, White and Indian racial groups. This is indicative of the demographics of the Western Cape Province, where the majority of workers employed in the public sector are Coloured people. Coloured people in turn may not necessarily have one distinct uniform culture due to various interracial and intercultural intersections. Regardless of racial background, all employees are bound to work together towards a common organisational goal. They should at least have some knowledge of the background of other racial groups with whom they work to facilitate harmonious working relationships. The relevance of race to the study is based on the various customs and traditions people follow which impacts on how they respond and communicate in different situations. The biologically-based definition establishes race as something fixed, whereas, the sociohistorically-based definition sees race as unstable and socially determined through constant debate. People may be of the same race but are diverse in culture (Jandt, 2007:4).

### **QUESTION 4: RESPONDENTS' RELIGION**

#### ***Response***

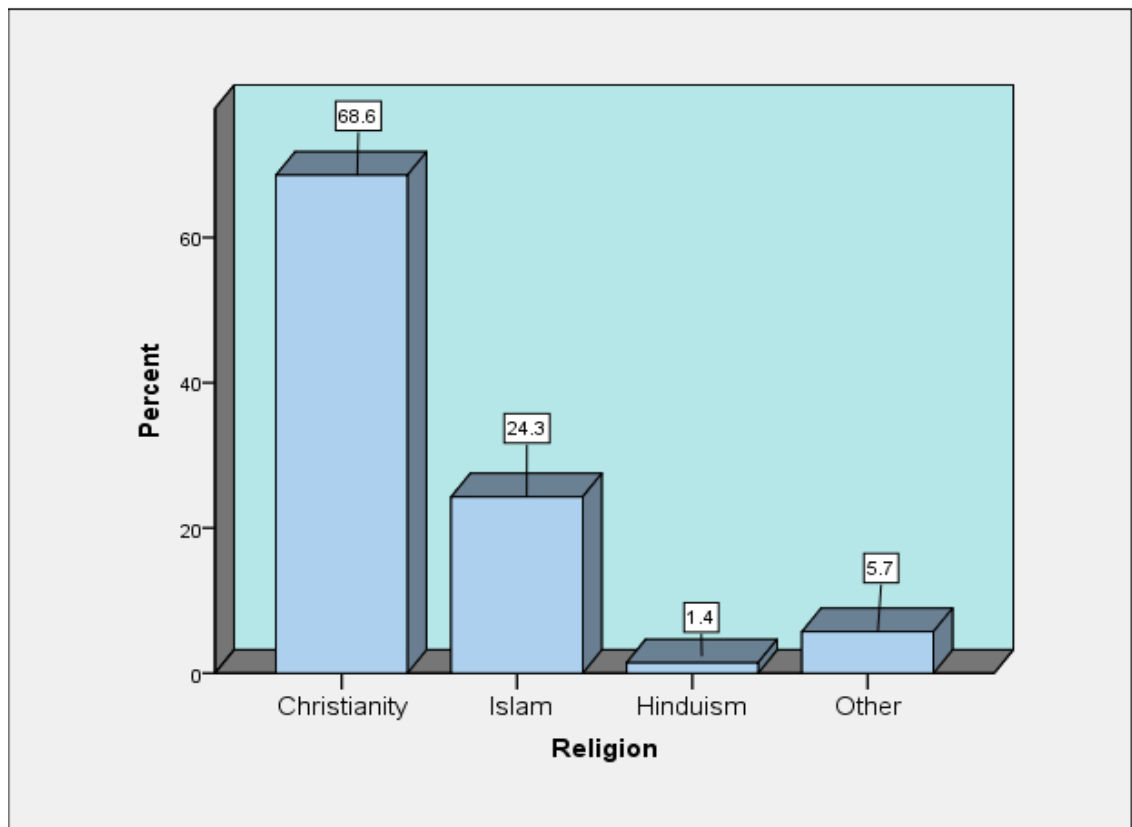
Table 4.4 and Figure 4.4 reveal that 68.6% of the respondents indicated that they belong to the Christian religious group, while 24.3% indicated that they belong to the



Islamic religious group. A further 1.4% indicated that they belong to the Hindu religious group, leaving a balance of 5.7% which belonged to other unspecified religions.

**Table 4.4: Respondents' religion**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Christianity	48	68.6	68.6	68.6
	Islam	17	24.3	24.3	92.9
	Hinduism	1	1.4	1.4	94.3
	Other	4	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.4: Respondents' religion**

***Interpretation***

It is evident that majority of the respondents belong to the Christian religious group followed by the second highest percentage of respondents belonging to the Islamic religious group. Only one respondent was Hindu. It is far more challenging to understand several religions compared to only one. The relevance of religion to this study is that religion is a dominant force in many cultures and the source of many differences between cultures. This in turn has an impact on the way people respond and communicate in various situations. Bovee and Thill (2008:73) describe religion as one of the most personal and influential aspects of life. Religion does bring potential for controversy in a work setting which makes it even more challenging to deal with.

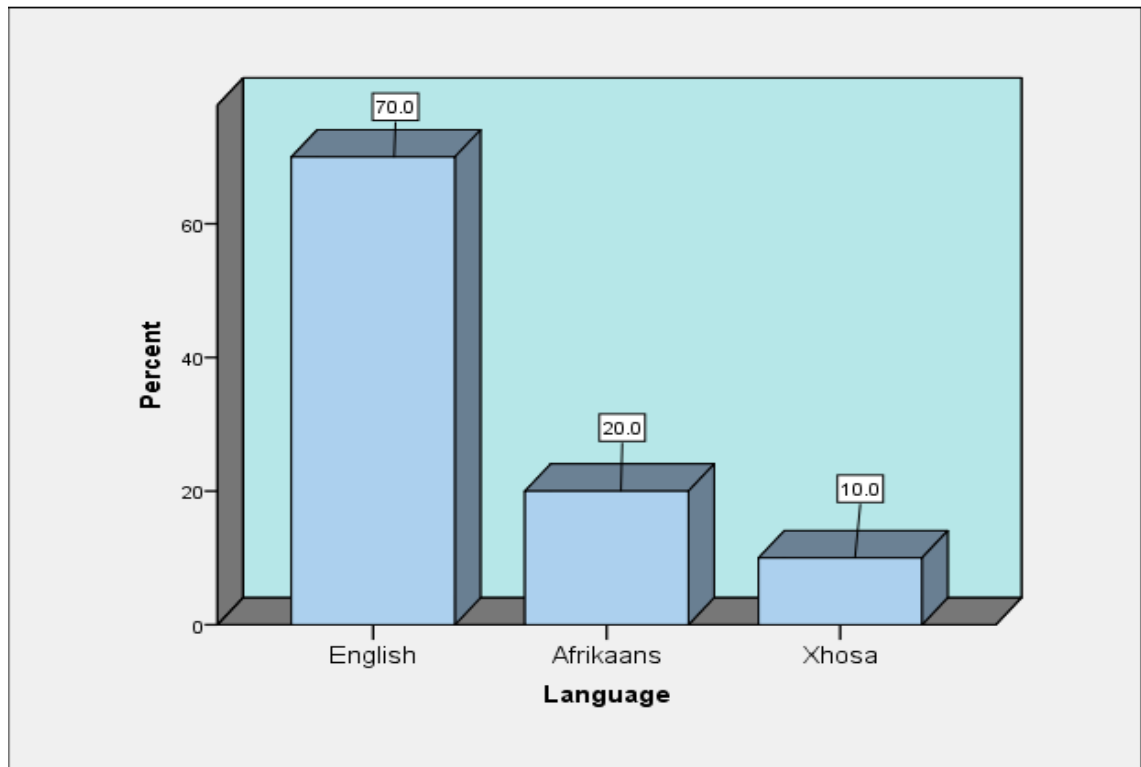
## **QUESTION 5: PREFERRED LANGUAGE OF RESPONDENTS**

### **Response**

The preferred language of respondents as depicted in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.5, is English and constitutes 70% of the respondents. Afrikaans accounted for 20% and the least preferred language was Xhosa, reflected by 10% of the respondents in this study.

**Table 4.5: Preferred language**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	English	49	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Afrikaans	14	20.0	20.0	90.0
	Xhosa	7	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.5: Preferred language**

### **Interpretation**

The result confirms that the majority of respondents prefer the English language, more than Afrikaans and Xhosa. Different words mean different things to different people. Age, education and cultural or racial backgrounds are variables that influence the language a person uses and the meanings they ascribe to words. The significance of language to this study is evident in an organisation such as the DOJ&CD (WC RO), where employees typically come from diverse backgrounds and have different patterns of speech. This in turn has an impact on the way people respond and interpret things in

various situations (Robbins & Coulter, 2005:300). Regardless of gender, race or religion, English is seen to be the preferred language among employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), in which they express themselves to convey and interpret messages.

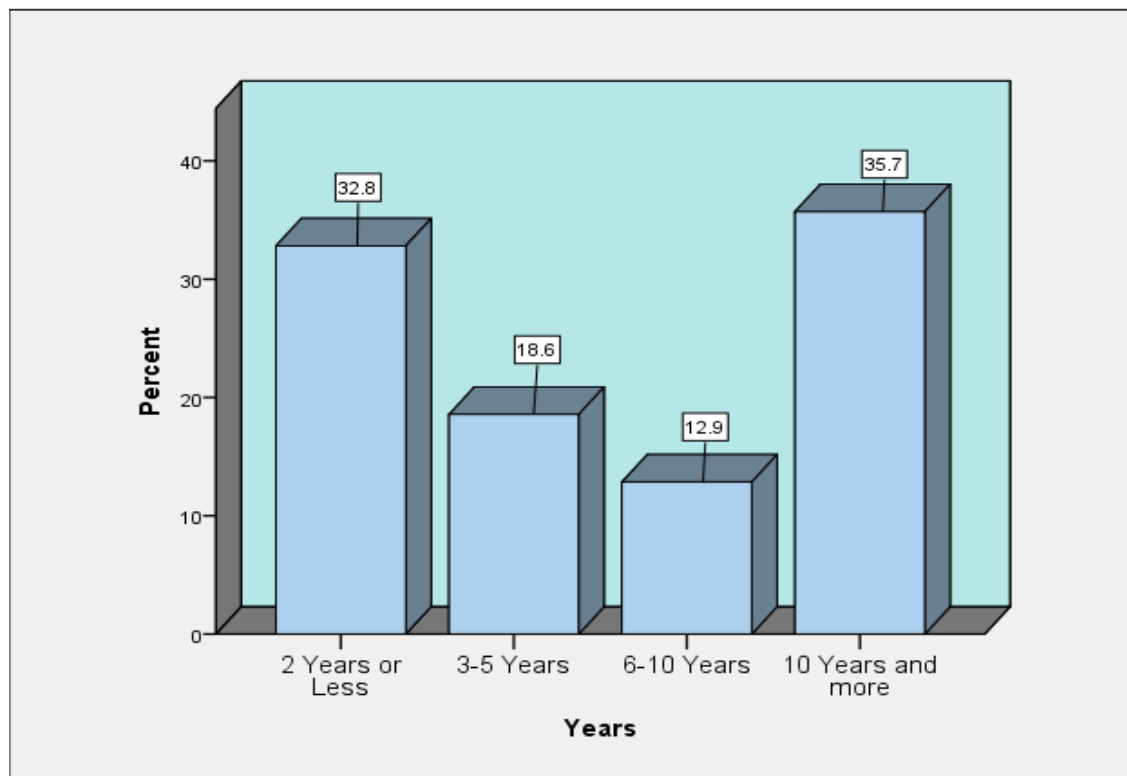
**QUESTION 6: NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING AT THE DOJ&CD**

***Response***

As reflected in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.6, the majority of the respondents (35.7%) have worked at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) for 10 years or more, followed by 32.9% of the respondents who have worked for 2 years or less at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). The second lowest group of respondents (18.6%) have been in service for between 3 and 5 years and the lowest percentage of respondents, comprising 12.9%, has been working at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) for between 6 and 9 years.

**Table 4.6: Length of service**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 Years or Less	23	32.8	32.8	32.8
	3-5 Years	13	18.6	18.6	51.4
	6-9 Years	9	12.9	12.9	64.3
	10 Years and more	25	35.7	35.7	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.6: Length of service**

### ***Interpretation***

35.7% of respondents in this study have been working at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) for 10 years or more. This long service means they could be reasonably expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures which have been implemented at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) over this period of time. It is also noted that the second highest percentage of respondents is the group who have worked at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) for 2 years or less. This group of employees might be less familiar with the various policies and procedures of the Department. The relevance of length of service at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) is that it has an impact on the values, beliefs, customs and practices that are uniquely shared by the employees and which are transmitted from one generation to another (Boddy, 2005:326).

### **QUESTION 7: JOB CLASSIFICATIONS OF RESPONDENTS**

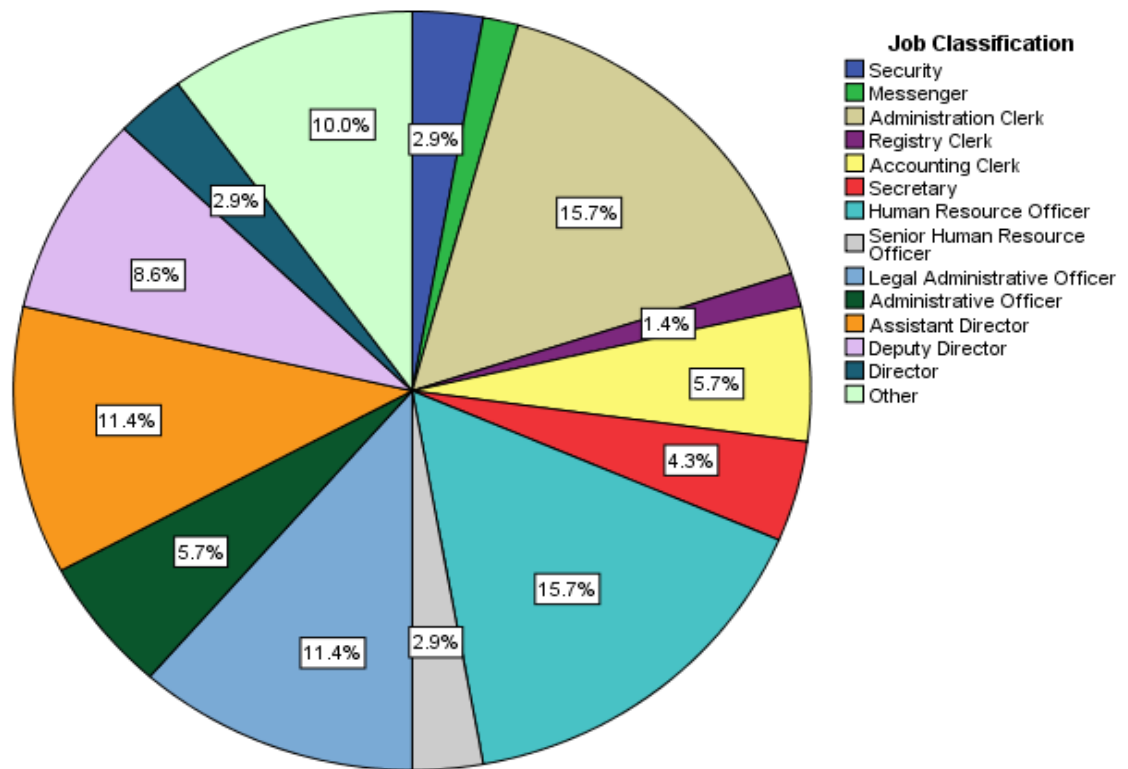
#### ***Responses***

Job classifications of the respondents are depicted in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.7. The highest percentage of respondents hold the positions of Human Resource Officers and Administration Clerks, each being 15.7% of the total respondents. Legal Administrative Officers and Assistant Directors are 11.4% each. The remaining job classifications relating to security, messenger, registry clerk, accounting clerk, secretary, senior human resource officer, administrative officer, deputy director and other unspecified positions, are all under 10% each.

**Table 4.7: Job classifications**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Security	2	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Messenger	1	1.4	1.4	4.3
	Administration Clerk	11	15.7	15.7	20.0
	Registry Clerk	1	1.4	1.4	21.4
	Accounting Clerk	4	5.7	5.7	27.1
	Secretary	3	4.3	4.3	31.4
	Human Resource Officer	11	15.7	15.7	47.1
	Senior Human Resource Officer	2	2.9	2.9	50.0
	Legal Administrative Officer	8	11.4	11.4	61.4
	Administrative Officer	4	5.7	5.7	67.1
	Assistant Director	8	11.4	11.4	78.6
	Deputy Director	6	8.6	8.6	87.1
	Director	2	2.9	2.9	90.0
	Other	7	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total		70	100.0	100.0

**Job Classification  
Percent**



**Figure 4.7: Job classifications**

***Interpretation***

In terms of the job classifications of the respondents in this study, the above data reveal that the highest percentage (42.9%) of the respondents are at either supervisory or management levels (Senior Human Resource Officers, Legal Administrative Officers, Administrative Officers, Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors and Directors). The relevance of job classification in this study is to determine what percentage of the respondents are in positions (management) to ensure that policies and procedures are effectively followed with regards to the implementation of meaningful intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

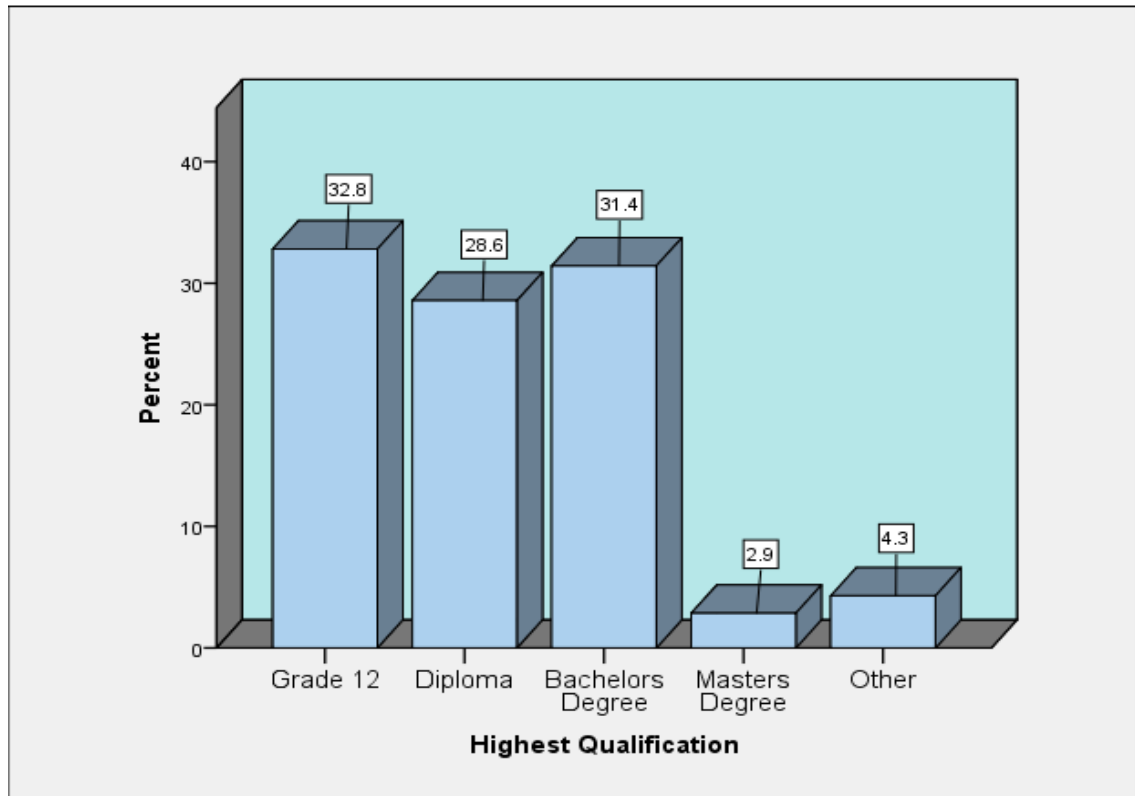
**QUESTION 8: QUALIFICATION LEVELS OF RESPONDENTS**

***Responses***

Table 4.8 and Figure 4.8 illustrate the qualification levels of the respondents in this study. The data reveals that 32.9% of the respondents have an educational level of grade 12, whilst 28.6% of the respondents possess a National Diploma. A further 34% of the respondents hold a post graduate qualification of which 31.4% of the respondents hold a Bachelors degree and 2.9% of the respondents have a Masters degree. The 4.3% of respondents who indicated other, means they either have a qualification less than grade 12 or a higher than a Masters degree.

**Table 4.8: Qualification levels**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grade 12	23	32.8	32.8	32.8
	Diploma	20	28.6	28.6	61.4
	Bachelors Degree	22	31.4	31.4	92.9
	Masters Degree	2	2.9	2.9	95.7
	Other	3	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.8: Qualification levels**

***Interpretation***

As shown above, the category of respondents with the highest percentage in this study have a grade 12 qualification, followed by respondents holding a Bachelors degree (31.43%) and those having a Diploma (28.57%). Level of education plays an important role in terms of how knowledgeable an individual is, as well as how they interpret and analyse situations. It is also noted that the majority of the respondents in this study have a Grade 12 qualification which is regarded as basic education and increases their capability to analyse and interpret fundamental issues. Qualification levels of respondents are relevant in determining competency levels of employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) and how they respond to various communication settings.

### 4.3.2 Respondents' views on working across cultures in a globalised environment

The basis for collecting this data was to obtain the respondents views regarding working across cultures in a globalised environment in relation to intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), to meet the research objectives of this study.

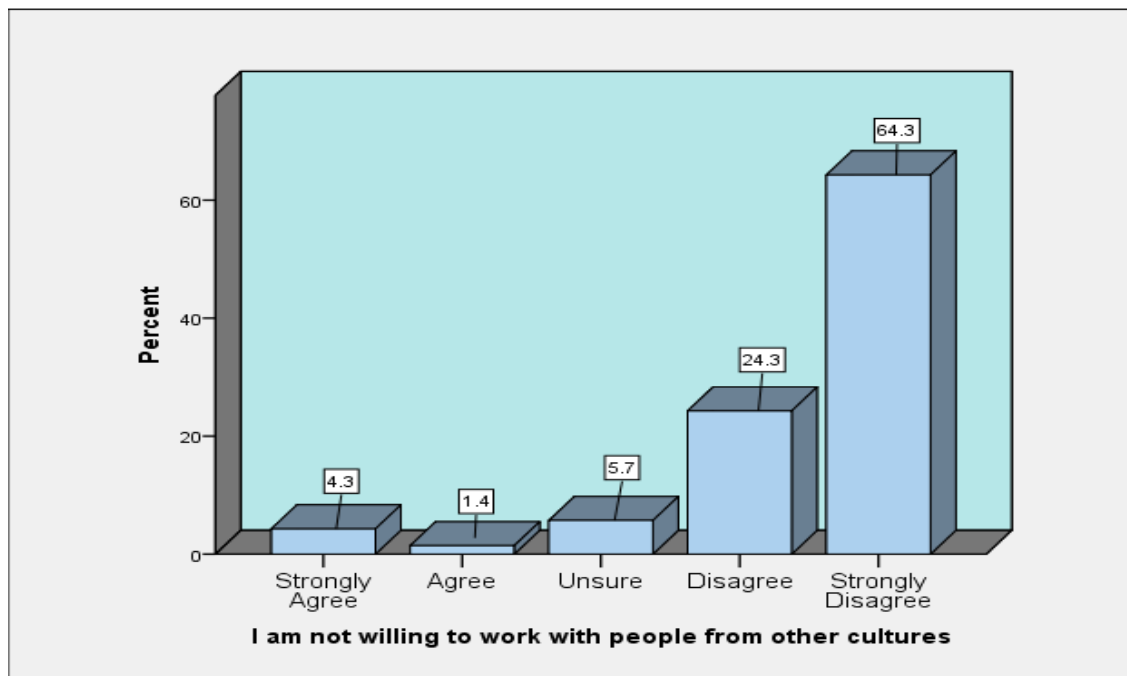
#### **STATEMENT 9: I AM NOT WILLING TO WORK WITH PEOPLE FROM OTHER CULTURES**

##### ***Response***

Table 4.9 and Figure 4.9 reveal that 5.7% of the respondents in this study strongly agree or agree that they are not willing to work with people from other cultures. A further 5.7% of respondents were unsure whether or not they are willing to work with people from other cultures. Conversely, 88.6% of the respondents disagree with the statement and would willingly work with people from other cultures.

**Table 4.9: Unwilling to work with other cultures**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Agree	1	1.4	1.4	5.7
	Unsure	4	5.7	5.7	11.4
	Disagree	17	24.3	24.3	35.7
	Strongly Disagree	45	64.3	64.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.9: Unwilling to work with other cultures**

##### ***Interpretation***

Working and communicating across cultures is assumed to be a cycle of stress and adaptation (Schlesinger, 2005:32). When people of different cultures come together

they feel uncertain, apprehensive and anxious and often tend to carry with them a host of thoughts, values, emotions and behaviours that were planted and cultivated by culture which later results in ethnocentric behaviour. However, results show that the majority of respondents who participated in this study disagree with the statement "I am not willing to work with people of different cultures" and would willingly work with people of different cultures, regardless of whether it is a cycle of stress, anxiety or adaptation

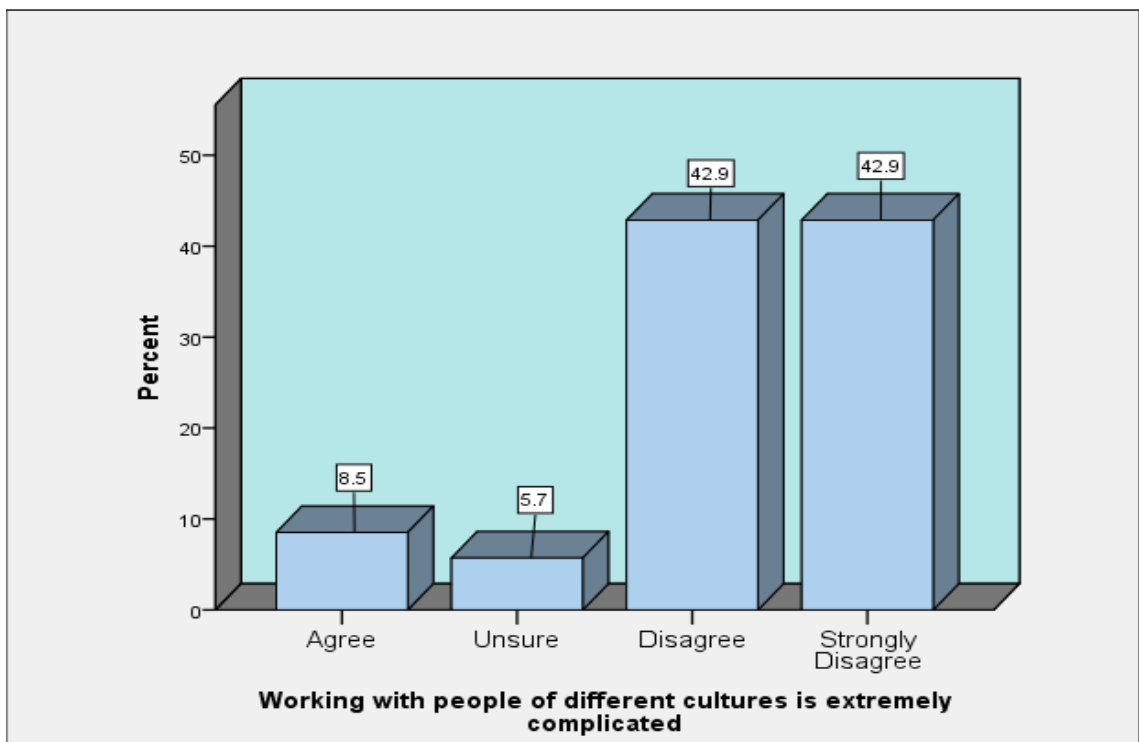
**STATEMENT 10: WORKING WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT CULTURES IS EXTREMELY COMPLICATED**

***Response***

Table 4.10 and Figure 4.10 depict that working with people of different cultures is extremely complicated to 8.6% of the respondents as they agree with the above statement. Though 5.7% of the respondents remain unsure whether they agree or not with this statement, 85.8% of the respondents disagree with the statement and view working with people of different cultures as not extremely complicated.

**Table 4.10: Working with other cultures is complicated**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	6	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Unsure	4	5.7	5.7	14.2
	Disagree	30	42.9	42.9	57.1
	Strongly Disagree	30	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.10: Working with other cultures is complicated**



### ***Interpretation***

Working across cultures is a new experience for many people entering the job market as it can be a dynamic and creative affair. Occasionally, due to the inability to interpret people correctly, it can become challenging and problems can arise (Dodd, 1991:2). However, the above data reveal that the majority of the respondents disagree with the statement that working with people of different cultures is extremely complicated. However, this could result from the majority of respondents not yet having been exposed to complicated situations while working across cultures or merely because they have not understood the statement and misinterpreted it.

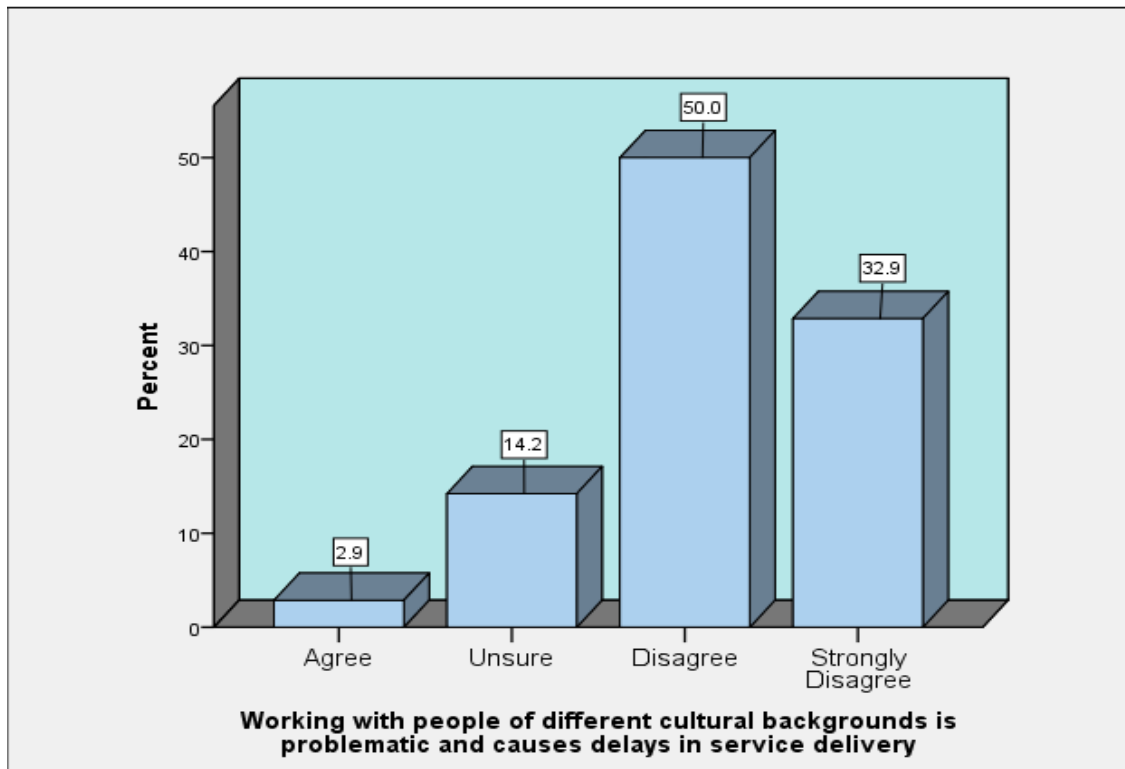
### **STATEMENT 11: WORKING WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS IS PROBLEMATIC AND CAUSES DELAYS IN SERVICE DELIVERY**

### ***Response***

Table 4.11 and Figure 4.11 reveal that 2.9% of the respondents agree that working across cultures is problematic and causes delays in service delivery whereas 14.3% of the respondents are unsure about the statement. The majority of respondents (82.9%) disagree with the statement and do not believe that working across cultures is problematic and causes delays in service delivery.

**Table 4.11: Working with different cultures causes service delivery delays**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Agree	2	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Unsure	10	14.2	14.2	17.1
	Disagree	35	50.0	50.0	67.1
	Strongly Disagree	23	32.9	32.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.11: Working with different cultures causes service delivery delays**

***Interpretation***

There are different types of problems that can arise in situations when people of different cultures work together. As in all communication settings, a fundamental problem has to do with understanding meaning. Lack of understanding could cause delays in service delivery as a person might not know what is expected of him or her, or perhaps because of a feeling of being of an inferior status you do not consider yourself in a position to ask for help or to admit that you have not understood an instruction and therefore fail to comply with service delivery standards (Allwood, 1985:16). The data show that the greater part of the sample is in agreement that working across cultures is not as problematic as the statement claims and does not necessarily cause delays in the service delivery process. However, these respondents might not have experienced any form of service delivery interruptions at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) or might have misinterpreted the statement.

**STATEMENT 12: WORKING WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT CULTURES DEVELOPS AND ENHANCES MY INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE**

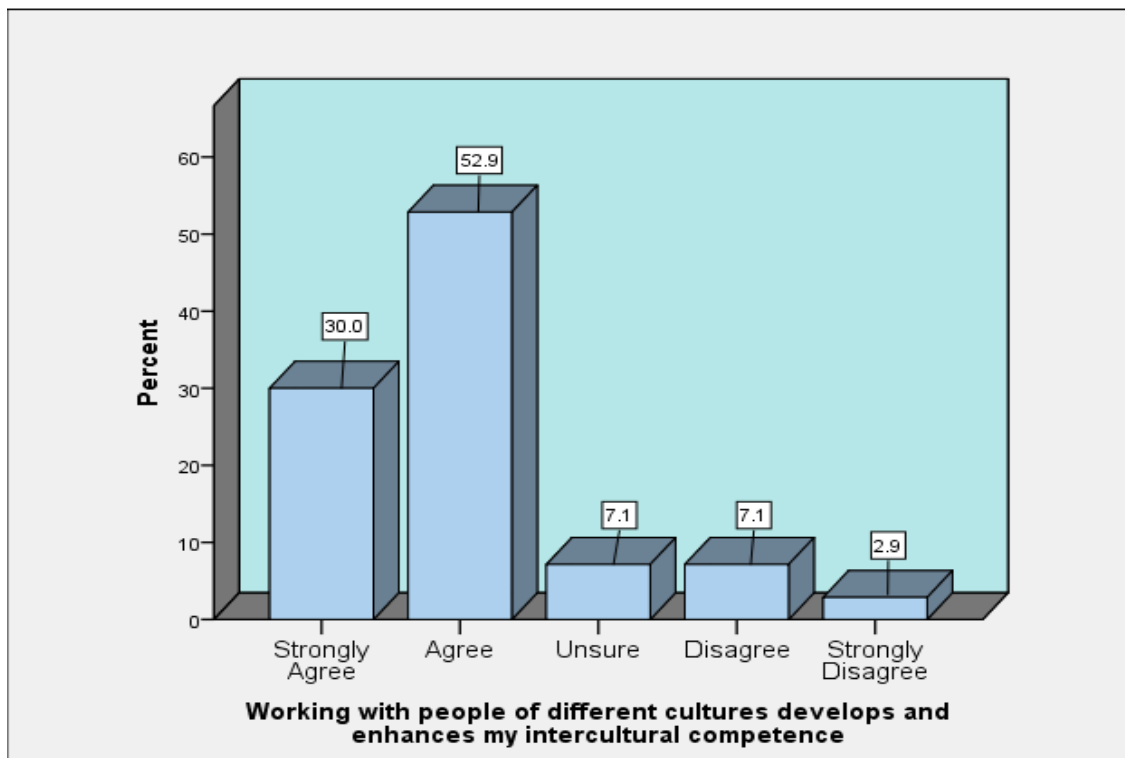
***Response***

Table 4.12 and Figure 4.12 reveal that a resounding 82.9% of the respondents in this study agree that working with people of different cultures develops and enhances their intercultural competence. A further 7.1% of the respondents are unsure whether or not working across cultures develops and enhances their intercultural competence while

the balance of 10% of respondents disagree that working across cultures develops and enhances their intercultural competence.

**Table 4.12: Working with different cultures develops intercultural competence**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	21	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Agree	37	52.9	52.9	82.9
	Unsure	5	7.1	7.1	90.0
	Disagree	5	7.1	7.1	97.1
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.12: Working with different cultures develops intercultural competence**

### ***Interpretation***

Building an understanding of other people's cultures, their communication styles and behaviours can greatly improve relationships and make one further successful in an intercultural environment. When working and communicating across cultures one learns more about the people belonging to that particular culture's way of life, values, history, habits, and the substance of their personality (Dodd, 1991: 2). In this way respondents feel that they will develop and enhance their intercultural competence. This correlates with the result of the previous findings (see Figure 4.9) where respondents are eager to work with people of different cultures, regardless of whether it is proclaimed to be a problematic and extremely complicated situation. Therefore, these data reveal that the majority of respondents in the sample group agree that

working with people of different cultures develops and enhances their intercultural competence.

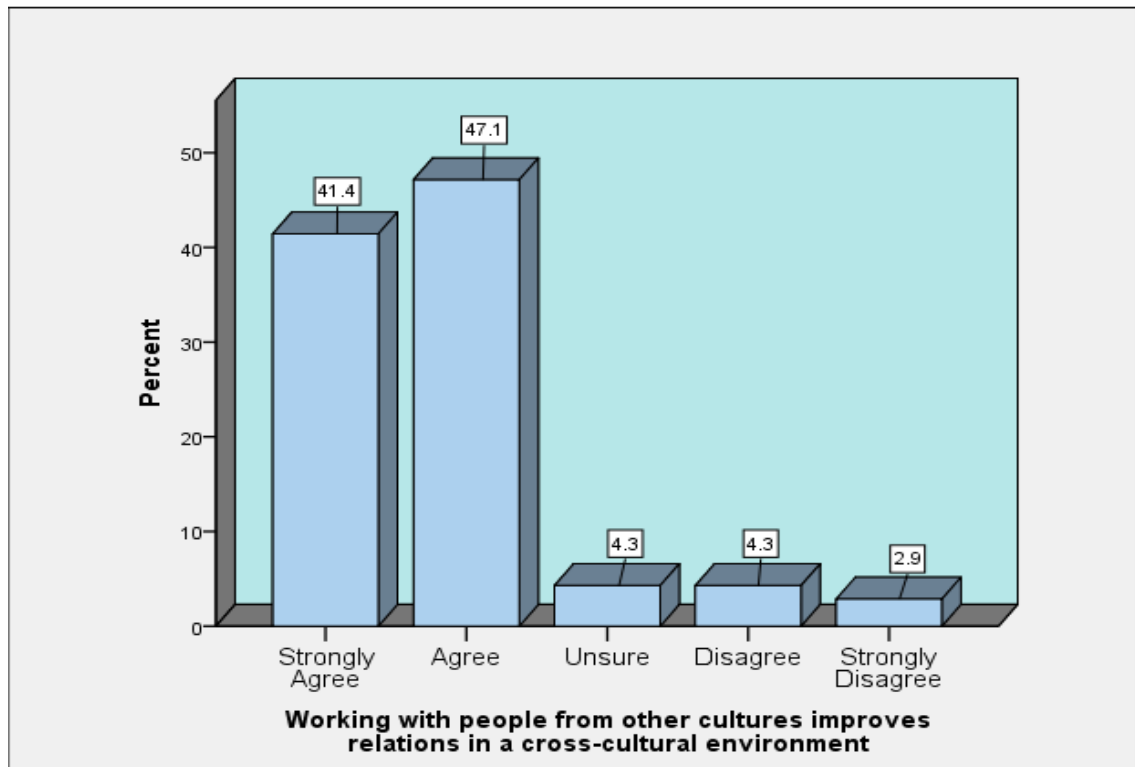
**STATEMENT 13: WORKING WITH PEOPLE FROM OTHER CULTURES IMPROVES RELATIONS IN A CROSS- CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Responses**

Table 4.13 and Figure 4.13 display that 88.5% of respondents in this study are in agreement that working with people from different cultures improves relations in a cross-cultural environment. A small portion (4.3%) of the respondents are unsure whether to agree or disagree with the statement and only 7.2% of respondents disagree that working with people from different cultures improves relations in a cross-cultural environment such as the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.13: Working with different cultures improves cross-cultural relations**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	29	41.4	41.4	41.4
	Agree	33	47.1	47.1	88.6
	Unsure	3	4.3	4.3	92.9
	Disagree	3	4.3	4.3	97.1
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.13: Working with different cultures improves cross-cultural relations**

### ***Interpretation***

As relationships between people of different cultures develop, a better understanding of the other culture is gained. One of the things you will eventually learn is that although cultures are different, people have much in common. Moreover, an improved cross-cultural environment is a condition of togetherness in which people have lowered their defences and learnt to accept and celebrate differences. These environments are made up of individuals working collectively for the benefit of everyone, not just their own group. Regardless of cultural orientation, open and honest intercultural communication amongst people can lead to the achievement of goals that benefit everyone (Schlesinger, 2005:5).

The results in Table 4.13 and Figure 4.13 reflect that working with people of different cultures improve relations in a cross-cultural environment as confirmed by the majority of the respondents in this study (88.5%). It is further interpreted that regardless of whether speculation exists that working across cultures is a challenge or a cycle of stress and anxiety, employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) consider working across culture as less of a challenge and more as a means of improving relations in a cross cultural environment. This will develop personal growth as well as economic profits (service delivery) that will benefit everyone, regardless of cultural orientation (Schlesinger, 2005:5).

#### **4.3.3 Respondents' views on intercultural communication problems at the DOJ&CD (WC RO)**

The following data was collected to obtain the respondents' observations regarding working across cultures at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

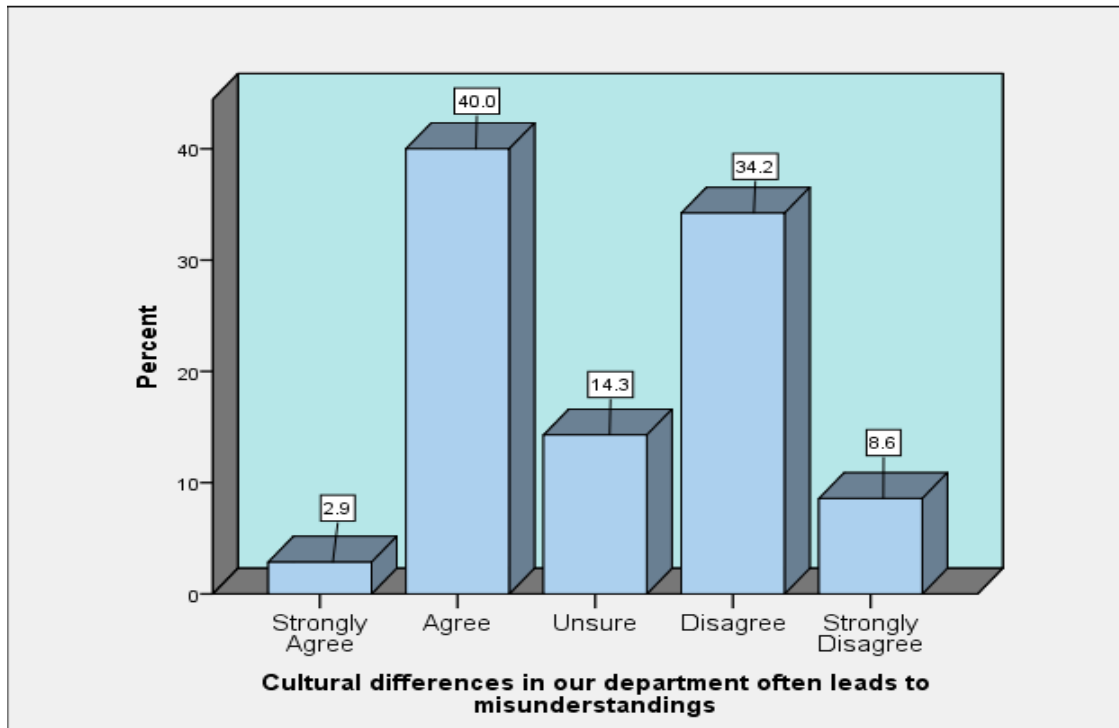
#### **STATEMENT 14: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN OUR DEPARTMENT OFTEN LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS**

##### ***Response***

Table 4.14 and Figure 4.14 inform that 42.9% of respondents agree that cultural differences at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) often lead to misunderstandings. A further 42.8% of the respondents disagree that cultural differences at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) often leads to misunderstandings in the work place. The remaining 14.3% of respondents were undecided on this statement.

**Table 4.14: Cultural differences lead to misunderstandings**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Agree	28	40.0	40.0	42.9
	Unsure	10	14.3	14.3	57.2
	Disagree	24	34.2	34.2	91.4
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.6	8.6	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.14: Cultural differences lead to misunderstandings**

***Interpretation***

According to the above, it is observed that 42.8% of respondents disagree whereas 42.9% of the respondents are in agreement that cultural differences at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) often lead to misunderstandings, while 14.3% of the respondents are uncertain whether this is the case or not. Allwood (1985:13) states that when people of different cultural backgrounds meet, all differences between them can possibly lead to misunderstandings. Beebe *et al.* (2011:97) affirm that misinterpretation and miscommunication happens when people from different cultures make use of different coding rules and cultural norms, which play a key role in determining patterns of interaction, thereby causing difficulties to effective intercultural communication.

Moreover, the risk that poor understanding will lead to misunderstanding is dependent on factors such as insufficient awareness of your own lack of understanding of other people’s cultural backgrounds. Further obstacles such as the use of language and the use of modern technology in the form of e-mails and SMSs may also cause misunderstandings. Therefore, it is observed that half of the sample is in agreement

that cultural differences at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) often lead to misunderstandings, whereas the other half of the sample is not entirely convinced that cultural differences at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) often lead to misunderstandings and might consider other obstacles such as difference in language usage or modern technology to also be factors that often lead to misunderstandings in the Department.

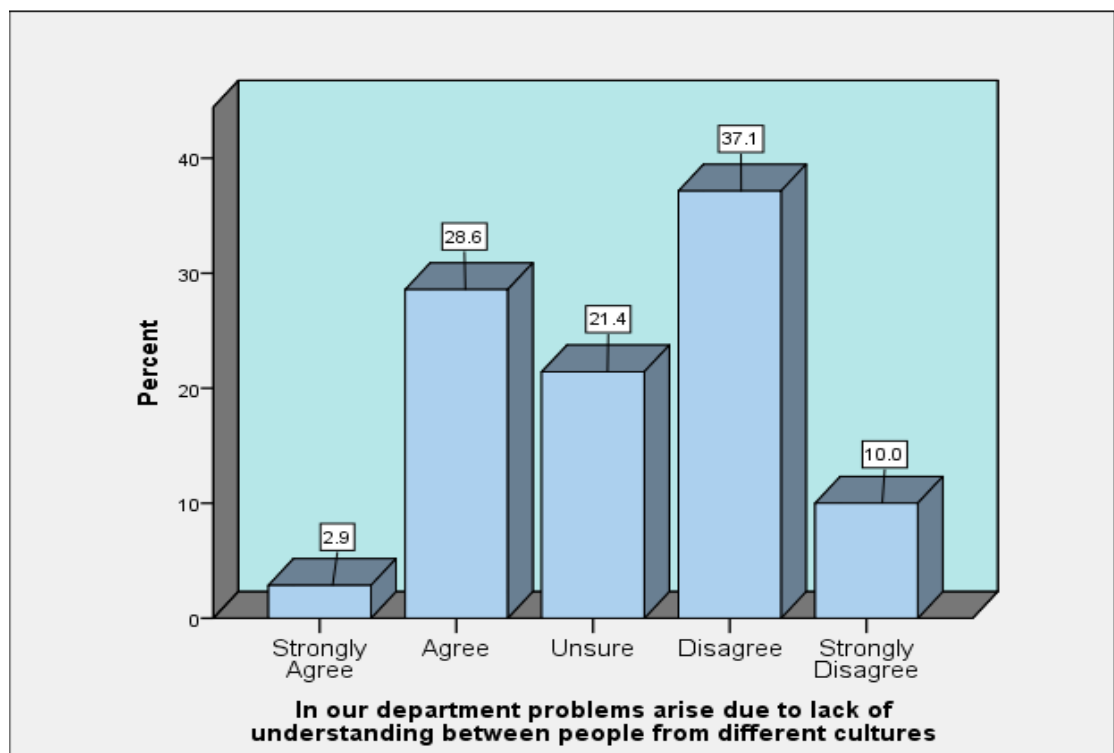
**STATEMENT 15: IN OUR DEPARTMENT PROBLEMS ARISE DUE TO LACK OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES**

**Response**

Table 4.15 and Figure 4.15 reveal that at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) 31.5% of the respondents in this study are in agreement that problems at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) arise due to a lack of understanding between people of different cultures. Respondents who were undecided formed 21.4% of the sample group, while 47.1% of the respondents disagree with the statement that states problems arise due to a lack of understanding between people of different cultures at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.15 Problems arise from lack of understanding between different cultures**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Agree	20	28.6	28.6	31.4
	Unsure	15	21.4	21.4	52.9
	Disagree	26	37.1	37.1	90.0
	Strongly Disagree	7	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.15: Problems arise from lack of understanding between different cultures**  
***Interpretation***

Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between people whose cultural background could lead them to interpret verbal and non-verbal signs differently which sequentially causes miscommunication and results in problems due to lack of understanding. Therefore it is assumed that the message sent is usually not the message received (Bovee & Thill, 2008:640).

Beebe *et al.* (2011:97-98) explain that intercultural communication happens when individuals or groups from different cultures communicate. However, the transactional process of listening and responding to people from different cultural backgrounds can be challenging. The greater the diversity in cultures between people, the greater the possibility for misunderstandings, distrust, anxiety and doubt.

Moreover, lack of understanding happens when failing to interpret parts of, or all, of what the other person is saying or doing to act and respond. The lack of understanding may be conscious or unconscious whereby you may or may not notice that you have not understood. The lack can, if it is conscious, lead to an attempt to be resolved, such as saying or indicating that you have not understood. The lack of understanding can also be allowed to pass, in spite of the fact that you are aware of it, due to lack of time or to an inferior status, you do not consider yourself in a position to ask for help or to admit that you have not understood which in turn contributes to tension (Allwood, 1985:16).

Despite the fact that theory persuades that problems do arise due to lack of understanding between people of different cultures that often results in miscommunication, as shown in Table 4.15 and Figure 4.15, the highest percentage of the respondents (47.1%) in this study disagree with the statement that proclaims problems arise due to lack of understanding between people from different cultures. However, 31.5% of respondents agreed that problems do arise due to a lack of understanding between people of different cultures at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). The remainder of the sample group (21.4%) could not decide whether to agree or not with the proclaimed statement and remained unsure. It could be interpreted that these respondents have not understood the question and felt safe in selecting "Unsure" as they were not in a position to ask for help or to admit that they have not understood the question.



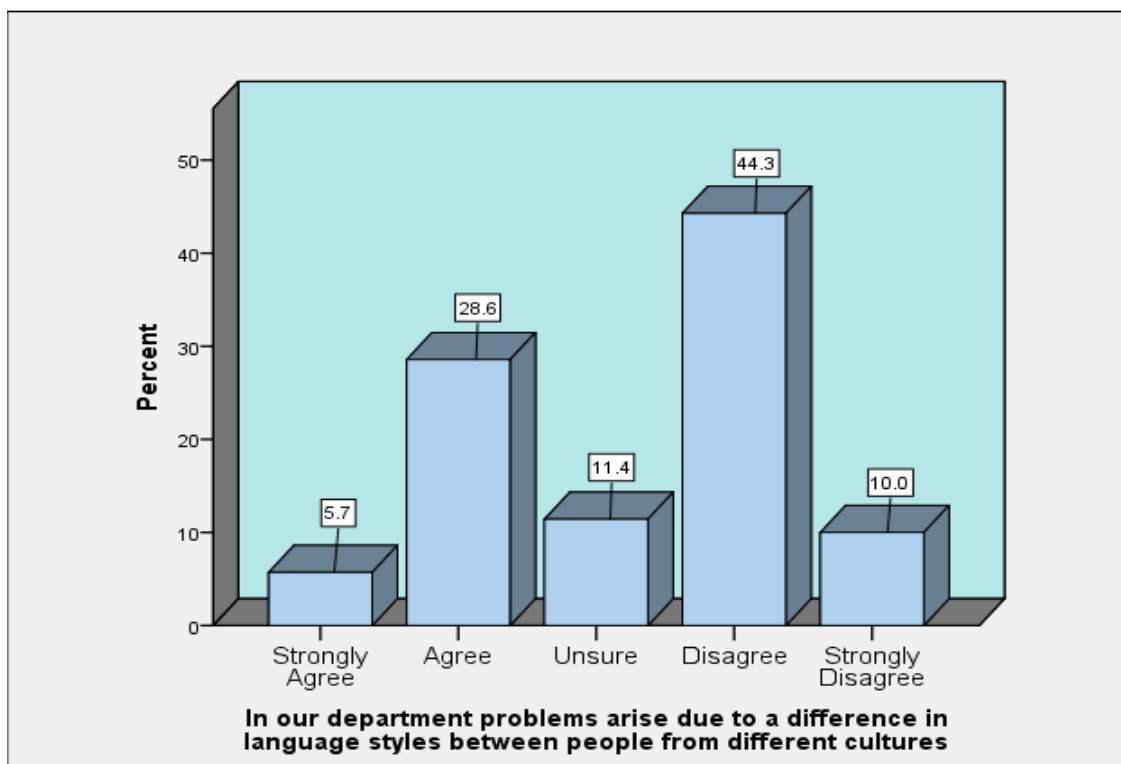
**STATEMENT 16: IN OUR DEPARTMENT PROBLEMS ARISE DUE TO A DIFFERENCE IN LANGUAGE STYLES BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES**

**Response**

Table 4.16 and Figure 4.16 reveal that 34.3% of the respondents in this study are in agreement that problems do arise at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) due to the different language styles used among people of different cultures. Of the 70 respondents, 11.4% were uncertain and the majority of respondents, 54.3% of the sample, disagree and feel that it is not necessarily the difference in language styles that are the cause of intercultural communication problems in the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.16: Different language styles cause problems between different cultures**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	5.7	5.7	5.7
	Agree	20	28.6	28.6	34.3
	Unsure	8	11.4	11.4	45.7
	Disagree	31	44.3	44.3	90.0
	Strongly Disagree	7	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.16: Different language styles cause problems between different cultures**

**Interpretation**

Words mean different things to different people. Age, education and cultural background are three of the more obvious variables that influence the language people use and the definitions they assign to words. In an organisation, employees typically

come from diverse backgrounds and have different patterns of speech (Robbins and Coulter, 2005:300). However, the importance of language as an indicator of culture is well-illustrated in the numerous occurrences of creating unintended meanings through the usage of language thus causing problems (Dodd, 1991:123).

Additionally, Chaney and Martin (2011:109) identify both the joining and contentious nature of language. A common native language ties people together, yet the existence of many different native languages in a small environment can cause problems. The usage of language and culture in creating political, social, economic and educational development has an effect on favouring certain ideals over the others. Accepting culture without understanding language is complex. Language determines people's understanding and awareness and therefore, if they are removed from their linguist environment, they no longer have the conceptual framework to explain their ideas and opinions.

Respondents in this study have different views regarding what causes intercultural communication problems at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). However, as set out in Table 4.16 and Figure 4.16, the majority of the respondents in this study disagree that problems arise due to a difference in language styles between people of different cultures at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Possibly the majority of the respondents have not been affected by intercultural communication problems as a result of differences in language styles.

Furthermore, respondents in this study may perceive that intercultural communication problems arise from other aspects, not just from the differences in language styles. The 24 respondents who agree that problems at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) do arise due to a difference in language styles between people of different cultural background may have experienced this and been exposed to intercultural communication problems in the past as a result of language differences. The 8 respondents who remained uncertain have either not been exposed to intercultural communication problems of this nature or have not understood the question and felt safe to select "Unsure".

**STATEMENT 17: AS A RESULT OF THE POST-APARTHEID ERA IN SOUTH AFRICA, IT CALLS FOR ALL RACIAL GROUPS TO LIVE IN HARMONY AND WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD A COUNTRY THAT IS ECONOMICALLY, POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY STABLE**

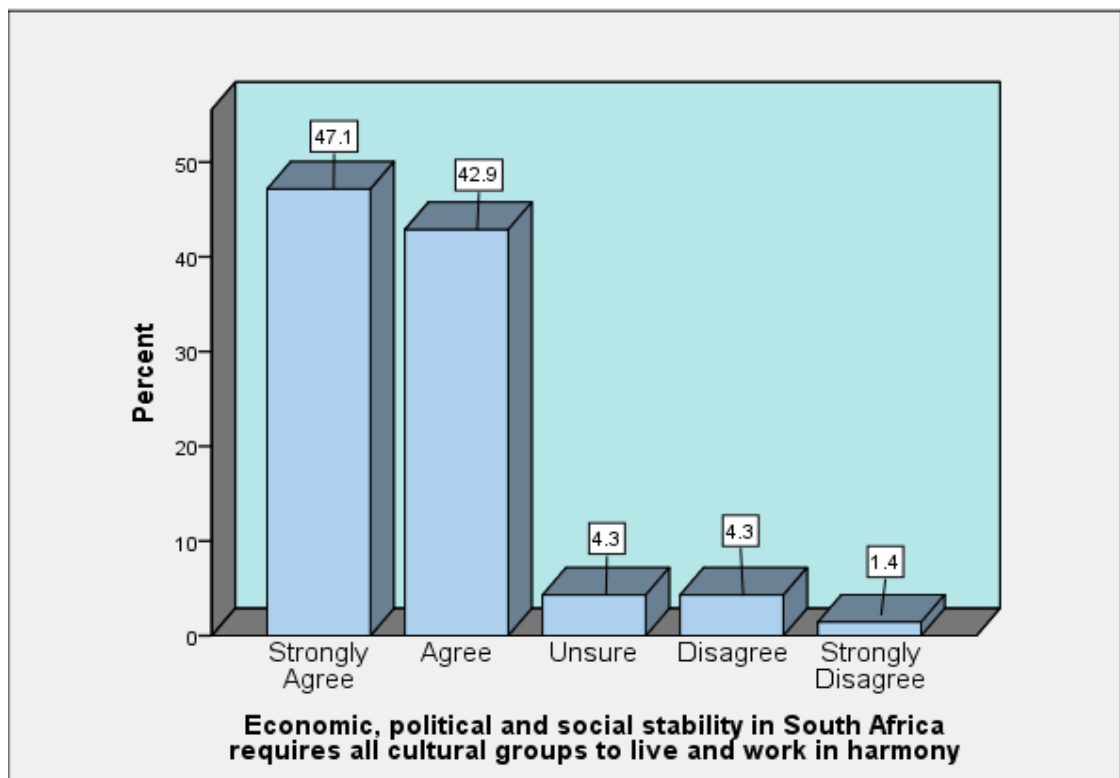
***Response***

Data shown in Table 4.17 and Figure 4.17 reveal that the vast majority of the respondents in this study, constituting 90% of the respondents, agree that the post-apartheid era in South Africa, also known as the democracy, has ensured that all racial groups live in harmony and work together to build a country that is economically, politically and socially stable, regardless of diverse cultural backgrounds. Only 4.3% of

the respondents are unsure whether they agree or disagree and a mere 5.7% of respondents disagree with the above statement.

**Table 4.17: Economic, political and social stability requires cultural harmony**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	33	47.1	47.1	47.1
	Agree	30	42.9	42.9	90.0
	Unsure	3	4.3	4.3	94.3
	Disagree	3	4.3	4.3	98.6
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.17: Economic, political and social stability requires cultural harmony**

**Interpretation**

Results show that the majority of the respondents in this study agree with the above statement. A democratic, post-apartheid South Africa calls for all racial groups to live in harmony and work together to build a country that is economically, politically and socially stable. To achieve this we need to understand the many cultures in our country and meet the challenges of different worldviews, values and beliefs, prejudices, languages, ways of using and interpreting the non-verbal code, ways of constructing messages and unequal power.

According to Mulaudzi (2005:2), ineffective communication is often a contributing factor in conflicts between groups and nations. Therefore, understanding cross-cultural communication is particularly important in a country such as South Africa which is still

in the process of national integration and nation-building, with government consistently focusing on seeking the unity of a previously divided society in working together to overcome the legacy of a history of division, exclusion and neglect known as the apartheid era.

According to Teng (2005), intercultural communication is not only a necessity, but a requirement for success in today's pluralistic society. Intercultural studies have gained popularity in a country such as South Africa. This popularity can be credited to the need for resolution and peaceful living of different racial and cultural groups and acknowledges the importance of multiculturalism and multilingualism in South Africa.

Respondents in this study feel that a post-apartheid South Africa calls for all racial and cultural groups to live in harmony and work together to build a country that is economically, politically and socially stable. This view is regardless of whether intercultural communication is regarded as a potential problem leading to lack of understanding between people of different cultures because of miscommunication, difference in language styles and the impact of the general division of South African cultural groups under the old apartheid regime.

#### 4.3.4 Respondents' views on intercultural communication and conflict

The following data was collected to obtain the respondents views regarding intercultural communication and conflict at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) to meet the research objectives of this study.

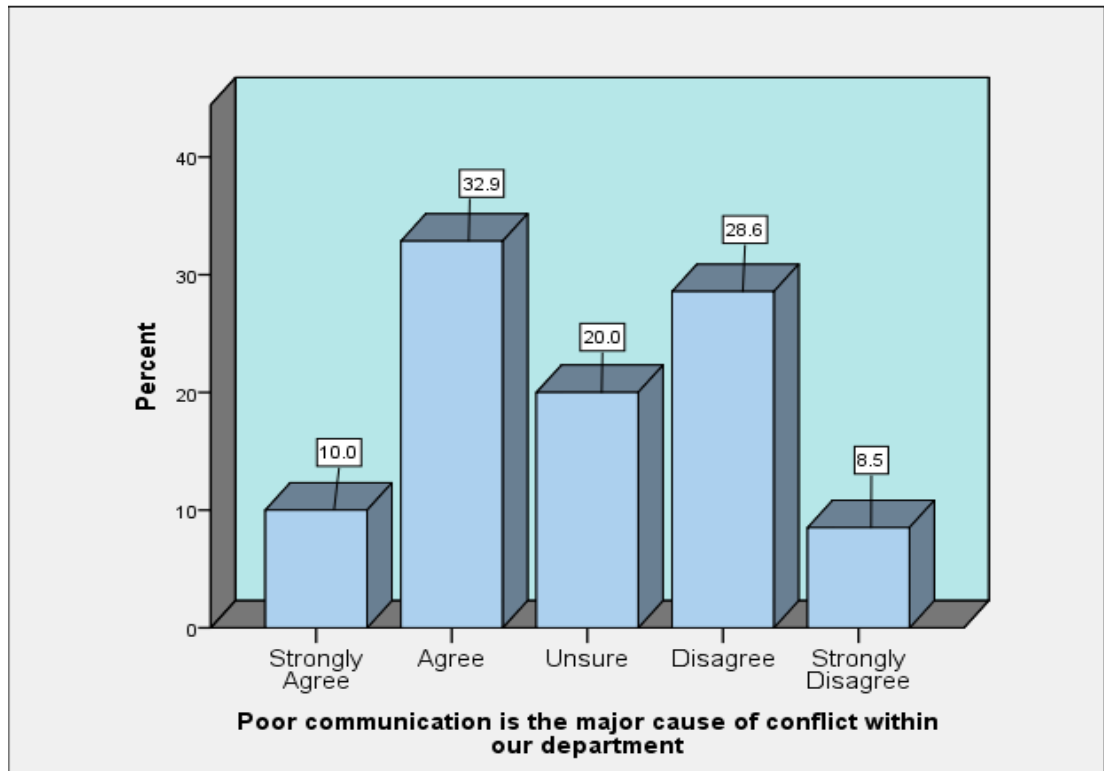
##### **STATEMENT 18: IN OUR DEPARTMENT POOR COMMUNICATION IS THE MAJOR CAUSE OF CONFLICT**

##### ***Response***

Table 4.18 and Figure 4.18 reveal that 42.9% of the respondents in this study agree that poor communication is the dominant contributing factor to conflict at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Undecided respondents accounted for 20% while 37.2% of the respondents disagree that poor communication is the major cause of conflict within the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.18: Poor communication is the major cause of conflict within our department**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	7	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Agree	23	32.9	32.9	42.9
	Unsure	14	20.0	20.0	62.9
	Disagree	20	28.6	28.6	91.5
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.18: Poor communication is the major cause of conflict within our department**

***Interpretation***

The results in Table 4.18 and Figure 4.18 indicate that poor communication is the major cause of conflict within the DOJ&CD (WC RO) (42.9% of respondents agree to this statement). As confirmed by Samovar, Porter and Mc Daniel (2010:318), conflict is an inescapable aspect of all relations. If managed improperly, conflict can lead to irreparable breakdowns. A substantial percentage of the respondents (20%) in this study were unsure whether poor communication is the major cause of conflict within the DOJ&CD (WC RO). This may be attributed to employees who have not worked in the Department long enough to be able to assess the levels of conflict. 37.2% the respondents in this study disagree with the proclaimed statement and feel that poor communication is not the only factor which contributes to conflict.

In line with the results of this study, Pepper (1995:199) states that communication is the dominant characteristic of conflict, for it serves as the vehicle of conflict transmission and the source of conflict management. It is further stated that almost all communication problems result in conflict situations, as both a cause and an effect. Misunderstandings resultant from poor communication can easily cause conflict or exacerbate an existing problem situation.

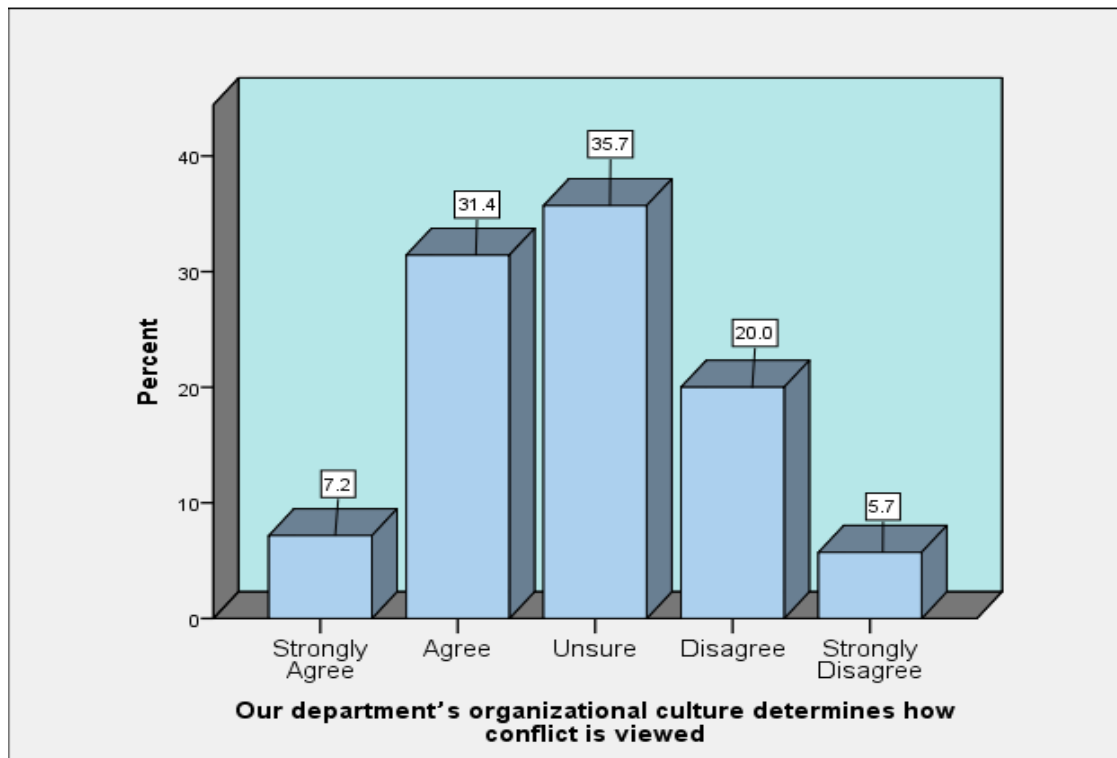
**STATEMENT 19: OUR DEPARTMENT’S ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE DETERMINES HOW CONFLICT IS VIEWED**

**Response**

In Table 4.19 and Figure 4.19 it is illustrated that 38.6% of the respondents agree that the DOJ&CD’s (WC RO)’s organisational culture determines how conflict is viewed. 35.7% of the respondents are unsure of this statement. The remaining 25.7% of the respondents contend that organisational culture does not determine how culture is viewed and they disagree with the statement.

**Table 4.19: Organisational culture determines how conflict is viewed**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	5	7.2	7.2	7.2
	Agree	22	31.4	31.4	38.6
	Unsure	25	35.7	35.7	74.3
	Disagree	14	20.0	20.0	94.3
	Strongly Disagree	4	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.19: Organisational culture determines how conflict is viewed**

**Interpretation**

According to 38.6% of the respondents, the organisational culture of DOJ&CD (WC RO) determines how conflict is viewed. 35.7% respondents are unsure of this statement. The remaining 25.7% of respondents does not agree with the statement, implying that the Department's organisational culture does not necessarily determine

how conflict is viewed, but rather by how managers deal with conflict situations raised by intercultural communication disputes.

Pepper (1995:199) claims that although conflict is part of nearly every aspect of the working environment, each culture's way of perceiving and dealing with conflict reflects its value system. It therefore follows that organisational culture determines how conflict is viewed and managed.

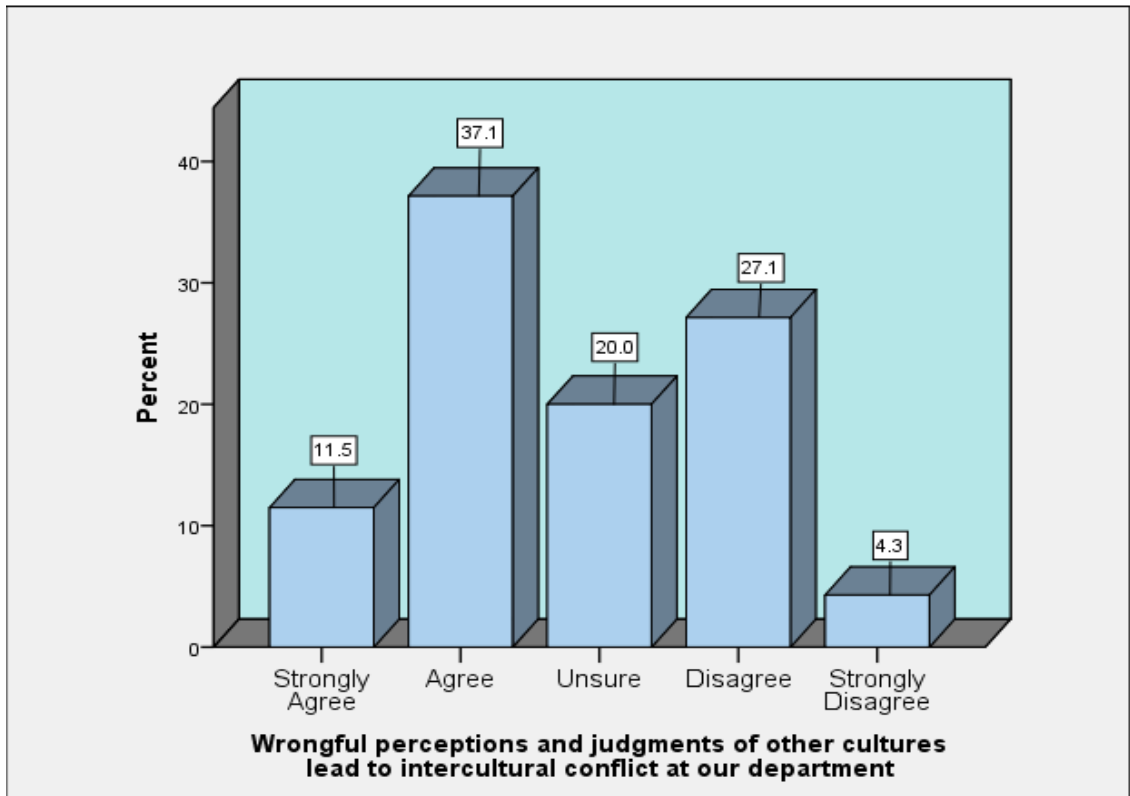
**STATEMENT 20: WRONG PERCEPTIONS AND JUDGMENTS OF OTHER CULTURES LEAD TO INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT IN OUR DEPARTMENT**

***Response***

Table 4.20 and Figure 4.20 reveal that 48.6% of the respondents in this study believe that wrongful perceptions and judgments of other cultures at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) do lead to intercultural conflict, while 20% of respondents are unsure of this statement. 31.4% of the respondents disagree with the statement that wrongful perceptions and judgments of other cultures lead to intercultural conflict at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.20: Wrong perceptions/judgment causes intercultural conflict**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Strongly Agree	8	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Agree	26	37.1	37.1	48.6
	Unsure	14	20.0	20.0	68.6
	Disagree	19	27.1	27.1	95.7
	Strongly Disagree	3	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.20: Wrong perceptions/judgment causes intercultural conflict**

***Interpretation***

Intercultural conflict is defined as the involvement of emotional frustration on mismatched expectations between people of different cultures’ values, norms, goals, scarce resources, or outcomes during an intercultural exchange (Neuliep, 2009:324). Furthermore, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) assert that intercultural conflict happens when cultural factors influence how an individual approach, avoid and manage conflict.

48.6% of respondents believe that wrongful perceptions and judgments of other cultures lead to intercultural conflict at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) maintain that intercultural conflict involves a certain degree of wrongful perceptions and judgments of other people’s cultures, as well as attitudes and behaviours which ethnocentric people hold about their own ingroup, thinking that their culture is superior to that of others.

Poor communication is the dominant characteristic of conflict among respondents in this study. The results also reveal that conflict is viewed and managed in accordance with the Department’s organisational culture. Lastly, conflict is evidently due to wrongful perceptions and judgments that the respondents have pertaining to other people's cultures.



### 4.3.5 Respondents' views on intercultural communication competence

The rationale for collecting this data was to obtain the respondents' understanding regarding intercultural communication competence at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), to meet the research objectives of this study.

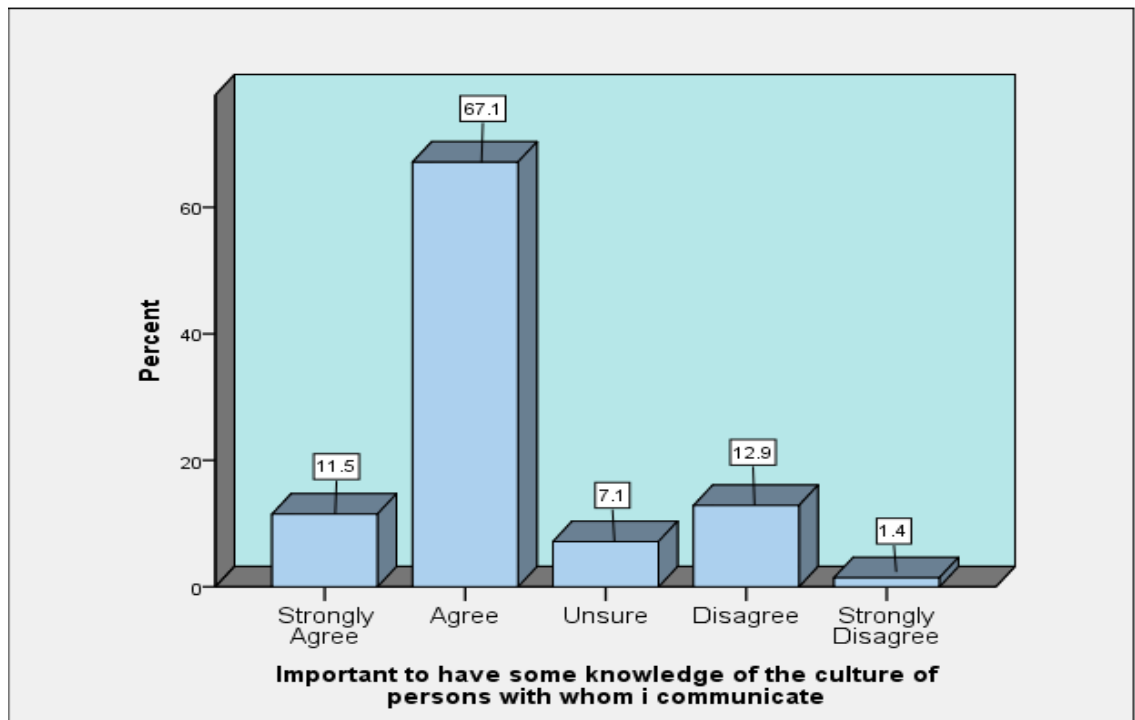
**STATEMENT 21: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT I HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE PERSON WITH WHOM I AM COMMUNICATING**

**Response**

Table 4.21 and Figure 4.21 validate that majority of the respondents in this study, 78.6% of the respondents, agrees that it is vital to have some knowledge about the person with whom they communicate. Of the 70 respondents, 7.1% are unsure of this statement. 14.3% of the respondents feel that it is not important to have knowledge of the culture of persons with whom they communicate.

**Table 4.21: Important to have some knowledge of the culture of persons with whom I communicate**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	8	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Agree	47	67.1	67.1	78.6
	Unsure	5	7.1	7.1	85.7
	Disagree	9	12.9	12.9	98.6
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.21: Important to have some knowledge of the culture of persons with whom I communicate**

### ***Interpretation***

It is observed from the above findings that the great majority of respondents agree that it is important to have some knowledge about a person's cultural background with whom they wish to communicate. Derived from the literature, intercultural communication competence is defined as the extent to which people effectively adapt their verbal and non-verbal messages to the appropriate culture context. This process requires that you have some knowledge about the person with whom you are communicating; this further enables the person to be motivated and comfortable to communicate with that particular person, eliminating the cycle of stress, anxiety and adaptation (Neuliep, 2009:394). Furthermore, reducing the impact of intercultural communication challenges requires that a person increases its knowledge by actively pursuing information about how other groups or cultures are likely to communicate. Therefore, people engaging in intercultural communication are urged to absorb facts about other cultures and the way they operate (Beebe et al., 2011:102-103).

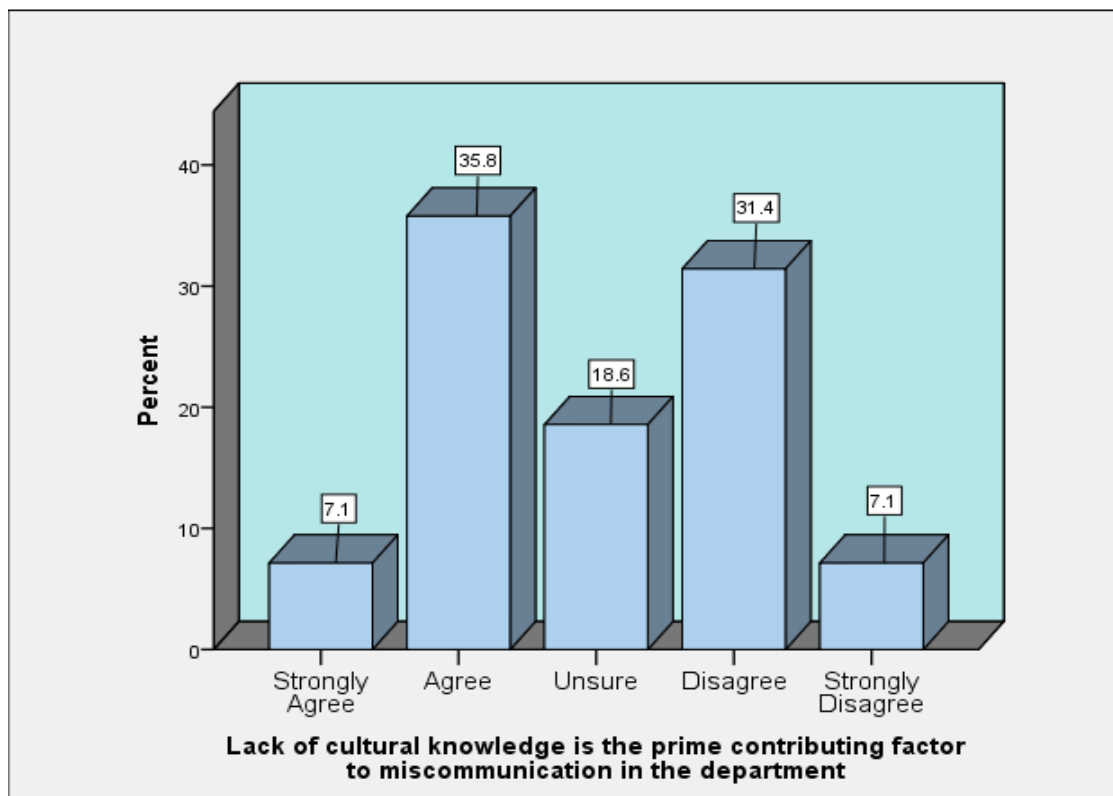
### **STATEMENT 22: LACK OF CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE IS THE PRIME FACTOR WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO MISCOMMUNICATION IN OUR DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Response***

Table 4.22 and Figure 4.22 reveal that according to 42.9% of the respondents, a lack of cultural knowledge is the prime factor which contributes to miscommunication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). It is noted that 18.6% of the respondents are uncertain about this statement, while 38.5% of respondents disagree that a lack of cultural knowledge is the prime factor which contributes to miscommunication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.22: Lack of cultural knowledge is the prime contributing factor to miscommunication**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Strongly Agree	5	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Agree	25	35.8	35.8	42.9
	Unsure	13	18.6	18.6	61.4
	Disagree	22	31.4	31.4	92.9
	Strongly Disagree	5	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.22: Lack of cultural knowledge is the prime contributing factor to miscommunication**

***Interpretation***

Intercultural competence is how much one knows of the culture of a person with whom one is communicating. Competence of the person's communication patterns is also necessary as it can vary between different linguistic and cultural societies. It is further assumed that two persons with different cultural backgrounds start to communicate because one of them has a need to do so. Having different cultural backgrounds probably verifies the lack of pre-understanding of a particular culture than two persons with the same cultural backgrounds. If the common pre-understanding is relevant to their joint activity and communication, this may lead to several consequences such as miscommunication as a result to lack of understanding and lack of cultural knowledge (Allwood, 1985:4).

The results in Table 4.22 illustrate that 42.9% of the respondents in this study agreed compared to 38.5% of the respondents who disagreed that a lack of cultural knowledge is the prime factor which contributes to miscommunication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

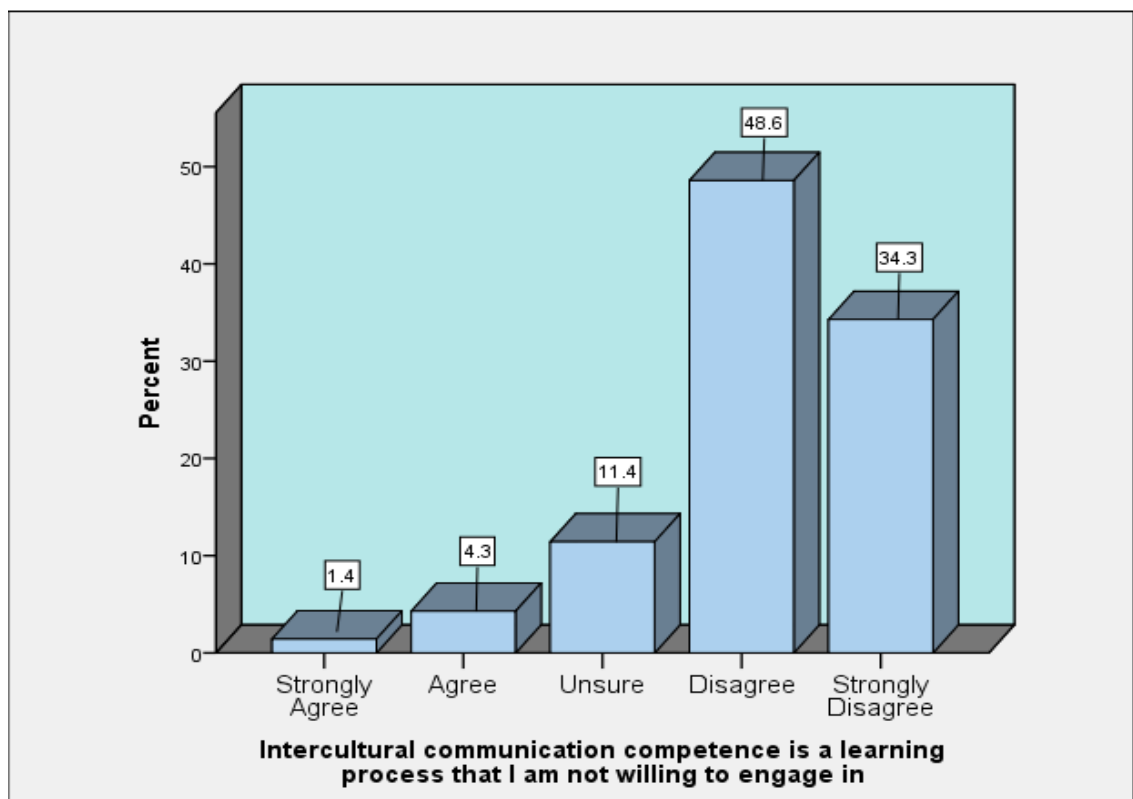
**STATEMENT 23: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IS A LEARNING PROCESS IN WHICH I AM NOT WILLING TO ENGAGE**

**Response**

Table 4.23 and Figure 4.23 confirm that intercultural communication competence is a learning process in which 5.7% of the respondents in this study are not willing to engage. A further 11.4% of the respondents were unsure whether they were willing to engage in the learning process of intercultural communication competence. However, the majority of the respondents in this study (82.9%) disagree with the above statement but would be keen to become more interculturally competent.

**Table 4.23: Unwilling to engage in intercultural communication competence**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Agree	3	4.3	4.3	5.7
	Unsure	8	11.4	11.4	17.1
	Disagree	34	48.6	48.6	65.7
	Strongly Disagree	24	34.3	34.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.23: Unwilling to engage in intercultural communication competence**

### ***Interpretation***

According to the above results, respondents in this study view intercultural communication as a learning process in which they are willing to engage as they are interested in becoming more culturally competent.

According to Neuliep (2009: 394), when you communicate with someone from a different culture, to be interculturally competent, you will have to adjust to the kinds of verbal and non-verbal messages you send. This process involves knowledge about the person with whom you are communicating, that you are motivated to communicate with him or her and that you have the suitable verbal and non-verbal skills to encode and decode messages (Neuliep, 2009:394). The primary motivation to intercultural communication competence is a voluntary, rewarding and lifelong learning process. The data reveals that the vast majority of respondents in this study are motivated to foster intercultural relations at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

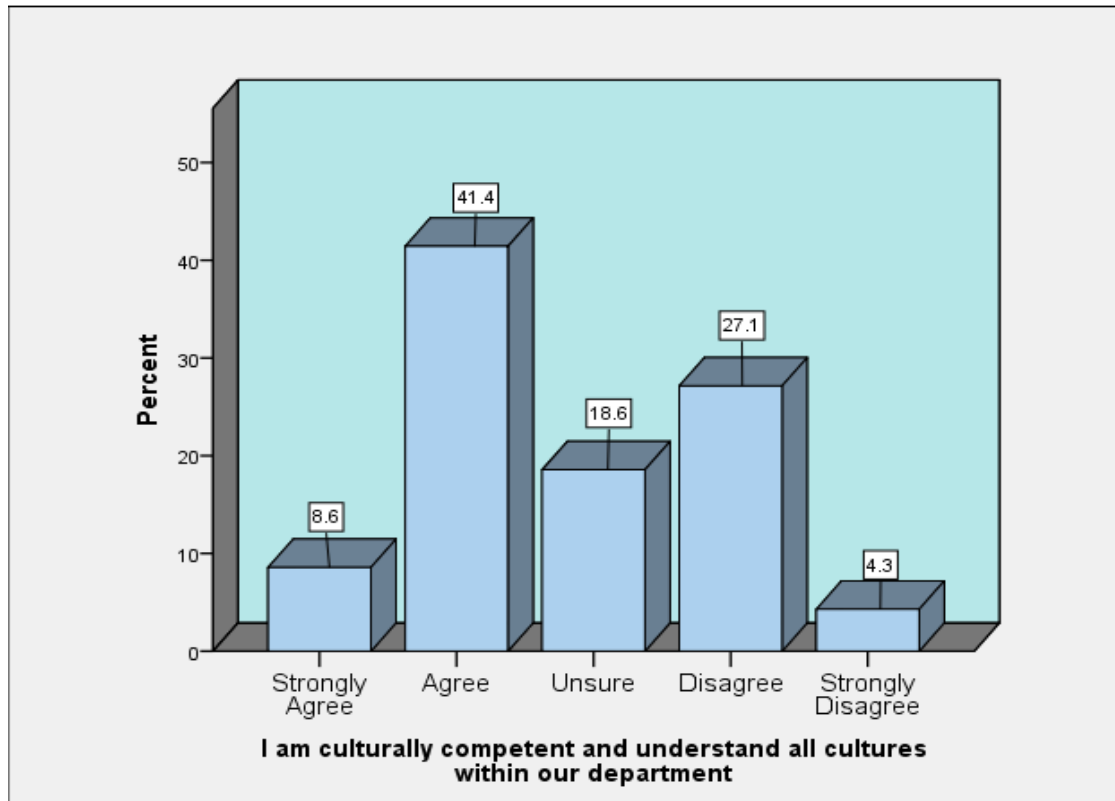
### **STATEMENT 24: I AM CULTURALLY COMPETENT AND KNOW ALL CULTURES I AM EXPOSED TO AT OUR DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Response***

In Table 4.24 and Figure 4.24, 50% of the respondents agree that they are culturally competent and know all cultures to which they are exposed at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). A further 18.6% of the respondents are unsure whether they are culturally competent and know all cultures to which they are exposed. 31.4% of the respondents in this study admit they are not entirely culturally competent and therefore disagree with the above statement.

**Table 4.24: I am culturally competent and understand all cultures within our department**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Strongly Agree	6	8.6	8.6	8.6
	Agree	29	41.4	41.4	50.0
	Unsure	13	18.6	18.6	68.6
	Disagree	19	27.1	27.1	95.7
	Strongly Disagree	3	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.24: I am culturally competent and understand all cultures within our department**

***Interpretation***

As revealed in Table 4.24 and Figure 4.24, half of the respondents in this study confirm that they are culturally competent and know all the cultures to which they are exposed at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) but the rest of the respondents indicated that they are not entirely culturally competent and did not know all the cultures to which they are exposed at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

Intercultural competence is something that is perceived about another person, rather than something an individual inherently possesses. In other words, an individual may appear competent to one person but not to the other. Moreover, intercultural competence differs from situation to situation (Neuliep, 2009:394). It is further interpreted that respondents think that they are culturally competent based on perceptions they have of different cultures. Some respondents appear competent to themselves and certain others, whereas for others they may not seem competent at all.

Competent intercultural communicators should adopt the correct attitudes towards other cultures, increase their motivational levels and acquire accurate information about other cultures' values and practices in order to overcome cultural barriers and develop specific skills needed to communicate effectively across cultures (Verderber & Verderber, 2008:116).

### 4.3.6 Respondents' views on the Communication Policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO)

The rationale for collecting this data was to determine the respondents' understanding of the communication strategy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO), to meet the research objectives of this study.

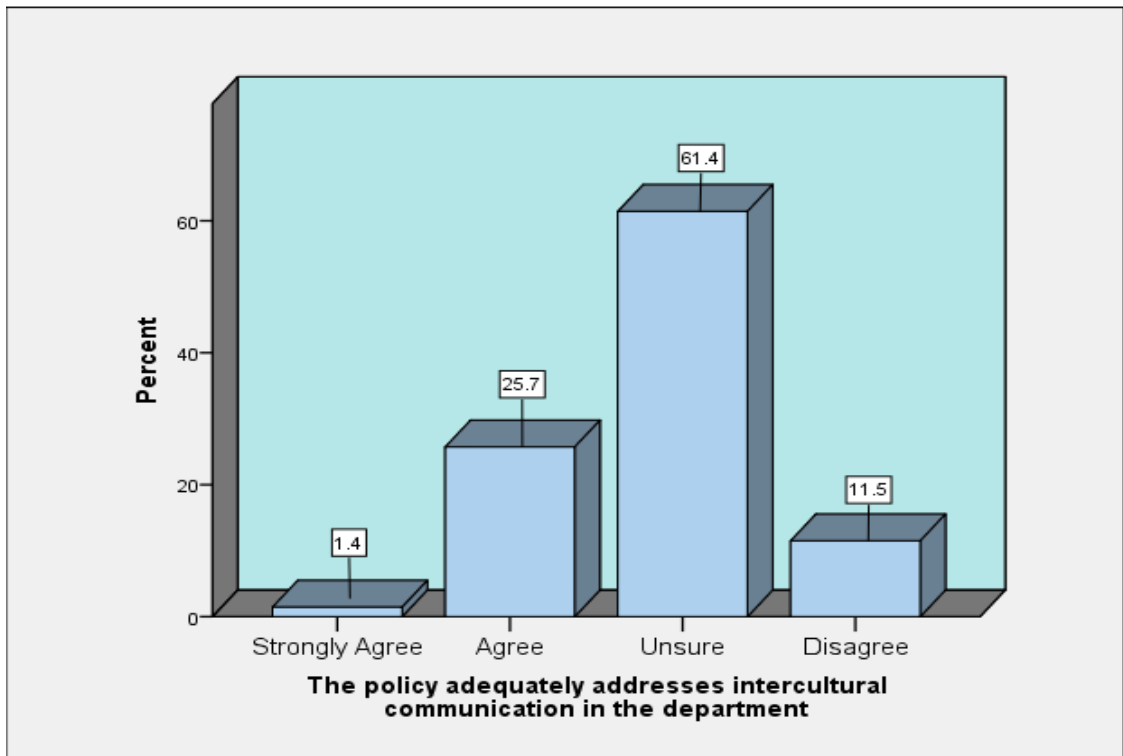
#### **STATEMENT 25: THE POLICY ADEQUATELY ADDRESSES INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE DEPARTMENT**

##### **Response**

Table 4.25 and Figure 4.25 reveal that 27.1% of the respondents in this study agree that the communication policy adequately addresses intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). The majority of respondents are unsure about this statement and constitutes 61.4% of the respondents. Only 11.4% of the respondents disagree with the above statement that says the communication policy adequately addresses intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.25: The policy adequately addresses intercultural communication in the department**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Agree	18	25.7	25.7	27.1
	Unsure	43	61.4	61.4	88.5
	Disagree	8	11.5	11.5	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.25: The policy adequately addresses intercultural communication in the department**

### ***Interpretation***

Robbins and Coulter (2007:60) describe organisational culture as the shared values, principles, traditions and ways of doing things that influence the way organisational members act, behave and communicate with each other, these aspects are normally outlined in a policy. The results revealed in Table 4.25 and Figure 4.25 show that most of the respondents are unsure whether the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) adequately addresses intercultural communication in the department.

### **STATEMENT 26: THE COMMUNICATION POLICY OF THE DOJ&CD GUIDES MANAGERS TO HANDLE CONFLICT SITUATIONS ARISING FROM CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AMONG EMPLOYEES**

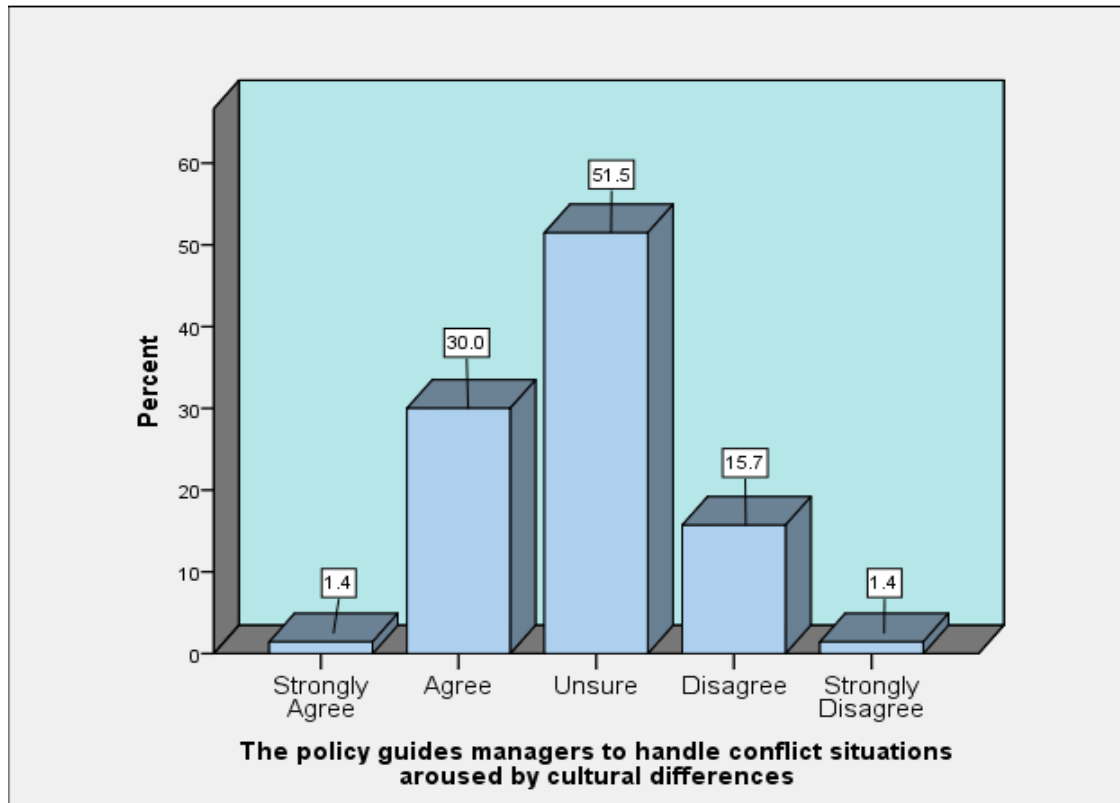
### ***Response***

Table 4.26 and Figure 4.26 reveal that 31.4% of the respondents in this study believe that the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) does guide managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences among employees. However, 51.4% of respondents are uncertain regarding this statement. Of 70 participating respondents, 12 (17.1%) respondents disagree with the statement and feel that policy does not guide managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences among employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.26: Policy guides managers to handle conflict arising from cultural differences**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Strongly Agree	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Agree	21	30.0	30.0	31.4
	Unsure	36	51.5	51.5	82.9
	Disagree	11	15.7	15.7	98.6
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	





**Figure 4.26: Policy guides managers to handle conflict arising from cultural differences**

***Interpretation***

The above data reveals that majority of the respondents participating in this study are uncertain if the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) guides managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences. The 22 respondents who felt that the policy does guide managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences merely forms part of management levels and are able to agree to this statement (see Figure and Table 4.7), while 17.1% of the respondents disagree that the policy guides managers to handle conflict arising from cultural differences. The interpretation of this data is that 51.5% of the respondents are not familiar whether the policy serves as a guiding tool to managers to handle conflict stemming from cultural differences.

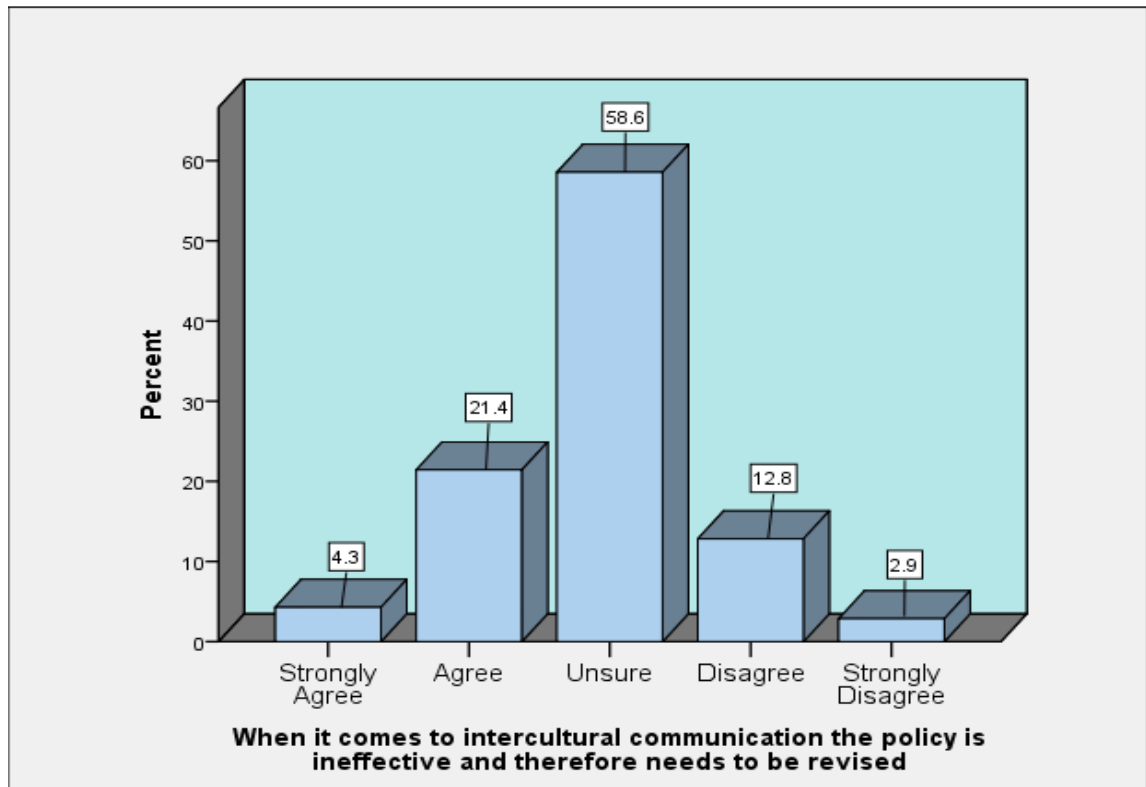
**STATEMENT 27: WHEN IT COMES TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION THE POLICY IS INEFFECTIVE AND THEREFORE NEEDS TO BE REVISED**

***Response***

Table 4.27 and Figure 4.27 show that 25.7% of the respondents agree that the policy regarding intercultural communication is ineffective and needs to be revised. The majority of respondents (58.6%) are unsure whether the policy is effective or not and needs revision, while 15.8% disagree with the statement and believe that pertaining to intercultural communication, the policy is effective and does not need to be revised.

**Table 4.27: Intercultural communication policy is ineffective and needs to be revised**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Agree	15	21.4	21.4	25.7
	Unsure	41	58.6	58.6	84.3
	Disagree	9	13	12.8	97.1
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.27: Intercultural communication policy is ineffective and needs to be revised**

***Interpretation***

As determined from the data presented above, the majority of the respondents are unsure whether the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) is effective or not when dealing with intercultural communication. For some respondents (25.7%) the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) is ineffective and needs to be revised to effectively deal with intercultural communication in the Department. Eleven of the 70 respondents (15.8%) indicated that they believe the policy is effective in the context of intercultural communication and does not need to be revised.

However, an area of concern is the large number of respondents who are unsure if the communication policy is effective or not. This could be interpreted that these respondents might not be aware of the current communication policy at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) therefore, not familiar with the policy content.

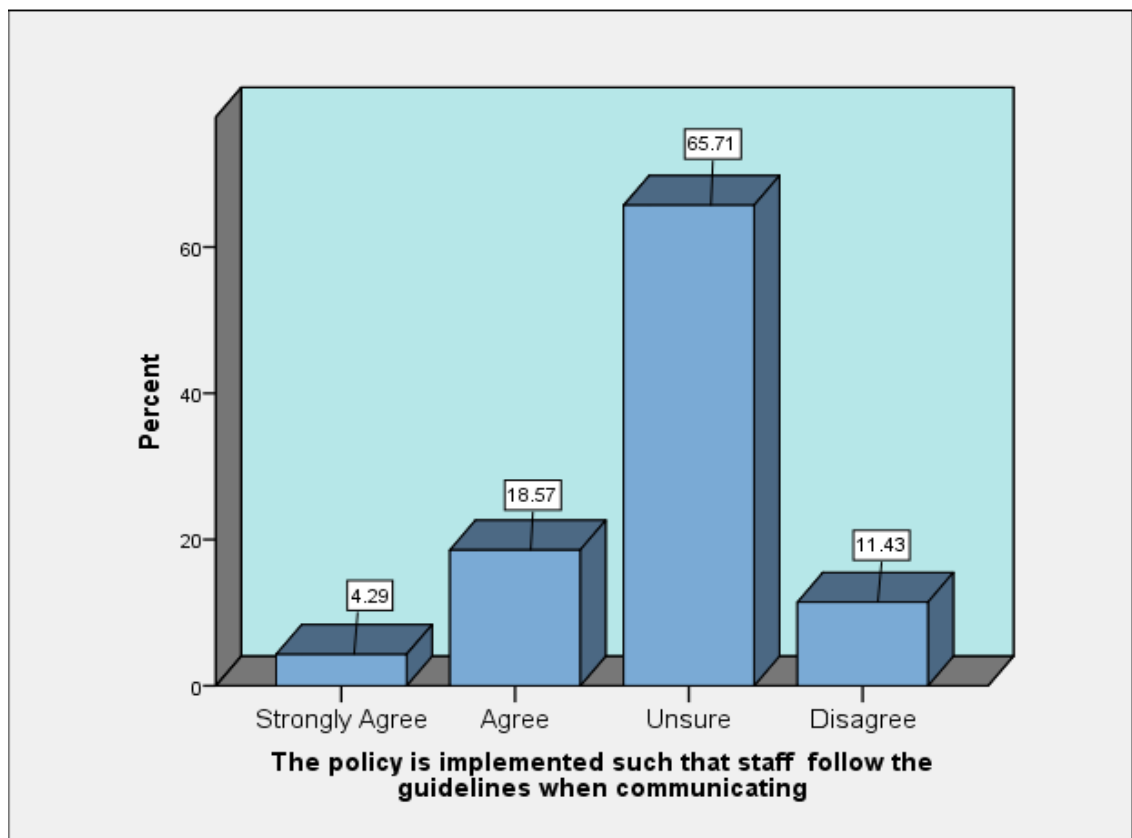
**STATEMENT 28: THE POLICY IS IMPLEMENTED IN SUCH A WAY THAT STAFF MEMBERS ADAPT THE POLICY GUIDELINES WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER**

**Response**

According to Table 4.28 and Figure 4.28, 22.9% of the respondents in this study agree that the policy is implemented in such a way that staff members adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other. Respondents who are unsure are measured at 65.7% of the sample group. The balance of 11.4% of respondents disagree with the statement that the policy is implemented in such a way that staff members adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other.

**Table 4.28: Staff follow policy guidelines when communicating**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Agree	13	18.6	18.6	22.9
	Unsure	46	65.7	65.7	88.6
	Disagree	8	11.4	11.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.28: Staff follow policy guidelines when communicating**

### ***Interpretation***

Data presented above shows that the majority of the respondents in this study (65.7%) are unsure whether the communication policy at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). enables them to adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other, possibly because they are unfamiliar with the policy content. Sixteen of the 70 (22.9%) respondents agree that the policy is implemented in such a way that they are able to adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other. The remaining 11.4% of the respondents were not convinced that the policy serves as a guideline when communicating across cultures.

It is interpreted that the policy has not been effectively communicated to employees and therefore does not adequately address intercultural communication in the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Furthermore, results show that the policy does not guide managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences occurring in the Department, nor does it allow staff members to adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other. From the above it may be concluded that the communication policy of the DOJ&CD is ineffective and clearly needs to be revised.

#### **4.3.7 Respondents' views on promoting intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).**

The rationale for collecting this data was to discover the respondents' views on how to promote intercultural communication, to meet the research objectives of this study.

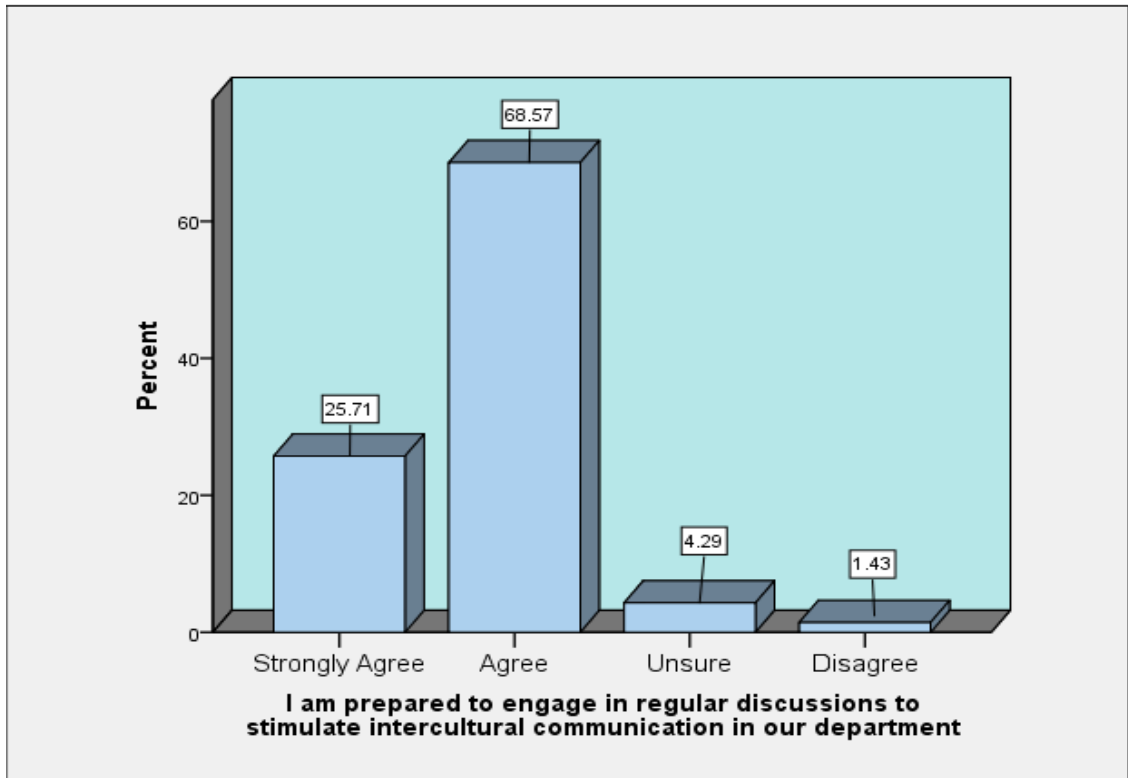
#### **STATEMENT 29: I AM PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN REGULAR DISCUSSIONS TO STIMULATE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN OUR DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Response***

Data in Table 4.29 and Figure 4.29 validates that the majority of the respondents, comprising 94.3% of the respondents, are prepared to engage in regular discussions to stimulate intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). 4.3% of the respondents indicated that they are unsure whether they are prepared to engage in these discussions and only 1.4% are not prepared to engage in regular discussions to stimulate and enhance intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

**Table 4.29: Prepared to engage in discussions to stimulate intercultural communication**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Strongly Agree	18	25.7	25.7	25.7
	Agree	48	68.6	68.6	94.3
	Unsure	3	4.3	4.3	98.6
	Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.29: Prepared to engage in discussions to stimulate intercultural communication**

***Interpretation***

As one communicates with people from different cultures one learns more about them and their way of life, including their values, history and habits and the substance of their personality. As the relationship develops one starts to understand them better, perhaps even empathising with them. One of the things people will eventually learn is that although cultures are different, people have much in common (Schlesinger, 2005:6).

According to the results revealed in Table 4.29 and Figure 4.29, the majority of the respondents confirm that they are prepared to engage in regular discussions to stimulate intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). They are willing to work with people of different cultures so that their intercultural competence can be developed and enhanced. In so doing, they can learn more about the lifestyles of other cultures, including history and value systems. Furthermore, stimulating discussions regarding intercultural communication will in turn improve relations in a cross cultural environment (Schlesinger, 2005:6).

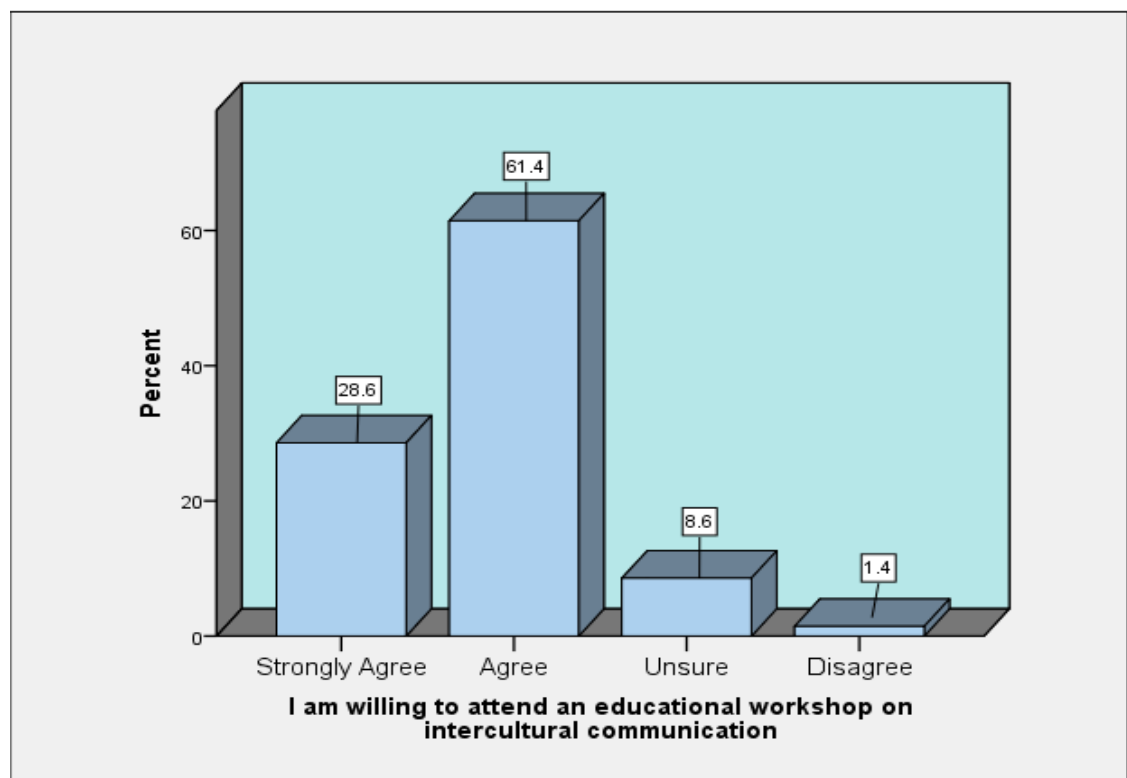
**STATEMENT 30: I AM WILLING TO ATTEND AN EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

**Response**

In Table 4.30 and Figure 4.30 it is revealed that 90% of the respondents in this study agree with this statement and are willing to attend an educational workshop on intercultural communication. 8.6% of the respondents are unsure whether they are willing to attend educational workshops on intercultural communication and a small percentage of only 1.4% of the respondents indicated that they are not willing to attend such workshops.

**Table 4.30: Willing to attend educational workshop on intercultural communication**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	20	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Agree	43	61.4	61.4	90.0
	Unsure	6	8.6	8.6	98.6
	Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.30: Willing to attend educational workshop on intercultural communication**

**Interpretation**

Even though there are a great deal of challenges existing in an increasingly diverse world, the benefits are even greater. These benefits include communicating and establishing relationships across cultures to increase international, national and local

commerce, promote healthier communities, reduce conflict and enhance personal growth through increased tolerance (Schlesinger, 2005:4).

The majority of respondents in this study indicate that they are willing to attend an educational workshop on intercultural communication. Educational workshops on intercultural communication have never occurred at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). This is regarded as one of the main reasons why employees at the department are not educated in intercultural communication and see the necessity to engage in regular discussions and educational workshops to stimulate intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

It is important that employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) attend intercultural communication workshops to educate staff that although there are a great deal of challenges existing within any working environment, the benefits are much more greater.

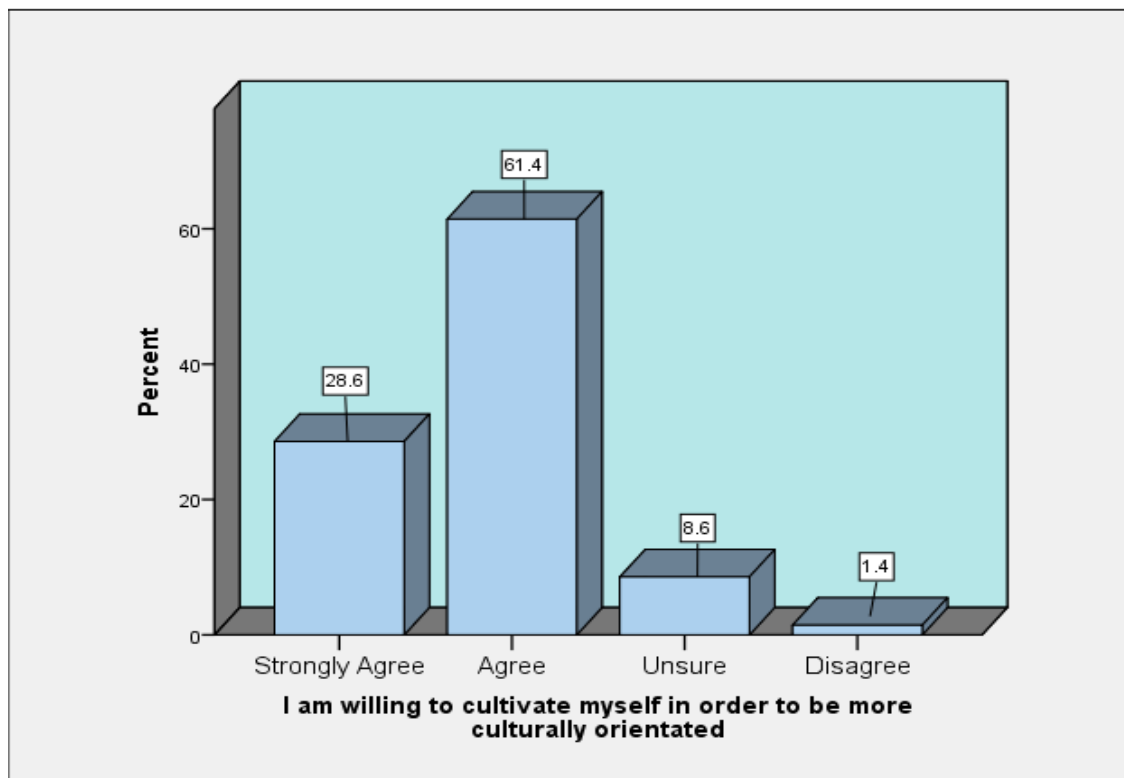
**STATEMENT 31: I AM WILLING TO CULTIVATE MYSELF TO BE MORE CULTURALLY-ORIENTED**

***Response***

Table 4.31 and Figure 4.31 show that 90% of the respondents in this study are willing to cultivate themselves to become more culturally-oriented and therefore agreed with the above statement. While 8.6% of the respondents are unsure whether they are willing to cultivate themselves to become more culturally-oriented, only 1.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

**Table 4.31: Willing to cultivate myself to become more culturally-oriented**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	20	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Agree	43	61.4	61.4	90.0
	Unsure	6	8.6	8.6	98.6
	Disagree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 4.31: Willing to cultivate myself to become more culturally-oriented**

### ***Interpretation***

Developing self and other knowledge is an ongoing process that will continue to adapt and grow as people of different cultures encounter new experiences. Mindfulness and cognitive complexity will facilitate people to continue to enhance intercultural communication settings, so that existing knowledge can constantly be revised to create new communication frameworks in that people become much more culturally competent to communicate effectively across cultures.

The results show that the vast majority (90%) of respondents in this study are willing to cultivate themselves to become more culturally-oriented, as well as to develop self and other knowledge and empower themselves to be more culturally-oriented. This will help them adapt and grow in a cross-cultural environment when encountering new experiences. To be culturally competent has a positive impact on reducing intercultural communication challenges in a cross-cultural environment. People engaging in intercultural communication are urged to learn and pursue more information about other cultures (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:102-103).

One of the things you will eventually learn is that although cultures are different, people have much in common. All humans have the same basic desires and needs, although everyone just has different ways of reaching them. In this way one develops personal growth through increased tolerance (Schlesinger, 2005:4).



#### **4.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented analysed and interpreted data collected by means of a structured questionnaire. The aim was to establish the views of respondents pertaining to intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO), with reference to working across cultures, intercultural communication problems, intercultural communication and conflict, intercultural communication competence, the communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) and promoting intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

The structured questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section 1 covered the biographical data of the respondents and Section 2 contained close-ended statements using a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree and strongly disagree). The data collected was analysed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21.0 (SPSS) and thereafter presented in the form of tables and graphs with detailed explanations.

The following chapter five contains a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study investigated the process of intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). The study also evaluated the employees' understanding of culture to determine whether a lack of cultural knowledge contributes to miscommunication in the department. Moreover, the study aimed to determine how effective the current communication strategy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) is in addressing intercultural communication. The causes and effects of poor intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO) were also verified.

The key purpose of this study was to devise a new communication strategy which will address intercultural communication in the workplace, specifically managers dealing with intercultural differences in particular will be assisted. Furthermore, the research objectives of this study were to provide a theoretical overview of intercultural communication in a globalised environment, as well as South Africa, to learn lessons from experiences and to devise a sound theoretical framework for the study from which key variables pertaining to intercultural communication can be formulated and to provide a set of adequate recommendations and conclusions aimed at enhancing intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

As a result of the above, Chapter One commenced with the introduction and background to the study, Chapter Two discussed the literature review of intercultural communication within a globalised environment, Chapter Three introduced the research methodology employed for the study, Chapter Four analysed the data and presented the results. Chapter Five completes the study by providing concluding remarks based on theoretical grounds as contained in Chapter Two. This chapter provides suggested recommendations to effectively enhance intercultural communication in government departments but with specific reference to the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

#### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

A theoretical overview of intercultural communication in a globalised environment including South Africa was discussed. The theoretical overview has revealed that over the past few decades the study of intercultural communication has expanded to cover a diverse set of variables derived from the concepts "communication" and "culture" and a combination of the two. It has been promoted that communication and culture are inseparable for culture is a

code we learn and share, and learning and sharing require communication. However, during intercultural communication it is assumed that the message sent is not always the message received (Schlesinger, 2005:32). Even though there are a great deal of challenges existing in an increasingly diverse world, the benefits are even greater. These benefits include communicating and establishing relationships with people to increase international, national and local commerce, promote healthier communities, reduce conflict and enhance personal growth through increased tolerance (Schlesinger, 2005:4).

This study revealed that working across cultures is not complicated among most employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), nor does it negatively affect service delivery in the Department as indicated by participants of the study. According to Bovee and Thill (2008:74), communicating successfully from one culture to another requires a variety of skills as communicating in a diverse business environment is not always an easy task. For this reason, intercultural communication is critical to any government department as it is a process of sending and receiving messages between people from different cultural backgrounds, causing them to interpret and understand verbal and non-verbal messages in a different way. Regardless of whether communicating across cultures is not an easy task, employees still find it interesting to work with people of different cultures. People can learn to overcome such challenges and eventually grow. As relations between people of different cultures develop they would start to understand each other better, resulting in an improved cross-cultural environment. Hence, this study reveals that working with people of different cultures improves relations and enhances intercultural competence in a cross-cultural environment.

Bovee and Thill (2008:640) states that during intercultural communication the message sent is not always the message received. Furthermore, Allwood (1985:13) states that when people of different cultures meet, all differences between them may potentially lead to misunderstandings. Consequently, the results of this study reveal that cultural differences may indeed lead to misunderstandings, while lack of cultural knowledge is a major contributing factor to miscommunication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Differences in language styles between people of diverse cultures are also deemed to be a factor of miscommunication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) as words mean different things to different people.

Fielding (1996) reports on fundamental patterns of cultural differences and concludes that the following are barriers to effective intercultural communication in a multiculturalism country such as South Africa: "different world views, different values and beliefs, prejudices, different languages, different ways of using and interpreting the non-verbal code, different ways of constructing messages, unequal power and the failure to allow for individual cultural differences within a group". These descriptions emphasise on the recurring causes of

intercultural communication difficulties in a multicultural working environment such as the DOJ&CD (WC RO). However, this study highlighted that economic, political and social stability in South Africa requires all cultural groups to live and work in harmony regardless of the irregularities of the past caused by apartheid.

Furthermore, while the vision of a globalised village holds great promise, the reality is that diverse people have diverse opinions, values and beliefs that clash and too often result in conflict. Only through effective intercultural communication can such conflict be managed and reduced (Schlesinger, 2005:37). Within the context of the DOJ&CD (WC RO), this study steers towards the view of Pepper (1995:199) who states that poor communication is the dominant characteristic of conflict for it serves as both a cause and an effect of poor intercultural communication. This study further revealed that the DOJ&CD (WC RO)'s organisational culture determines how conflict is viewed. Boddy (2005:326) describes organisational culture as the collection of relatively uniform and enduring values, beliefs, customs and practises that are uniquely shared by an organisation's members and which are transmitted from one generation of employees to the next. Moreover, it has also been detected in the study that intercultural conflict involves a certain degree of wrong perceptions and judgements of other people's cultures within the DOJ&CD (WC RO). A good starting point to illustrate conflict would be to recognise that people of different cultures are different, rather than better or worse (Schlesinger, 2005:32).

Intercultural communication competence is defined as the extent to which people effectively adapt their verbal and non-verbal messages to the suitable culture context. However, this process requires that you have some knowledge of the culture of the person with whom you communicate. Hence, this study emphasises the importance of cultivating intercultural competence amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Furthermore, this study reveals that lack of cultural knowledge is one of the prime factors leading to miscommunication in the at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), despite the fact that this study reveals employees are culturally competent and know all cultures to which they are exposed. Intercultural competence is a learning process and this study highlighted that employees are willing and motivated to engage in enhancing their intercultural communication competency levels, which is deemed to be a voluntary, rewarding and lifelong learning process.

The communication policy of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) maintains that effective communication is imperative to overcome cultural differences across nationality, religion, cultures and behaviours of employees working at the department. However, this study revealed the uncertainty of employees regarding the communication policy of the DOJ&CD. This study detected that employees are unsure whether the policy adequately addresses intercultural communication, guides managers to handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences. There was also uncertainty about whether the policy is implemented in such a

way that employees adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other and is regarded as ineffective and therefore needs to be revised. It can be concluded that the current communication policy of the DOJ&CD is unknown to employees or it could be that the policy has not been effectively communicated to all employees resulting to the policy not adequately addressing intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

Developing self and other knowledge is an ongoing process that will continue to grow as people of different cultures may encounter new experiences. Mindfulness and cognitive complexity will facilitate people to continue to enhance intercultural communication settings so that existing knowledge can constantly be revised to create new communication frameworks, in that people become much more culturally competent to communicate effectively across cultures (Beebe *et al.*, 2011:102-103). Consequently, the findings of this study reveal that employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) are inspired to cultivate themselves to become more culturally-oriented and to adapt and grow in a cross-cultural environment such as the DOJ&CD. Thus, being culturally competent is a means of reducing the impact of intercultural communication challenges.

It is believed that the information presented in this study will assist the DOJ&CD (WC RO) to highlight various problems causing miscommunication and enhance intercultural communication to both internal and external stakeholders. For miscommunication amongst employees lead to ongoing tension and conflict which in turn leads to formally lodged grievances at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

Resultant from the above, the following section makes recommendations to enhance, control, monitor and evaluate effective intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO). Additionally, resulting in a more harmonious working environment, with reduced conflict and increased productivity levels within the DOJ&CD (WC RO) and the Public Service as a whole.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Every attempt to send and receive messages is influenced by culture, so to communicate successfully people will need a basic understanding of the cultural differences they may encounter. To enhance effective intercultural communication at the DOJ&CD (WC RO), recommendations are made to serve as guidelines towards meeting the objectives of the study.

The following are the key recommendations which result from this research study. These recommendations should be considered as methods to enhance intercultural communication amongst employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

### **5.3.1 Policy-makers of the DOJ&CD (WC RO)**

#### ***Recommendation One***

It is recommended by the researcher that policy-makers at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) should review their communication policy. As the current policy only mentions that effective communication is imperative to overcome cultural differences across nationality, religion, culture and behavior of employees working at the department. It should be reviewed so that it places more emphasis on the importance of effective intercultural communication in the workplace. The policy should serve as a guideline to employees to successfully communicate across cultures, outlining means to overcome intercultural communication barriers as well as the benefits to effective intercultural communication. The policy should further serve as a guide to managers to effectively handle conflict situations arising from cultural differences amongst employees. Overall the policy should be communicated to all employees in various languages of choice to create clear understanding.

### **5.3.2 Human Resource Directorate: Training Division of the DOJ&CD (WC RO)**

#### ***Recommendation One***

Educational workshops dealing with culture and communication should specifically be designed by the Training Division of the Human Resource Directorate of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) in order to ensure continuous advancement of intercultural communication amongst employees. Furthermore, it is recommended that the topic intercultural communication be discussed at Induction Training Programs, which should be held quarterly for new employees appointed at the DOJ&CD (WC RO).

### **5.3.3 Employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO)**

#### ***Recommendation One***

It is recommended that employees at the DOJ&CD (WC RO) actively strive to develop cross-cultural understanding through:

- Acquiring knowledge regarding different cultures;
- Indulging in formal training provided by the Human Resource Directorate;
- Asking questions to show interest in the next persons culture;
- Seeking individual differences to avoid cultural stereotyping, as culture not only determines people's values, beliefs and behaviours but also determines people's background, experiences and personalities.
- Starting from scratch and forgetting about assumptions and stereotypes;

- Learning to understand the basics of various languages;
- Listening carefully to what the next person is saying and being able to understand before responding; and lastly
- Avoiding jokes regarding culture, race, religion and beliefs.

The more employees communicate and work together across cultures the more they tend to learn about each other's cultures, way of life, which includes their values, history, habits and the substance of their personality. As such relationships develop they would start to understand each other better, which in turn contributes to effective intercultural communication and a harmonious working environment.

### ***Recommendation Two***

To enhance intercultural communication within the DOJ&CD (WC RO), the researcher recommends that employees should become culturally competent to overcome miscommunication resulting from lack of cultural knowledge. Furthermore, it is also recommended that employees of the DOJ&CD (WC RO) engage in self-actualisation and a personal growth process to become culturally competent and achieve successful intercultural communication.

Employees can adapt the following aspects in becoming culturally competent communicators:

- Employees should adopt the correct attitudes by exploring new behaviours, rather than expecting the other person to adjust to theirs. Also, display a sense of unselfish and genuine concern for the welfare of others;
- Employees should become more motivated as motivation is crucial when communicating across cultures and no other skill is relevant to becoming a competent intercultural communicator. The desire for employees to improve their intercultural communication skills is required as the initial step towards effective communication;
- Employees should acquire knowledge about other cultures which will improve their understanding and reduce the chances of miscommunication;
- Employees should develop culture-specific skills that are required for efficient intercultural communication namely listening, empathy and flexibility

### **5.3.4 Management of the DOJ&CD (WC RO)**

#### ***Recommendation One***

It is recommended that managers be equipped to deal swiftly and effectively with intercultural disputes, to the benefit of all employees and the DOJ&CD (WC RO) as a whole for perceiving and handling conflict is rooted in culture. Managers are

recommended to adapt the following skills when dealing with intercultural conflict situations at the DOJ&CD (WC RO):

- The manager should confront cultural discrimination in the workplace and show no tolerance for it;
- The manager needs to identify the contentious issue by discovering what the core of the disagreement is. By doing this proves the manager's willingness to negotiate in an unbiased manner;
- The manager should not rush to solve intercultural conflict situation him or herself. The involved employees should be interviewed to identify the core issues, to create opportunities for involved employees to validate the concerns of each other. This includes the recognition and constructive expression of differences, as well as highlighting cultural similarities;
- The manager should investigate the cultural norms of the employees involved in the dispute as it could be a matter of pure misunderstanding instead of it being a cultural component; and also
- The manager should keep the conflict situation centred on ideas and not people. This process keeps the negotiation focussed on solving the problem that created the conflict instead of having the parties defend their egos or preserve their image.

### ***Recommendation Two***

As a result of the above, the researcher recommends that managers familiarise themselves with multicultural groups by having regular discussions with employees regarding possible cultural differences and being able to establish how these cultural differences may affect employees and their interactions in the workplace. The researcher further recommends that managers should maintain control over intercultural communication in the workplace by means of the following:

- Assessment of intercultural competence or expertise, in other words how people think and feel about intercultural differences;
- Enhance group facilitation matched to the group's current intercultural expertise;
- Encourage group development and learning matched to the group's current intercultural expertise; and
- Highlighting the presence of the various cultures in the working environment and foster understanding and participation through cultural events.



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## APPENDIX A: Permission letter to conduct research



10 May 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Ms S Davids (Student number: 205078648)**

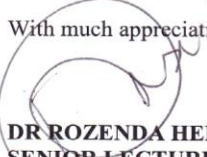
The above student is registered for a Masters degree in Technology (Public Management) at the above institution.

The title of her research is: *Intercultural communication amongst employees of the Department of Justice Western Cape.*

As her research supervisor, I kindly request that you please assist her with information she may require to conclude her studies successfully. The information will be handled in an ethically sound manner as per the university's research and ethics policies.

Feel free to contact me should any further information be required.

With much appreciation and kind regards,



**DR ROZENDA HENDRICKSE**  
**SENIOR LECTURER**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**  
**TEL: 021 – 460 3929**  
**EMAIL: hendrickser@cput.ac.za**



## APPENDIX B: Letter of approval from the DOJ&CD

37 Eloff Way  
Portlands  
Mitchells Plain  
7785  
25 May 2012

To: The Regional Head  
Adv. H. Mohamed  
Private Bag X9171  
Cape Town  
8000

Cc: The Director Human Resources  
Mr. D. Roux

**REQUEST TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH – SHAFIEKAH  
DAVIDS, PERSAL NUMBER: 23293365**

My name is Shafiekah Davids and I am currently registered for a Masters degree in Technology (Public Management) at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology with student number: 205078648. I am employed as a Human Resource Officer at the Western Cape Regional Office, Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. **Annexure A**

Part of my course in Public Management requires that I submit a full-thesis relating to the sphere of studies. The topic that I have chosen is Intercultural Communication.

Considering the preceding, I hereby seek permission to conduct research at the Regional Office, Western Cape. The study will focus on all the different Directorates, namely Human Resources, Legal Services, Court Operations as well as the Finance Directorate of which the sample will consist of 120 employees. I can assure that the information gathered will be for research purposes only. I am also willing to avail a copy of my thesis to the Regional Office upon completion thereof.

Thanking You.

  
.....  
Shafiekah Davids  
23293365

25/05/2012




REQUEST TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH- SHAFIEKAH DAVIDS


RECOMMENDED/..... ✓ .....

Comments (if any)

.....  
.....  
.....

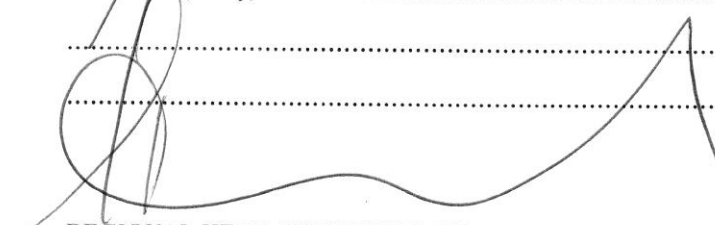

  
**DIRECTOR: HUMAN RESOURCES**  
DATE: 25/5/2012

REQUEST TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH- SHAFIEKAH DAVIDS

APPROVED/.....  .....

Comments (If any).....

.....  
.....

  
**REGIONAL HEAD: WESTERN CAPE**  
DATE: 

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND  
CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
PRIVATE BAG X9171  
2012-05-05  
CAPE TOWN 8000, WESTERN CAPE  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND  
CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



## APPENDIX C: Letter to participants



Dear Colleague

### REQUEST TO COMPLETE A BIOGRAPHICAL AND RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Masters student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology conducting research for my thesis on Intercultural Communication. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2012 I obtained permission from Advocate Hishaam Mohamed (Regional Head: Department of Justice) to proceed with my research at your department.

The attached biographical questionnaire (section 1) contains questions about you, while the intercultural communication questionnaire (section 2) relates to your feelings and opinions regarding intercultural communication in your department. There are no right and wrong answers. Please ensure that you select all your responses by making a cross (**X**) in the appropriate block.

Your responses will be treated with the utmost of confidentiality and is for research purposes only; therefore no provision is made for you to indicate your name on the questionnaire.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for availing yourself and thereby contributing towards making my research thesis a success.

Thanking you.

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Shafiekah Davids

## APPENDIX D: Questionnaire



### INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Biographical Information: Section: 1

Please indicate with a cross (X) in the block applicable to you.

<b>1. Gender</b>	
Male	
female	
<b>2. Age</b>	
25-35	
36-45	
46-55	
56 and older	
<b>3. Race</b>	
African	
Coloured	
White	
Indian	
<b>4. Religion</b>	
Christianity	
Islam	
Judaism	
Hinduism	
Other (specify)	
<b>5. Preferred Language</b>	
English	
Afrikaans	
Xhosa	
Sotho	
Other (specify)	

<b>6. Number of years at the DOJ&amp;CD</b>	
2 years or less	
3 – 5 years	
6 -10 years	
10 years and more	
<b>7. Job classification</b>	
Security	
Messenger	
Administration clerk	
Registration Clerk	
Accounting Clerk	
Secretary	
Human Resource Officer	
Senior Human Resource Officer	
Legal Admin Officer	
Administrative Officer	
Assistant Director	
Deputy Director	
Director	
Other	
<b>8. Highest Qualification</b>	
Grade 12	
Diploma	
Bachelors Degree	
Masters Degree	
Doctoral Degree	
Other (specify)	

**Section: 2**

Listed below are a series of statements that represents the topic intercultural communication. Please select an answer by making a cross (X) in the appropriate block that resembles your opinion

1.	<b>WORKING ACROSS CULTURES</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.1	I am not willing to work with people from other cultures					
1.2	Working with people of different cultures is extremely complicated					
1.3	Working with people of different cultural backgrounds is problematic and causes delays in service delivery					
1.4	Working with people of different cultures develops and enhances my intercultural competence					
1.5	Working with people from other cultures improves relations in a cross-cultural environment					

2.	<b>INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
2.1	Cultural differences in our department often leads to misunderstandings					
2.2	In our department problems arise due to lack of understanding between people from different cultures					
2.3	In our department problems arise due to a difference in language styles between people from different cultures					
2.4	As a result of the post-apartheid era in South Africa, it calls for all racial groups to live in harmony and work together to build a country that is economically, politically and socially stable					

3.	<b>INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
3.1	In our department poor communication is the major cause of conflict					
3.2	Our department's organizational culture determines how conflict is viewed					
3.3	Wrong perceptions and judgments of other cultures lead to intercultural conflict in our department					

4.	<b>INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
4.1	It is important that I have some kind of knowledge about the person with who I am communicating					
4.2	Lack of cultural knowledge is the prime factor which contributes to miscommunication in our department					
4.3	Intercultural communication competence is a learning process in which I am not willing to engage					
4.4	I am culturally competent and know all cultures I am exposed to at our department					

5.	<b>THE COMMUNICATION POLICY OF THE DOJ &amp; CD</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
5.1	The policy adequately addresses intercultural communication in the department					
5.2	The policy guides managers to handle conflict situations aroused by cultural differences among employees					
5.3	When it comes to intercultural communication the policy is ineffective and therefore needs to be revised					
5.4	The policy is implemented in such a way that staff members adapt the policy guidelines when communicating with each other					

6.	<b>IN ORDER TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
6.1	I am prepared to engage in regular discussions to stimulate intercultural communication in our department					
6.2	I am willing to attend an educational workshop on intercultural communication					
6.3	I am willing to cultivate myself in order to be more culturally-orientated					

## **APPENDIX E: Letter from grammarian**

1 Kort Street  
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September 2013

### **EDITING & PROOFREADING**

Cheryl M. Thomson

EDITOR & PROOFREADER

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### **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to confirm that the Master's Thesis of SHAFIEKAH DAVIDS, student number 205078648 at the CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, was proof read and edited by Cheryl Thomson in preparation for submission of thesis for assessment.

Yours faithfully

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