Contact Centre Culture Within and Between Organisations

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work, except where due acknowledgement is made to others. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in the field of Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any University.

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Abstract

Organisational culture is an underlying theme in every organisation and moderates an organisation's success or failure. The employee is a representation of the organisation and it is the congruence of their beliefs with the culture of the organisation that predicts the organisation's success. Contact centres tend to be the customer- facing department within many organisations but are characteristically distinguished from the rest of the organisation by their use of telephonic communication and stringent performance monitoring. As a result of the critical sales or service interactions that contact centres are responsible for, this research report seeks to establish whether contact centres have a distinct culture or share a common culture with the rest of the organisation. Two contact centres and one administration department were researched in two organisations as well as a single contact centre in a third organisation. The total sample (N=238) allowed the researcher to investigate whether organisational culture varies between contact centres and other divisions within the same organisation or whether contact centres have a shared distinct subculture across organisations. A self-composed, 61- item scale entitled "Culture Questionnaire" was used to investigate these differences. Two other minor descriptive scales were included as well as a questionnaire focussing on the South African concept of Ubuntu. The research established that differences in organisational culture exist between departments in different organisations, including contact centres. No differences were established between departments within the same organisations. The results of this research project thus suggest that contact centres do not have a distinguishable subculture and are a representation of the greater organisation.

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Table of Contents

iv) List of Tables

v) List of Figures

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Organisational culture is perhaps one of the most poorly understood psychological constructs within the modern organisation. This may result from the difficulties in defining "organisational culture", measuring "organisational culture" or the fact that culture moderates organisational relationships instead of having a direct impact on the bottom-line and thus its impact within the organisation is not clearly quantified. This by no means negates the impact of organisational culture on the organisation.

Multiple studies have focussed on the role of culture on workers' performance, motivation, commitment, intention to leave and other psychological constructs (Meglino, Ravlin & Adkins, 1989; Sathe, 1983). These constructs impact on company profit but as a moderator of such relationships, it is the "goodness of fit" between an individual and the organisation's culture that may be a better predictor of success (Chatman & Jehn, 1991). This idea was shared by Marvin Bower, once the managing director of McKinsey and Company, who suggested that success, was dependant on the congruence between one's own culture and that of the organisation (Bower, 1966).

The concept of organisational culture is not easily defined. Besides being easily confused with organisational climate, there is no universal instrument to measure culture. As a result, the definitions and models of organisational culture vary. This will be explored within the next chapter. However, organisational culture may be simply defined as "the way we do things around here" (Bower, 1966). The aims and objectives of the study are now discussed.

1.1 Objective and Aims of the study

The objective of this research report was to explore whether organisational culture differs between and within different organisations and contact centres.

The specific aims of the study were:

- To identify whether there was a difference in culture within different contact centres
- To identify whether culture differs within different departments in the same organisations

The study was undertaken within three different organisations in order to meet the objectives of this study. Within each organisation, different departments were selected in order to distinguish between any differences in culture within and between organisations.

A discussion on organisational climate and organisational culture follows and concludes this chapter.

1.2 Organisational Climate and Organisational Culture

While this research focuses exclusively on *organisational culture*, some of the constructs discussed and measured in this research may be viewed as elements of *climate*. At this juncture it is important to differentiate between these two concepts as well as justify the conceptualisation of organisational culture in this research.

With a review of the literature, it is apparent that there is a blurring of the concepts between *organisational culture* and *organisational climate*. With careful analysis of the literature, there are also differing views as to whether culture and climate are synonymous terms or unique constructs with their own defining characteristics. This will now be explored below.

Climate often refers to the physical attributes of an organisation such as remuneration, leadership and supervision. Payne and Pugh (1976) confirmed this view and listed dimensions such as risk-taking, warmth, support and control as defining concepts of an organisation's climate. Albert (1985) strengthened the view that they are different constructs by defining organisational culture as a set of values that influence employee behaviour. This is the overarching view of Schwartz and Davis (1981) who defined climate in terms of physical constructs whereas Albert (1985) and Tunstall (1983) both defined culture in terms of the constructs that influence the behaviour of employees.

Kurt Lewin initiated some of the first studies of "climate" during the 1930's. As opposed to the deep-rooted nature of "culture", "climate" tends to vary with changes in three main factors that are prevalent in most organisations. These are listed below:

a) the history of the climate (duration, type and direction of change)
b) the limitations placed on the individual by the formal organisation and the tasks performed within the organisation
c) the needs, values and expectations of the organisation's members.

Lewin (1951) however claimed that the overarching and dramatic determinant of climate seems to be the influence of the managers and leaders present in the organisation at a particular time. Climate is thus ultimately dependent on the following factors: focus placed on adherence to rules; goals and standards set; relationships with peers, and the quality of communication with colleagues (Lewin, 1951).

Schwartz and Davis (1981) claimed that climate surveys measure attitudes and not behaviour. Climate thus focuses on whether employees' expectations of an organisation are being met whereas culture is a pattern of beliefs and expectations that are shared by members of an organisation. As a result of this, climate is relatively easy to change and can be managed over the short term. Culture is deep-rooted and is difficult to change (Schwartz and Davis, 1981).

The self-constructed questionnaire used in this research focuses on reward systems, management contact, communication patterns, identity, integration, risk tolerance, initiative, conflict tolerance, control and Ubuntu within an organisation. Climate identifies individual's expectations towards such constructs. The way these constructs are presented, defined and analysed within this research, allows for the identification of deep-rooted organisational practises that identify an organisation rather than the individual perceptions within that organisation.

It is hoped that these deep-rooted identities will answer the research questions that compare and contrast organisations as well as various departments within each organisation.

Culture is generally viewed as an attribute of an organisation and not to the individual (Selby & Garretson, 1981). As a consequence, organisational culture is constructed from the commonly held attitudes, shared beliefs and values of employees. These attitudes, beliefs and values are usually supported by the organisation and create unwritten rules that guide and moderate behaviour within the organisation.

The behaviour of individuals will also be influenced by their perceptions of the organisation's climate. Climate and culture are closely interrelated but it is the long-standing prevalence of these views across an organisation rather than the perceptions of an individual that differentiates culture from climate. As a result, culture is difficult to change and should be used constructively to guide behaviour towards a desired endpoint as opposed to enforcing it.

There is thus a difference between organisational culture and climate. The key aspects that differentiate these two concepts are the level at which they impact on employees and the ease with which each can be changed. Organisational culture will be further defined and discussed within the literature review and is the basis upon which this research project will focus.

1.3 Summary of the Research Report

The literature review follows on from this introduction with a theoretical review of contact centres and organisational culture. This is followed by a review of the origins and sources of organisational culture and the African values concept of Ubuntu. A discussion on subcultures and past relevant research to the research aims conclude this chapter.

The methods section describes the research design undertaken and the sampling methodology and the final composition of this sample. The pilot study is then discussed along with the procedures used to undertake this research and data collection. The measures and their composition are then discussed followed by the methods of statistical analysis. Factor analysis, internal reliability analysis and analysis of variance was used in order to answer the research questions. The methods section is concluded with an in-depth discussion of the ethical considerations operationalised by the researcher.

The results are presented and this is followed by a discussion of the results and how they relate to existing published research. This research project is concluded with brief discussions on the theoretical and practical implications of this research followed by the limitations of this research and directions for future research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Overview

This chapter provides a theoretical overview of contact centres by defining the concept and differentiating it to other organisational divisions. An in-depth analysis of organisational culture follows with a focus on the models of Schein (1980), Robbins (1987) and Smircich (1983). This discussion is followed by an overview of the origins and sources of organisational culture. The African value system of "Ubuntu" is discussed and the chapter is concluded by a discussion on subcultures and past research that is of relevance to the research questions.

2.1 Contact Centres

Contact centres are relatively new organisational phenomena that have become popular due to the benefits they offer in furthering an organisation's objectives (Holman, 2005). These objectives include the servicing of clients using both the latest technology and performance monitoring in a highly structured, centralised location (Hingst, 2006).

Contact centres and call centres are often used interchangeably as if they are synonymous terms. Within the research reviewed, many researchers also use the terms interchangeably. However, a key difference is that the range of services and advice offered by a contact centre consultant is of a broader and more in-depth nature than a call centre agent. The nature of work and features of contact centres, as will be described below, are similar however. For the purpose of this project, the researcher will refer to these specific work environments as "contact centres."

Holman (2005) characterises contact centres according to four key features that differentiate a contact centre from other organisational divisions. These characteristic features are: unique contact centre technologies; extensive performance monitoring; unique human resource management styles and lastly the specialised job and work designs within contact centres. These will now be discussed below.

The first is that of *contact centre technologies*. All work processes within contact centres are facilitated by computer and telephone-based technology (Garson, 1988). Contact centres can thus be defined by customer-employee interaction that is technologically mediated and where the technology permeates every single aspect of the work environment as well as its associated processes (Holman, 2003). Cherns (1987) claims that the relationship between contact centre technology and social customer interaction, allows for a contact centre to be defined as a socio-technical system.

Performance monitoring is the second key feature of contact centres (Holman, 2005). Performance monitoring involves the recording, examination and provision of feedback in response to employees' telephone calls (Stanton, 2000). The purpose of performance monitoring includes performance appraisal, quality control, identifying training needs and having recourse should a dispute arise later. The desired outcome of performance monitoring should be to improve the client experience and as Davidson and Henderson (2000) claimed, performance monitoring should be for developmental rather than disciplinary means. In many organisations however, performance monitoring is used to control contact centre agents' behaviour as well as a means of asserting discipline and instituting disciplinary action.

Human resource management is the third key feature of contact centres. There are two models of service management: *mass service* and *high commitment service* (Holman, 2005). The *mass service* contact centre serves the mass market, where profit margins are small and the market is very competitive. Products are standardised for low training costs and monitoring is high to ensure adherence to the standardised job requirements (Ichniowski, Kochan, Levine, Olson & Strauss, 1996). Examples of such contact centres include those dealing with public transport and retail banking. Within these contact centres, the queries tend to be of a similar nature and the call centre adds to the costs of a company. Thus there is a drive to field as many calls as possible and the service tends to be impersonal with no relationship being built between the call centre agent and the client. Mass service contact centres tend to be termed call centres as opposed to contact centres based on the reasoning outlined earlier.

The *high commitment* contact centre serves a higher net worth clientele where profits and sales can be enhanced by building a relationship with the client and providing a customised, tailored service to meet one's individual needs (Ichniowski et al, 1996). The contact centre agent within a high- commitment environment may "own" more complex queries and ensure it is resolved – thus more commitment to the client is required as opposed to a single telephone call that gets resolved immediately within a mass service environment. A high commitment call centre may be viewed as a cost to the company but such interactions between the call centre consultant and the client may lead to further business in the future and thus indirectly add profit to the organisation.

The last key feature is the actual *job and work design* within contact centres. According to Frenkel, Korczynski, Shire and Tam (1999), the design of contact centre jobs can be placed along a continuum from *Taylorist* to *Empowered*. In Taylorist contact centres, the work is unskilled, monotonous and repetitive. Calls are short in duration with a script to read to the client. There is thus little control over any sphere of one's work such as intensity, skills variety and task independence (Holman, 2005).

Empowered contact centre agents have a high degree of control over their work and usually have knowledge and training on multiple products and services (Holman, 2005). Agents handle a variety of calls of longer duration and are not subjected to the pressure of having their call lengths strictly monitored. There is usually high task interdependence with minimal, if any scripting (Holman, 2005).

Virtually every piece of literature on contact centres labels them as stressful places to work (Fernie & Metcalf, 1998; Mulholland, 2002; Peaucelle, 2000 and Ruyter, Wetzels & Feinberg, 2001). This conception is primarily based on the fact that computers, that are meant to be used to help agents do their work more efficiently, are merciless monitoring instruments too (Peaucelle, 2000). Fernie and Metcalf have been the most critical of contact centres and have used metaphors to describe them as "tiny pig pens," "battery farms" and "dark satanic mills" (Fernie & Metcalf, 1998, p. 2).

Besides for pervasive electronic monitoring, another unique workplace characteristic of a contact centre is the need to suppress one's emotions, alternatively referred to as "emotional labour." Hochschild (1983) described emotional labour as the suppression of one's own emotions in order to be friendly to clients. Alternatively, the contact centre agent may need to display empathy towards a client while separating out his or her own reactions to the caller (Kinnie, 2000).

Contact centre agents also do their job via the anonymous medium of a telephone (Hingst, 2006). Without the cues of face-to-face communication, the agent needs to communicate and understand the client using only the voice as a source of information (Mulholland, 2002). This again is a unique characteristic to contact centres. Other jobs involve face-to-face communication, alternatively, not at the consistent intensity that contact centre agents have to continuously deal with clients via a telephone.

Contact centre agents perform complex tasks telephonically (Bagnara, Gabrielli & Marti, 2000). They are unable to plan for the call and usually have to deal with problem solving that may involve multiple products and operating systems. On the other extreme, an agent doing tele-marketing may have a script to follow in order to try and sell a product.

For most contact centres, the priority is speed rather than quality. On average, 72% of calls are answered within 10 seconds and the average length of a call is two minutes in high performance contact centres such as those within the telecommunications sector (The Merchant Group, 1998).

Contact centres are usually designed to isolate agents and leave them isolated in their relationship with the client (Bagnara et al, 2000). Product knowledge is expected to be exceptional while contact centre layout and organisational procedures inhibit organisational learning. Also, technologies may be poorly integrated with a benchmarking study conducted in 1998 showing that agents have to use, and switch between, three or more applications at a time in order to assist with queries (The Merchant Group, 1998).

While much is expected of contact centre agents, they are managed as industrial workers (Bagnara et al, 2000). Contact centre agents are usually young and highly educated but are offered low salaries and a vague career in which to progress (Bagnara et al, 2000). Kjellerup (2000) states that contact centres are "toxic environments" and are often the place one works in order to make money to leave.

While much research can be found focussing on different cultures within the work environment and instilling "sales" or "service" cultures within organisations, the author was unable to find research focussed on organisational culture within contact centres. A possible reason for this may be that contact centres may be outsourced and that little research funding is directed towards research on constructs such as culture as they are cost-driven (Taylor & Bain, 1999). Contact centres tend to be isolated from other divisions (Houlihan, 2001), yet tend to be the public face or client service medium for an organisation's clients. This study aims to investigate the role of culture within such a critical area for most organisations and how it compares to other departments. A discussion of culture will now follow below.

2.2 Organisational Culture

Organisational culture may be used to define organisational boundaries that differentiate one organisation from another (Robbins, 1998). Thus, a sense of identity is created for the organisation's members that allows for a sense of belonging by establishing stability and standards that guide norms, behaviour and attitude. These standards are perpetuated by the hiring and promotion of employees that share the organisation's culture (Drennan, 1992).

The concept of "sharing" commonalities within an organisation encompasses the essence of organisational culture. Killman, Saxton and Serpa (1986) defined organisational culture as the philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms that unite an organisation and is shared by its employees. Schein (1984) believed that such definitions were limiting in that they fail to explain how culture is initiated, maintained and can be used as a driver for change. Organisational culture is thus defined as the basic assumptions that have evolved over time in order for the organisation to adapt to its environment (Schein, 1984).

There are a number of models that define organisational culture. Schein's model (1980), Robbins' (1987) cultural dimensions and Smircich's (1983) research on culture are three of the major theoretical understandings of "culture." They will now be discussed below.

Schein (1984) conceptualised organisational culture as a pattern of basic assumptions developed by a group to cope with the demands of external adaptation and internal integration. These assumptions have been tested over time and are taught to new members of the group. Over time, they become ingrained in one's work persona and may drop out of consciousness. Thus, according to Schein (1985), culture is a product of a group's experience and is learned.

The actual model focuses on the dynamics of organisational culture at three different levels of awareness. Schein (1985) conceptualised culture to include elements such as the physical layout of offices at the most basic level of awareness to the most heightened state of awareness that includes the underlying conceptual categories and assumptions that enable people to communicate ingrained beliefs of an organisation. These levels of awareness are categorised below.

Level 1: Artefacts and Manifestations

This level is the most visible and encompasses the observable characteristics of an organisation's culture (Ott, 1989). It constitutes both material and non-material objects and patterns within the organisation that communicate the organisation's beliefs, values, assumptions and way of doing things (Schein, 1990). This communication may be intentional or unintentional (Ott, 1989). Artefacts include organisational components such as the use of technology, architecture, dress code, audible behaviour, documentation of mission statements and any other element of culture that one can interpret without having to probe beyond the obvious (Ott, 1989).

Level 2: Values and Beliefs

Values and beliefs require a higher level of awareness in order to identify them (Ott 1989). The values of an organisation i.e. the ability to serve a purpose or solve a problem are tested at this level. If true and reliable, these values are transformed into beliefs by means of "cognitive transformation." If the beliefs continue to serve employees' needs or solve problems, they are transformed into assumptions. They become taken for granted and the conscious awareness of these assumptions is diminished (Schein, 1980).

Values however remain at a conscious level and organisational members should be aware of them. The values are usually explicitly stated in order to guide behaviour. An example would be: "We are honest with our clients." Ott (1989) defines a value as *the* organisational culture or the conscious desires or wants of the organisation.

Level 3: Basic Underlying Assumptions

Values and beliefs are surface representations of the basic underlying assumptions. These assumptions represent beliefs that have been used repeatedly and have had positive outcomes. They also tend to be accepted by all members and have been through a process of validation (Schein, 1984). These assumptions form the actual basis for guiding behaviour and are not negotiable; they are the expected norms for behaviour.

This model is unique as it provides a working definition of culture and extends beyond the one-dimensional definitions offered by other theorists. The focus is usually on the overt aspects of culture but Schein (1987) illustrates how through acceptance, they become taken for granted, invisible and preconscious.

Schein's model is not immune to critique. Hatch (1993) challenged Schein's (1985) assumption that organisational culture is unitary and that organisational departments may be viewed as a differentiating function within an organisation. This outlook contrasts with Schein's (1985) view that culture is an integrating function (Martin & Siehl, 1983). Martin and Siehl (1983) emphasise this by stating that a specific culture

may not fit a specific setting and that organisational culture is compromised of multiple interlocking phenomena or even conflicting subcultures.

This critique is critical to the research questions and based on the results of this research project, the researcher will be able to suggest whether organisational culture is unique to each department or whether the culture integrates various departments across an organisation.

Each organisation has different values, beliefs and assumptions. There are however common cultural dimensions (Robbins, 1987). These vary in degree and ultimately define an organisation's culture. Robbins (1987) has identified the following 10 dimensions:

1. Individual initiative- the amount of autonomy and responsibility invested in individuals.
2. Risk tolerance- the amount of support and encouragement employees are given in taking risks and innovative thinking
3. Directions- the clarity of standards/objectives and performance expectations
4. Integration- the amount of co-operation between divisions/departments within the organisation.
5. Management contact- this focuses on the amount of contact time that managers spend with subordinates, including the support offered
6. Control- the rules that regulate employee behaviour and their compliance in respect of these controls
7. Identity- the affiliation and identification with the organisation as a whole as opposed to the department
8. Reward System- the degree to which reward is linked to performance
9. Conflict tolerance- the degree to which constructive conflict is encouraged
10. Communication patterns- the degree to which communication is effected through channels and the degree of openness between staff

These elements are interrelated and form a culture that the organisation uses to define itself. As Robbins (1997) points out, culture is not formed from behaviours and attitudes but that structural factors are also contributory factors in determining an organisation's culture. This view supports Schein's (1980) model.

Another view is that culture is a background factor or an explanatory variable that influences the development and re-enforcement of beliefs (Smircich, 1983). Culture is thus a single feature in an organisation which is influenced by, and exerts influence on other features of the organisation such as strategy, leadership and innovation. As a background variable, culture can easily be assimilated with climate.

Ott (1989) reviewed relevant literature and found 164 definitions of culture. While the three approaches support each other, there certainly remains an elusive definition for "culture." Both Alvesson (2002) and Smircich (1983) sought to clarify the definition by utilising metaphors. One approach is to view culture as a critical organisational variable while the other views culture as a root metaphor. This essentially differentiates between what an organisation has (critical variable) as opposed to something an organisation is (root metaphor) (Smircich, 1983).

While an organisation has structure, turnover and other identifiable variables, it is their "expressive, ideational and symbolic aspects" (Smircich, 1983, p. 348) which provide the cultural meanings for interpretation. This view enables the realisation that organisations are socially constructed rather than being objective and measurable entities (Alvesson, 2002). The metaphor approach thus describes how a culture is developed and provides insight into the objective characteristics of the organisation.

Alvesson (2002) provides a critique of Smircich's (1983) research. Multiple researchers have defined culture along a continuum – from a variable approach to the metaphor approach. Alvesson (2002, p. 27) states that "many researchers fall between the two, refraining from reducing culture to a variable without fully viewing an organisation as a culture." Smircich is one proponent of this approach. This allows for the understanding of how an organisation's construction shapes and directs the behaviour and attitudes of those within the organisation.

2.3 Origins and Sources of Organisational Culture

No organisation functions within a vacuum- as a result, organisational culture may be determined by three sources or determinants of organisational culture (Ott, 1989). These are: the broader societal culture in which an organisation functions; the nature of an organisation's business and the impact of the founding members. These three elements are now discussed below.

Societal culture shapes organisational culture as a result of the beliefs, values and expectations possessed by an organisation's internal and external environment (Ott, 1989). As these elements of organisational culture change, they slowly begin impacting on and changing the "culture" within the organisation (Hofstede, 1997).

While little research has confirmed Ott's (1989) belief that similar organisations share similar cultures, a common notion is that organisations tend to be dominated by people from specific professions. Thus organisations attract similar professionals who socialise new entrants into their system of beliefs, values and assumptions. Thus the professional culture of the organisation shapes the organisation's culture.

The last element is that an organisation may be a reflection of its founding members (Ott, 1989). Founders, leaders and current dominant members select new entrants who tend to share their views, values, beliefs and assumptions. In this way, the founding culture perpetuates itself unless these founders or dominant members alter the existing culture. Founding members formulate a culture that leads to success and as new members join the organisation, they learn the successful culture. Those that do not identify with the prevailing culture tend to leave the organisation or lose influence (Ott, 1989). Microsoft has been described by the characteristics that define its leader, Bill Gates- aggressive, disciplined and competitive. These characteristics are used to describe Microsoft and the people who tend to succeed in the organisation.

Hofstede (1980) evaluated South African organisations as reflections of their leaders and the political situation within the country. Elements included high-power distance, uncertainty avoidance and strong masculine traits. However, along with the advent of democracy in 1994 and laws aimed at eradicating discrimination, many of these elements have transformed in the workplace. Due to Democracy and the demographic shift in employees' cultures permeating the South African workplace, the African concept of "Ubuntu" has begun to reflect in many organisations' cultures.

2.4 Ubuntu

Ubuntu is a deeply rooted value system in South African that focuses on the human aspect rather than the structural factors that define the cultural models of Robbins (1997) and Schein (1980).

The theme of Ubuntu is derived from the Zulu phrase "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabuntu*" which is translated as "*a person is a person through other persons*" (Ramose, 1999). The central tenet of this concept is the humanness displayed towards fellow individuals and how individuals should relate to each other (Shutte, 1993). Ubuntu is thought to be inherent in all humans and defines the individual in terms of their relationship with others (Shutte, 1993).

Ubuntu places emphasis on constructs such as: understanding, compassion, empathy, solidarity, respect and dignity. Teffo (1998) claimed that African societies place a high value on human worth within a communal context rather than on the individual. This characteristic along with the strength of Ubuntu as a means of describing a group or department's culture within an organisation has not been studied previously.

Khoza (2000) states that *ubuntu* manifests itself through various behaviour patterns in different contexts in which people interact. It is founded on the following principles:

  - Unity: it offers people a sense of oneness
  - Collective work and responsibility: it is based on the concept of communal togetherness
  - Empowerment: Ubuntu encourages empowerment, discipline and purpose
  - Purpose: all humans have a common purpose in their endeavours (Khoza, 2000).

Besides for assessing the humanness within an organisation, the researcher is required to investigate whether culture differs within and between organisations. A discussion on sub-cultures follows below.

2.5 Sub- cultures

The dominant culture represents the core values shared by a large majority of the members of an organisation. A subculture is a set of values shared by a small group of individuals and may complement the greater organisation's culture (Luthans, 1989). A subculture emerges where divisions or specific functional areas exist (Sathe, 1985). This may be significant in this research study and will be discussed later.

While Luthans (1989) claims that subcultures may complement those of the greater organisation, research by Dunnett (2007) contradicts this view by claiming that a stronger culture may be the equivalent of a more homogeneous culture, whereas a weaker culture may be more fragmented, comprising many subcultures. It is hoped that this research may be able to offer some clarity regarding this contradiction in its findings.

Sathe (1985) highlights three basic subcultures: enhancing, orthogonal and counter culture. An enhancing subculture has the same content as the main company but tends to be stronger. An orthogonal subculture differs from the main organisation's culture but remains consistent. A counter culture opposes the content of the greater company's culture (Sathe, 1985).

Subcultures have emerged as a result of specific circumstances to a department within an organisation (Luthans, 1989). A counter-culture may be destructive but subcultures tend to supplement the main organisation's culture. Subcultures tend to focus on solving day-to-day problems of a specific division (Luthans, 1989) and may complement the core values of an organisation (Sathe, 1985).

Based on the statements above, it may be suggested that contact centres (based on their unique work design) may have unique subcultures. No research has been done on culture within and between organisations that encompass the dynamic nature of contact centres. This creates a new area of research interest.

Past research has however been done on the reciprocal relationship between information technology (IT) and organisational culture (Morieux & Sutherland, 1988). Information technology has an impact on elements of an organisation's culture while culture may have an impact on the attitude displayed towards information technology. While this is significant, no research has focussed on contact centres that are based on information technology, telephonic communication as well as a focus on customer care.

Research by Chatman and Jehn (1991) found that companies within similar industries tend to have similar cultures. Their sample consisted of eight accounting firms, three general consultancies, one government transport department and one freight company. Their key finding was that membership to a specific industry accounts for significant variance in organisational culture beyond the variance explained by organisation-level differences.

Inter-organisational research on culture has not been widely published in the past. A study by Guzman, Stam and Stanton (2008) focussed on the culture of an IT team within a larger organisation. The aim of this research was to assess the existence and importance of occupational culture of Information Technology (IT) personnel within an organisation. While the sample was relatively small – IT personnel (N= 32) and other employees (N=89) – the research suggested that IT personnel have a distinct organisational culture characterised by: the use of jargon; lack of formal rules and a high value being placed on technical knowledge. Differences in subcultures within different departments of the same organisation may also give rise to conflict (Guzman, Stam & Stanton, 2008).

Research by Caudron (1992) also indicated that subcultures exist within an organisation based on job functions, operating units or social interests and this may interfere with a company's overall mission because of the different values involved. Intensive communication and team-building has been found to be successful in reducing potential conflict based on subcultures along with the elimination of hierarchies and functional divisions (Caudron, 1992).

While much of Hofstede's work focuses on national culture, he has published a paper on organisational culture entitled: "Identifying organisational subcultures: An empirical approach" (Hofstede, 2002). This research study involved 3 400 individuals from a Danish insurance company. By performing a hierarchical cluster analysis, it was established that three distinct organisational cultures existed within the organisation- all linked to the employee's function. These three were identified as: a professional subculture, an administrative subculture and a customer interface subculture. This study further strengthens the belief that culture differs within organisations.

Buono, Bowditch and Lewis (1985) analysed the cultural impacts of bank mergers and found that cultural differences between organisations within the same industry can be just as great as across industries. Cultural differences were also prevalent in similar industries that were geographically separated (Latapie & Tran, 2007). Latapie and Tran's (2007) research focussed on a virtual team working apart but all contributing to the same software development. Within this project team, there was a

lack of leadership and no cohesiveness to ensure consistency in "the way we do things around here" (Bower, 1966). This led to the view that different subcultures existed within the virtual team. Based on the research presented, culture may be specific to inter-organisational teams but when differences such as geography, language and culture are incorporated, there may no longer be a sense of a shared subculture. A brief discussion on direction and intensity will complete this chapter below.

Organisational culture is neither linear nor one-dimensional (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). As a result, organisational culture differs in terms of direction and intensity. Directions refers to the actual content of the organisation's culture e.g. what sort of behaviour does it encourage? Intensity refers to the encouragement of "living" the culture and the emphasis placed on an organisation's culture (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988).

Cooke and Rousseau (1988) believe that cultures that vary in direction, support different types of behaviours. Cultures varying in intensity also influence organisational members to different degrees. Based on the aims of this research, such a concept is significant, as one would expect individuals with shared perceptions of the organisational culture to behave in similar ways.

The research explored earlier in this paper indicates that organisational culture may vary across industries and possibly even different departments within the same organisation. The research questions are as follows:

- Does organisational culture vary between a contact centre and other divisions within an organisation?

- Do contact centres have a shared distinct subculture across different organisations?

Chapter 3 Methods

Overview

This chapter covers the research design and the sample selection. A summary of the sample is presented. This is followed by details of the pilot study, procedure and the methods used. An overview of the statistical measures is presented and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the ethical considerations for this research project.

3.1 Research Design

A research design was used to define the procedures used to collect and analyse data (Denzen & Lincoln, 1998). This was a quantitative study as the researcher used statistics to measure organisational culture (Howell, 1999). By using scales for each measure, there was an emphasis on the quantification of constructs (Babbie & Mouton, 2004). This approach eliminated prejudice and subjectivity by the systematic use of statistics to analyse data.

There was no independent variable manipulation, control group or random assignment in this study. The study was consequently a non- experimental correlational design. While this design is not the most rigorous form of research, it is appropriate for the research questions in this study.

This research was cross-sectional as it studied the phenomena at one moment in time. Alternatively, Christensen (1988) defines a cross-sectional design as a measurement of the same characteristics in representative samples of individuals. Both of these definitions are applicable and appropriate.

3.2 Sample Selection

The intention of this study was to analyse organisational culture within and between organisations. In order to meet the aims of this study and to answer the research questions, three organisations were studied. Within each organisation, a sample was derived from the contact centres as well as at least one other department (except for the cellular phone provider where access was only gained to a single contact centre). Access to the contact centre was critical in order to identify whether contact centres had a unique culture within an organisation or between organisations. The other divisions needed were non-specific.

The procedure will be discussed later but a brief overview of each company now follows. The first company was a leading private bank, the second was a leading retail bank and the last was a leading cellular telephone service provider.

The private bank researched offered a range of innovative financial products servicing a niche market of high net-worth individuals and those earning a substantial income. It manages over R550 billion annually and employed over 4 300 people in 11 countries. The Bank offered investment banking, a current account, financing, lending, insurance and other products offerings for its niche market.

This bank had a single contact centre offering advice and assistance on all their products and services. This was supported by each client having a dedicated personal banker who provided personalised service and financial planning advice. The Private Bank administration area or "middle office" serviced the contact centre and personal banker by processing all documentation, Pin and payment requests. The Asset Management call centre was an entirely different entity to the Private Bank and offered investment advice and a wide range of unit trusts.

The second organisation, a major retail bank was the biggest bank by assets in South Africa. This bank had two main contact centres and was solely for credit card queries and processing of credit card transactions. A number of other contact centres existed at this organisation for each service or product offering. Thus the range of skills and knowledge of these agents was less complex than their colleagues in the private bank.

The two call centres studied, were separated geographically as part of the organisation's disaster recovery plans. The foreign exchange administration area assisted with the documentation related to moving funds around the world and for reporting to the South African Reserve Bank. They also processed foreign exchange purchases for individuals and companies and completed the necessary processing and documentation.

The third organisation, one of South Africa's leading cellular telephone service providers, was extremely difficult to gain access to. Access was only granted to their direct sales call centre. This call centre fielded incoming calls and sold cellular phones directly to the public. For the purpose of this research and to answer the research questions, it was deemed valid to include this organisation in the research even though the researcher was not able to compare the contact centre to other departments within the same organisation.

The sample was drawn from full-time, adult employees within the divisions of each organisation as mentioned above. There were no further specific requirements to be part of the sample. The researcher thus made use of non- probability sampling. This is defined as the use of a non-random sample to describe a population (Chadwick, Bahr and Albrecht, 1984).

The use of non-probability sampling is risky and the author was consciously aware of some potential pitfalls (Babbie and Mouton, 2004). Generalisation from the data is one such issue but the author overcame this by analysing culture and sub cultures between organisational divisions individually. The analysis of differences between divisions is in line with the research aims and justified the use of non-probability sampling. Chadwick et al (1984) emphasise that care must be taken not to generalise the data as a reflection of the whole organisation but this was overcome by focussing on the contact centres and the other divisions as separate case studies. The same process was applied to the inter-organisational aspect of the study.

Based on the purpose of the study, purposive or judgemental sampling was used. Such a process allowed for the selection of participants who best represented the aims of the research. Thus, in order to assess whether contact centres had a unique culture, it was necessary to purposely select it as one division of an organisation under investigation.

On an individual level, no random selection was used. Furthermore, the departments were selected based on the convenience of having easy access to them. The individuals within these departments then chose whether to participate or not.

The size of the sample was dependant on the size of the division as well as the number of individuals who were willing to participate and return their questionnaires. Divisions within the proposed organisations consisted of a minimum of 20 members each and the scope of analysis covering six divisions within two organisations and the contact centre of a third organisation, allowed for a large sample in excess of 200 individuals. This was sufficient in order to gain insightful knowledge regarding the research area as well as to ensure a normal distribution of the data.

Bailey (2004) claims that a minimum of 30 subjects are needed per study. Others claim that 100 is sufficient while Chadwick et al (1984) claim that 200 is sufficient. These numbers are relevant to the type of statistical analysis done but for the analysis used for this research study, a sample of 238 participants was adequate.

Table 3.1 – Demographical and work history information of the sample

Sample Size	*N*= 238		
	M	**S**	**Range**
Age (in years)	25.34	4.32	18- 47
	N	**%**	
Gender			
Male	98	41%	
Female	140	59%	
Marital Status			
Single	191	80%	
Married	35	15%	
Other	12	5%	
Number of Children			
0	171	72%	
1 to 2	62	26%	
3 or +	5	2%	
Race			
Black	119	50%	
White	42	18%	
Coloured	42	18%	
Indian	33	14%	
Other	2	<1%	
Home Language			
English	111	47%	
Afrikaans	23	10%	
Zulu	38	16%	
Xhosa	12	5%	
Pedi	5	2%	
North Sotho	7	3%	
South Sotho	18	8%	
Venda	5	2%	
Tsonga	0	0%	
Siswati	1	< 1%	
Tswana	11	4%	
Other	7	3%	
Qualification			
Grade 10 or below	2	< 1%	
Grade 12/ Matric	87	37%	
Certificate	49	21%	
Diploma	43	18%	
Undergraduate Degree	45	19%	
Postgraduate Degree	12	5%	

Table 3.1 continued – Demographical and work history information of the sample

Tenure with current employer		
< 1 year	123	52%
1- 3 years	85	36%
4- 6 years	19	8%
7+ years	11	4%
Tenure with current department		
< 6 months	56	24%
6 months to 1 year	100	42%
2 - 4 years	72	30%
4+ years	10	4%
Job Level		
Manager	3	~ 1%
Supervisor	20	~ 8%
Operational	215	~ 90%
Number of employees in department		
< 20	31	13%
20 - 50	122	51%
50 - 00	63	27%
> 100	22	9%
Job Status		
Permanent	134	56%
Contractor	92	39%
Other	12	5%
Presence of Induction programme?		
Yes	198	83%
No	10	4%
Don't know	30	13%
Attendance of Induction		
Yes	164	~ 69%
No	56	~ 24%
Don't know	18	~ 8%
Induction outlines Cultures & Values		
Yes	147	62%
No	10	4%
Don't know	81	34%

The table above provides an overview of the sample (N=238) used for this research report. The demographical responses are summarised and the mean (M=25.34), standard deviation (S=4.32) and range (18- 47 years) of the sample's age is presented.

34

The majority of the participants are young individuals in operational roles (90%) who have worked at their current employer for less than a year (52%) and are single (80%) Africans (50%) with no children (72%). Only 24% of the respondents had an undergraduate degree or higher. A surprise in the data are the number of contact centre employees who are permanently employed- this is contrary to the theory where call centre individuals tend to work on contracts (for short periods) and then move onto other contact centres or other forms of employment (Kjellerup, 2000)

Questions relating to each company's induction programme were included as these programmes help the individual to understand the social, technical and importantly for this research report, the cultural aspects of the organisation (Werther & Davis, 1993). No research found explores whether contact centre employees are inducted into the organisation. This was a useful set of questions to ask based on the context of this research project. While 83% of respondents claimed that their company had an induction programme, only 64% had been on this programme. An interesting note is that while 62% claimed that the induction programme outlined the organisation's "Culture and Values," a large proportion of the sample, 34%, did not know whether it had been outlined even though they had been on induction. This result may be reflective on the fact that "Organisational Culture" is an abstract concept and not as clear and observable as "organisational climate." Based on the research by Werther and Davis (1993), this may mean that many contact centre agents are not integrated or understand the organisational culture and work within the silo of their own department.

3.3 Pilot Study

Questionnaires were used as they are cheap and easy to distribute. They provide data that can be quickly and statistically analysed in order to produce useful information for interpretation. A pitfall of questionnaires is that participants need to be language proficient (Babbie & Mouton, 2004). This concern is to a large extent mitigated as a result of English proficiency being a main job requirement. However, a pilot study was undertaken to assess the questionnaire.

The manager of each area was contacted telephonically and a basic outline of the proposed research was discussed. Their names and numbers were provided by each company's switchboard. This was followed up with an electronic mail (e-mail) containing an "Invitation to Participate" (Appendix A). Attached to this email was an "Organisation Acceptance Form for Access" which the manager returned via email indicating that they were willing to allow their departments to participate in the research.

Once acceptance to participate was received, a pilot study was performed in the retail bank's contact centre. An overview of the pilot study is now discussed below.

The pilot study had multiple aims. Firstly, it needed to be assessed whether the questionnaire was easy to understand by the proposed sample; secondly to assess if the items were relevant to the research aims; thirdly to assess whether the questionnaire flowed logically and lastly to assess whether the questionnaire made sense. It must be noted also that the questionnaire was self- constructed and had not undergone any psychometric analysis.

For the pilot study, the proposed questionnaire was handed to twelve random individuals within the one retail bank's contact centre and they were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it voluntarily. Eleven individuals participated in the pilot. The retail bank's call centre was chosen as it had the lowest entry level in terms of education i.e. Grade 12. For the foreign exchange administration team and all the roles within the Private Bank, the entry level education required when this research was undertaken, was an undergraduate degree. However, the data indicated that many individuals within these teams were studying towards an undergraduate degree or had experience with no further education after Grade 12. The pilot group was thus typical of the proposed sample.

The average completion time was between 20 and 30 minutes. The questionnaire was found by participants to be relevant, logical and sensical. The feedback was consistent and showed that there was no ambiguity, there was no duplication of questions and that the length of the questionnaire was appropriate. However, three items of the "Culture Questionnaire" were found to be ambiguous or difficult to understand for individuals whose first language was not English- these questions were rephrased so that they were more easily understood.

3.4 Procedure

Once the pilot study had been completed and the necessary questions rephrased, questionnaires along with the "invitation to participate" were distributed.

This distribution of the questionnaire and a blank return envelope addressed to the researcher was done by leaving a copy of the questionnaire on each individual's desk. This allowed the individual to complete the form at their leisure. This was especially critical for participants from the call centres where they were under constant pressure to maintain productivity. Thus the pressure to complete the form during "call- taking" time was eliminated. A discussion on the ethical soundness of this research will follow later in this chapter.

Once the questionnaire had been completed, it was placed in the return envelope and placed in the sealed box for the researcher to collect. The sealed box was placed in a quiet, discreet passage so that participants could return their questionnaires confidentially and privately. It was noted that not all participants made use of this return envelope and simply inserted their completed questionnaire into the box. The box was cleared periodically by the researcher.

A risk when using questionnaires is that of selection bias where answers are randomly selected. The researcher carefully scrutinised each scale for selection bias prior to coding that questionnaire for the data analysis. The questionnaires that indicated any form of selection bias (e.g. response sets) were discarded from this research study and the exact number of discarded questionnaires will be reported below. All the questionnaires that were discarded either had blank sections or showed selection bias.

This was identified by the same response being selected for multiple answers or patterns of answers across the questionnaire.

Once the data collection was completed and the completed forms analysed, it was noted that within the Private Bank Client Support Centre, 45 questionnaires were handed out with 38 being returned and 38 used for analysis. The Asset Management call centre returned 25 out of 31 questionnaires that were handed out. One of these was not used as the participant only completed the first three pages of the questionnaire and left the remaining pages blank. At the retail bank, 80 questionnaires were distributed at each call centre. From the first call centre, 55 questionnaires were returned and 51 used for the analysis. Four questionnaires were discarded as one was blank and three indicated selection bias. From the second call centre, 50 were returned and 47 used. The three discarded questionnaires showed signs of selection bias. Within the foreign exchange administration area of the retail bank, 20 questionnaires were handed out and 14 were returned and adequately completed for inclusion in the analysis. Lastly, at the cellular telephone call centre, 60 questionnaires were handed out and 45 were returned. Of the 45, 3 were discarded as they were blank.

Thus, 345 questionnaires were handed out and 250 were returned. This is a 73% response rate which is relatively high compared to other research studies. The final number of returned questionnaires used in the statistical analysis was 238 to ensure a final response rate of 69%.

3.5 Measures

A review of available literature failed to identify an appropriate questionnaire relating to organisational culture as it was intended in this study. As a result, a self-constructed questionnaire was compiled and its structure will be discussed below.

The questionnaire consisted of an "Invitation to Participate," demographic questions and questions based on relevant theory (Appendix C). The demographic component requested information such as: gender, age, marital status, number of children, race, home language, education level and work history. These variables are important as

they may be a source of difference in how organisational culture is perceived amongst different employees.

An appropriate scale on organisational culture could not be found within the literature. As a result, the author compiled a 61- item scale based on the ten dimensions of culture as identified by Robbins (1987). These dimensions are: risk tolerance; individual initiative; integration; direction; control; identity; reward systems, conflict tolerance; management contact and communication patterns. This scale has been titled the "Culture Questionnaire" and is presented as a five- item Likert scale with one being "strongly disagree" and five being "strongly agree." The dimensions within the scale were scrambled and items 8, 10, 16, 21, 22, 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 35, 43, 45, 51 and 59 were reverse scored. A factor analysis of the scale was done and Cronbach- alphas assessed the reliability and validity of subscale. This will be presented later.

Table 3.2 Culture Questionnaire's subscales, examples of questions and related items

Subscale	Example of Question	Number of Items	Item Numbers
Risk Tolerance	Item 7- My colleagues will support and encourage me if I propose new ideas	7	7, 8, 19, 37, 39, 41, 56
Individual Initiative	Item 6- I am encouraged to use my initiative	9	5, 6, 23, 24, 36, 40, 52, 59, 60
Integration	Item 22- My division relies on other divisions to get the work done	2	10, 22
Direction	Item 17- The objectives of my division are clear	6	1, 17, 28, 43, 49, 55
Control	Item 16- My division has rules and regulations that control my behaviour	7	16, 21, 27, 33, 46, 47, 58
Identity	Item 15- I am able to identify with the goals of my division	6	14, 15, 32, 35, 50, 57
Reward Systems	Item 31- I feel that I am remunerated adequately for the type of work that I do	5	2, 13, 31, 53, 61
Conflict Tolerance	Item 30- Management tends to suppress or avoid conflict	5	4, 12, 30, 42, 44
Management Contact	Item 18 - I feel at ease to contact my manager at any time	6	9, 18, 25, 45, 48, 54
Communication Patterns	Item 11 - Communication of new information is always from management down to the worker	8	3, 11, 20, 26, 29, 34, 38, 51

Table 3.2 above lists the ten subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire" and provides an example of a question from each subscale, the number of items within the whole scale relating to each subscale and the actual item numbers in the scale.

This section of the questionnaire focused on the strength of the cultural dimensions within each division and once analysed, could be used to confirm whether differences exist between the divisions – thus meeting the aims of the research.

The questionnaire titled "Describing your division's culture" is based on a questionnaire by Robbins (1998). While no psychometric properties for this scale were discussed, this scale will be used to classify the division into either a warm, open, trusting and supportive environment or a division that is closed, cold, task orientated and autocratic (Robbins 1998). This is a ten item scale using a Likert scale of one to five where one is "strongly disagree" and five is "strongly agree." This scale

is based on similar subscales to the "Culture Questionnaire." The results of this scale are discussed in Chapter Five and the environments are able to be clearly described based on the classification provided by Robbins (1998).

"The cultural fit between you and your organisation" scale investigates whether the individual's beliefs match those of the organisation. This was included in the questionnaire to establish whether workers were being selected to complement the organisation's culture i.e. Founders affect or if it is a feature that is being overlooked. This is a seven item scale using a five item Likert scale ranging from one - "strongly disagree" to five – "strongly agree." This scale was originally published by Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003). The results of this scale are also discussed in Chapter Five.

The questionnaire titled "The Value of Ubuntu" focuses on eight core characteristics of Ubuntu. There is no clear or uniform definition of Ubuntu and the eight characteristics listed are those used by Teffo (1998) to define Ubuntu. The eight characteristics included are: humanness, care, understanding, compassion, empathy, solidarity, respect and dignity. The researcher self-composed the scale by listing the eight characteristics and the participant was asked to rate the presence of each characteristic within both their department and the organisation as a whole. The participant rated each item on the scale with a score of one to seven where one indicates "none present" and seven indicates "lots present." The results of this scale will be discussed in Chapter Five.

3.6 Data analysis

Once the data set was uploaded into SAS from Excel, errors in the data set were investigated and corrected. The single error identified was a capturing error from the completed questionnaire.

In order to answer the research questions, a number of statistical analyses were performed by the researcher. These will be discussed and outlined below.

3.6.1 Factor Analysis

The "Culture Questionnaire" was self constructed and consisted of 61 items based on ten subscales. An exploratory factor analysis was performed on the responses to this scale in order to identify the basic underlying variables that account for the correlations between the actual test scores in order to validate the subscales (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2001). Anastasi (1982) succinctly states that the primary purpose of a factor analysis is the reduction and summarisation of data from a large number of variables to a fewer number of factors.

This complex analysis generates artificial dimensions (factors) that correlate highly with several of the real variables (Babbie & Mouton, 2004). The outcome of the factor analysis is consequently a number of *factors* which are generated from the observed relations between variables and *factor loadings* which are the correlations between each variable and each factor (Babbie & Mouton, 2004). The cluster of variables loaded on a specific factor can then be easily identified and interpreted.

There are two types of factor analysis: exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis is used when the number of factors and their loadings are not specified whereas confirmatory factor analysis is used to confirm the expected number of factors and their loadings (Kim & Meuller, 1978). As a result of this questionnaire being self-constructed around ten subscales, the researcher thought it prudent to use an exploratory factor analysis.

A difficulty with factor analysis is that factors are generated without meaning and that factors may load very highly even when the variables are substantively different or unrelated (Babbie & Mouton, 2004). A second criticism of factor analysis relates to a philosophical argument that every hypothesis has a null hypothesis. A factor analysis however always produces a solution in the form of factors and the researcher needs to be aware that the generation of factors does not always guarantee that the result has meaning (Babbie & Mouton, 2004).

3.6.2 Reliability Analysis

Once the factor analysis was completed, the Cronbach alphas were calculated on the following scales: "Culture Questionnaire;" "Describing Your Division's Culture;" "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" and "The Value of Ubuntu." The Cronbach alpha scores were calculated on the new subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire" (as a result of the new factor loadings of the factor analysis) and at an organisational and departmental level for "The Value of Ubuntu" scale. Cronbach's alpha scores reflect the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the variables. A higher inter-item consistency is achieved by a more homogenous variable (Anastasi, 1982).

Reliability testing allows the researcher to estimate the proportion of the total variance of test scores that is in fact error variance (Anastasi, 1990). The measurement errors can not be eliminated but the extent of these errors can be established by means of calculating the internal consistency of the instruments (Anastasi, 1990). The researcher has thus used Cronbach's alpha of .60 as a minimum acceptable alpha to assess the reliability of the scales. According to Carmines and Zeller (1979), an internal reliability greater than .60 is satisfactory in this type of social science research.

3.6.3 Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is required when testing for differences in the means of several groups (Howell, 1999). When calculating an ANOVA, there are a number of elements that make up the analysis including: sum of squares; degrees of freedom and F-statistics. These are briefly explained below.

The sum of squares is the sum of the squared deviations about the mean (Howell, 1999). Howell (1999) defines the degrees of freedom as the number of independent pieces of information remaining after one or more of the parameters has been estimated or simply the allocation of the total number of degrees of freedom between two variation scores. Lastly, the F-statistic is calculated by dividing the mean square of the between-groups variance by the mean square of the within-groups variance (McCall, 1990). The F- statistic is calculated to establish whether the two variance

estimates are drawn from the same population. Kerlinger (1986) asserts that a significant F- ratio suggests that differences exist between the means and does not signify which combination of means differ. If the F- statistic is significant, then it is possible to conclude that the group means may not be an estimate of the common population mean (Runyon & Haber, 1980).

The ANOVA was performed on the following scales: "Describing Your Division's Culture;" "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" and "The Value of Ubuntu" at an organisational and departmental level. The ANOVA was also performed on the new subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire."

Post hoc analysis in the form of Tukey's was done on the significant ANOVAs in order to further analyse the F- value for each combination of means. The outcome of this ANOVA was to ascertain which groups (departments) differed from each other with reference to the particular variable on which the group differed (McCall, 1990). Simply, Tukey's test was used to compare means across groups when the F-statistic was significant to determine which groups were statistically different within the ANOVA.

3.6.4 Conclusion of Data Analysis

By using the statistical methods mentioned above, the author was able to answer the research questions. It was thus possible to establish whether subcultures existed within organisations and whether contact centres had a distinct organisational culture or conformed to the culture of the greater organisation.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Prior to the research being done, each organisation was approached at a managerial level and access was requested to their organisation. Access was confirmed by means of written confirmation.

The "Invitation to participate" (Appendix C) discussed the ethical considerations that were of relevance to the participant directly. These considerations included confidentiality, anonymity and that the research was voluntary. There were also no direct advantages or disadvantages in participating.

Each individual within each division was given the "Invitation to Participate" as well as the questionnaire. There were no identifying features on the questionnaire. The return envelope was also non-identifying and was addressed to the researcher. The only indicator on each envelope was a letter indicating from which area the returned questionnaire originated.

Once the questionnaire was completed, it needed to be returned and placed in a sealed box that had been placed in a discreet location within the office. Only the researcher had access to this box and cleared it periodically. The anonymity of the individual was not compromised.

In terms of the "Ethical Code of Professional Conduct" issued by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), informed consent includes the use of language that participants are able to understand as well as informing participants of the nature of the research. Participants had a choice not to participate or had the option to withdraw from the study at any time (The Professional Board for Psychology, 2000).

The "Invitation to participate" stated that the completion and return of a questionnaire indicated the participants' willingness and consent to participate in the study. The sample used was not a vulnerable or stigmatised group within society. There were also no consequences to non- participation.

This study included no deception of participants and there was no reward for participating. Feedback regarding the study was provided in the form of a summary to the employer. No individual feedback was given to participants- only a global summary of the key research findings. The employer had a choice to distribute the findings or use it for developmental purposes. Copies of the results were displayed in the refreshment area of each division to be perused at one's leisure. Copies were printed and left in the area for readers to take away for future reference if they so wished.

The raw data was shredded and destroyed after entering it into a data set and its accuracy had been established. Only the researcher had access to the data and it was stored in a secure environment at the researcher's home while being analysed. The data set had no individual identifying characteristics.

The contact details of the researcher and his supervisor were provided, should the participants require any further information concerning the study. The relevant Ethics Committee in the School of Psychology and the Faculty of the Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand also approved the research before it was conducted.

Chapter 4 Results

<u>Overview</u>

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses that were performed. The results of the factor analysis are presented followed by a brief discussion on the factor structure of the "Culture Questionnaire." The Cronbach's co-efficient alphas of the new subscales are presented as well as a discussion on the new subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire". The Internal Reliability Analysis of all the scales follow. The results of the ANOVA conclude this chapter and answer the research questions.

The significance level for each of the relevant statistical analyses was set at 0.05 or 5%. Significance at 5% was indicated by one asterisk (*).

<u>4.1 Results of the Factor Analysis</u>

The "Culture Questionnaire" was self-constructed by the researcher for this research project and was based on ten subscales. An exploratory orthogonal varimax factor analysis was carried out on the scale items to identify the factor structure of the scale.

Below, the eigenvalues, scree plot and factor loadings for each factor are presented and discussed.

Table 4.1 Table of Eigen Values

Eigenvalue	Factor	Proportion	Cumulative
17.61	1	0.29	0.29
3.97	2	0.07	0.35
2.76	3	0.05	0.40
2.06	4	0.03	0.43
1.80	5	0.03	0.46
1.57	6	0.03	0.49
1.44	7	0.02	0.51
1.42	8	0.02	0.54
1.37	9	0.02	0.56
1.24	10	0.02	0.58
1.17	11	0.02	0.60
1.12	12	0.02	0.62
1.11	13	0.02	0.63
1.01	14	0.02	0.65

Based on Table 4.1, fourteen factors have eigenvalues greater than 1.00. This selection is based on Kaiser's criterion where eigenvalues greater than 1.00 are selected so that the summarising variables do not have less information than the original data. These 14 factors explain 65% of the total variance.

The eigenvalues of factors 15 to 61 are not presented in the table. The scree plot of the eigenvalues is now presented below.

```
                          Scree Plot of Eigenvalues
Eigenvalues

  17.5        │    1


  15.0        │


  12.5        │


  10.0        │


   7.5        │


   5.0        │

                  2

                   3
   2.5        │
                    4
                     56
                      7 89012 3
                         4567 89012 34567
                                   89012 34567 89012 34567 89012
   0.0        │                                         34567 8901


                  0    5   10   15   20   25   30   35   40   45   50   55   60   65


                                                                        Number
```
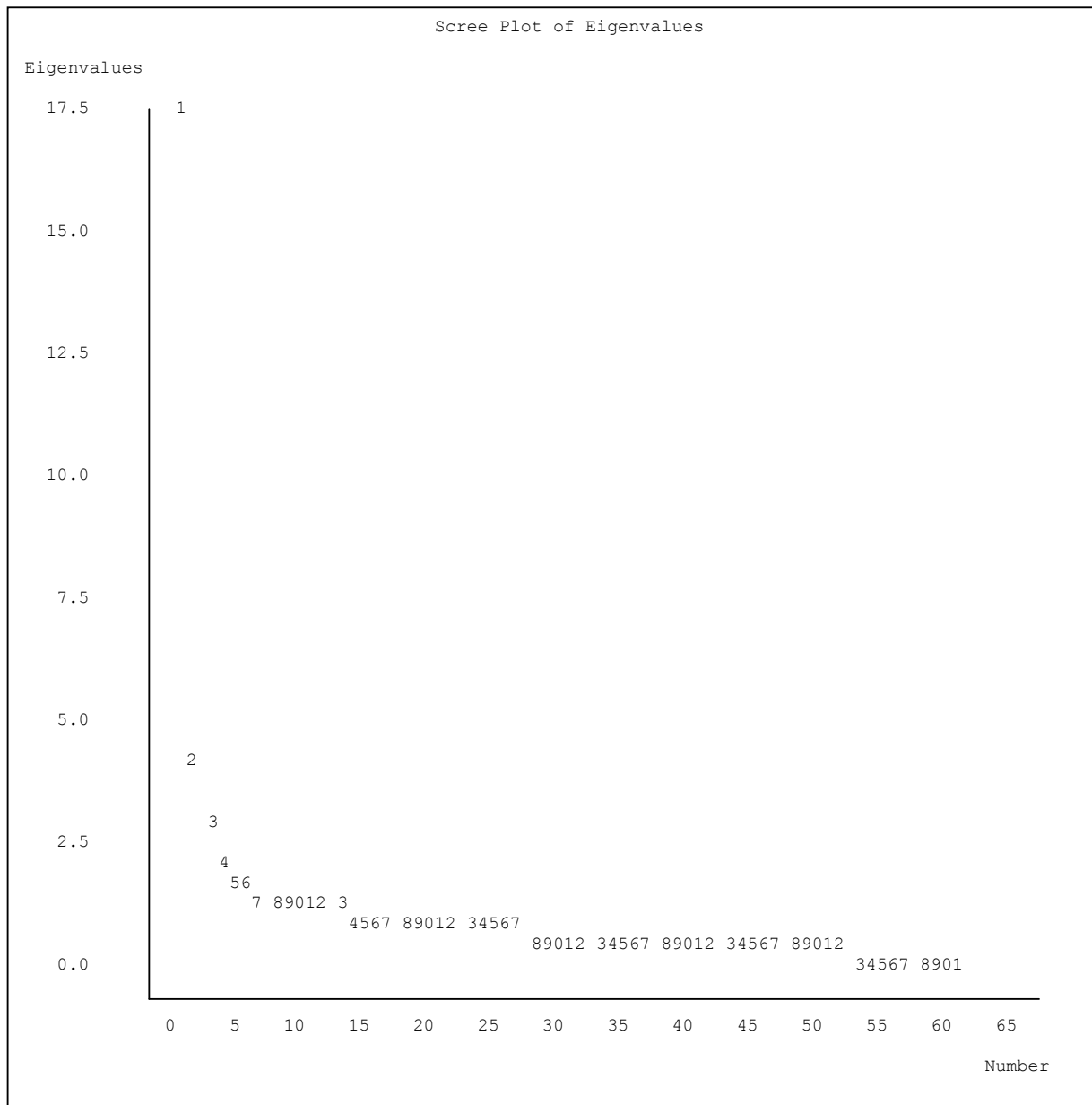
Figure 4.1- Scree plot of the eigenvalues

The scree plot presented in Figure 4.1 shows the principal components on the slope
with the "scree" beginning from 7. The scree plot suggests that a 6 factor solution
would be appropriate.

Table 4.2 Rotated Factor Pattern

Item	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6
1	0.69	0.03	0.20	-0.10	0.11	0.13
2	0.64	-0.06	-0.11	-0.15	0.19	-0.12
3	0.81	0.03	0.20	0.14	0.076	-0.03
4	0.71	0.04	0.33	0.05	0.04	0.14
5	0.71	-0.05	0.04	0.06	0.00	0.16
6	0.64	0.05	0.07	0.26	0.33	0.18
7	0.53	-0.17	0.02	-0.06	0.15	0.13
8	-0.37	0.01	-0.12	0.27	0.25	-0.04
9	0.41	-0.10	0.55	0.05	0.07	0.05
11	0.29	-0.31	0.00	0.24	-0.10	0.05
12	0.44	-0.06	0.06	-0.01	-0.04	0.64
13	0.74	-0.07	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.13
14	0.80	-0.17	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.14
15	0.68	-0.14	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.05
16	-0.22	0.64	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.02
17	0.63	-0.32	0.22	0.16	0.20	-0.06
18	0.41	-0.07	0.61	0.08	0.09	-0.08
19	0.60	-0.18	0.34	0.20	-0.06	0.08
20	0.63	-0.21	0.17	0.11	0.03	0.14
21	0.00	0.74	0.08	0.08	0.07	-0.02
24	0.34	-0.02	0.16	-0.02	0.23	0.12
25	0.39	-0.05	0.55	0.50	0.07	-0.01
27	0.04	0.38	0.02	0.19	0.04	0.16
28	0.35	-0.37	0.17	0.22	0.31	0.02
31	0.40	-0.20	0.14	0.06	0.04	0.04
32	0.63	-0.17	0.00	0.22	0.13	0.03
33	-0.10	0.70	-0.12	-0.16	-0.26	0.03
35	-0.29	0.31	-0.03	-0.16	-0.12	0.18
37	0.55	-0.11	0.14	0.13	0.08	0.33
38	0.48	-0.37	0.28	0.17	0.06	0.11
39	0.28	0.17	0.12	0.11	0.27	0.61
40	0.39	0.01	0.08	0.63	0.26	0.26
41	0.49	-0.07	0.11	0.60	0.08	0.31
42	0.67	0.05	0.31	0.30	0.07	0.06
44	0.21	0.23	0.59	0.09	0.23	0.25
46	0.47	-0.16	0.06	0.25	0.41	0.14
47	0.22	0.17	0.16	-0.23	0.53	0.17
48	0.07	-0.29	0.13	0.10	0.64	0.00
49	0.54	-0.08	0.21	-0.14	0.08	0.28
50	0.33	-0.27	0.18	0.13	0.29	0.24
51	0.11	0.00	0.17	0.62	-0.06	-0.21
52	0.40	-0.17	0.24	0.06	0.04	0.23
54	0.31	-0.16	0.50	0.21	0.17	0.24
55	0.41	-0.18	0.16	0.39	0.24	0.08
58	0.36	-0.45	-0.01	0.05	0.16	0.10
59	-0.03	0.23	0.03	0.11	0.12	-0.41
60	0.35	0.02	0.36	0.17	0.29	0.21

Based on Table 4.2, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 31, 32, 37, 38, 41, 42, 46, 49, 50, 52 and 55 all loaded on Factor 1. Items 11, 16, 21, 27, 28, 33, 35 and 58 loaded on Factor 2. Factor 3 loaded items 44, 54 and 60 and items 40 and 51 loaded on Factor 4. Items 47 and 48 loaded on Factor 5 and items 39 and 59 loaded on Factor 6. Items 10, 22, 23, 26, 29, 30, 34, 36, 43, 45, 53, 56, 57 and 61 were discarded as they did not load with a variation greater than .30 which is the guideline of Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998). No items loaded on more than one factor.

As a result of this factor analysis, the items comprising each factor were adapted into six new subscales. The first of these subscales was called the Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE) and consists of items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 31, 32, 37, 38, 41, 42, 46, 49, 50, 52 and 55. This scale consists of items that employees would view in a positive light about their workplace e.g. quick decision- making, effective communication, trust and good performance. Many of the items reflect on passion towards one's role where there is enjoyment and a desire to contribute to the organisations performance. Many of the items within this subscale also relate to innovation, changing processes and taking risk- all an essence of an entrepreneurial flair.

The second subscale was termed the Traditional Rule- Base scale (TRB) and consisted of items 11, 16, 21, 27, 28, 33, 35 and 58. These items focus on rules, monitoring and a top-down communication strategy from management with little worker input. With this sense of disempowerment is the idea that the customer is always a priority.

The third subscale was termed the Manager Interaction scale (MIS) and consisted of items 44, 54 and 60. These three items relate to manager interaction with colleagues and the trust placed in employees by management.

The fourth subscale was termed the Innovative and Informal Communication scale (IIC) and consisted of items 40 and 51. Item 40 relates to innovative thinking to service clients in better ways and item 51 is about informal communication taking place within the organisation "through the grapevine."

The fifth subscale was termed the Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS) and consisted of items 47 and 48. These items revolve around the freedom to work at one's own pace and not being forced to use titles- managers can be addressed by their first names.

The sixth and last subscale was termed the Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS) and consisted of items 39 and 59. These subscales were used for the remaining analyses in this study. Item 39 relates to the freedom to respond to each situation as warranted. Item 59 was a reversed scored item and is the opposite of item 39. Both items 39 and 59 thus relate to the ability to respond to a situation.

Cronbach co-efficient alphas were calculated for all the scales and subscales in the research project. The Cronbach co-efficient alphas for the new subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire" are presented below.

Table 4.3: Reliability results for the scales and subscales used in the study

Scale	Cronbach's alpha
Describing Your Division's Culture	.79
The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation	.63
The Value of Ubuntu- Organisation	.79
The Value of Ubuntu- Department	.80
Culture Questionnaire	.84
Culture Questionnaire subscales:	
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial subscale (PPE)	.94
Traditional Rule- Base subscale (TRB)	.83
Manager Interaction subscale (MIS)	.82
Innovative and Informal Communication subscale (IIC) ^	.83
Non-Prescriptive subscale (NPS) ^	.83
Situational Responsiveness subscale (SRS) ^	.83

As can be seen from table 4.3, the lowest Cronbach co-efficient alpha was .63 for "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" scale. The "Describing Your Division's Culture" and "The Value of Ubuntu – Organisation" scale both had Cronbach alphas of .79 and the score for the Ubuntu scale at a departmental level was .80. The "Culture Questionnaire" and its subscales all had a Cronbach alpha greater than .80 thus indicating high reliability.

^ The last three subscales (IIC, NPS and SRS) consisted of only two items each. The values displayed above are consequently not Cronbach alphas but rather correlations between the two items that make up the relevant subscales.

All the reliability statistics were thus acceptable and used in the remaining analyses within this research project.

4.3 Results of the ANOVA

ANOVAs were performed in order to establish whether there were statistical significant differences in mean scores across all the scales used in this research project. Levene's test was then performed in order to test for equality of variance. Tukey's post hoc test was done in order to establish where the significant differences occurred between the seven different departments in terms of the scales that showed significant differences across the means scores of the ANOVAs.

First, the means and standard deviations for the "Describing Your Divisions Culture," "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation," the "Culture Questionnaire" and its new subscales as well as the "Value of Ubuntu" across the departments and the organisations are presented below.

Table 4.4: Means and Standard Deviations of the scales across departments

Scale/ subscale	Private Bank Contact Centre (N=38)		Asset Management Contact Centre (N=24)		Private Bank Middle Office (N=22)	
	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)
Describing Your Divisions Culture	41.32	5.68	38.75	7.12	40.86	8.03
The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation	26.24	2.78	25.67	3.29	25.13	3.17
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE)	113.82	16.22	105.92	14.79	108.41	17.99
Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB)	23.53	2.59	24.21	3.43	24.6	3.42
Manager interaction scale (MIS)	11.82	2.13	12.08	1.67	11.55	2.76
Informal Communication scale (IIC)	8.03	1.28	7.75	1.85	7.82	1.62
Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS)	7.84	1.5	7.71	1.8	8.05	1.5
Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS)	6.71	1.47	6.8	1.74	7.05	1.65
Culture Questionnaire	41.3	5.68	38.75	7.12	40.86	8.03
Ubuntu Scale- Organisation	41.97	9.27	40.58	9.3	44.18	9.36
Ubuntu scale- Department	43.26	10.11	37.79	11.14	43.32	10.38

Scale/ subscale	Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburban) (N=51)		Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD) (N=47)		Retail Bank Forex Team (N=14)	
	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)
Describing Your Divisions Culture	39.86	8.34	37.83	10.09	39.36	5.4
The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation	26.06	3.82	26.96	2.98	24.93	2.34
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE)	110.41	21.24	105.79	27.1	108.21	18.5
Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB)	22.03	2.65	21.79	2.06	21.36	2.68
Manager interaction scale (MIS)	10.57	2.67	9.77	3.11	10.86	1.61
Informal Communication scale (IIC)	7.22	1.88	6.64	1.92	7.5	1.16
Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS)	7.2	1.98	6.57	1.92	7.79	1.31
Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS)	5.84	1.21	5.68	1.09	6.29	1.33
Culture Questionnaire	39.86	8.34	37.83	10.1	39.36	5.4
Ubuntu Scale- Organisation	41.6	12.48	42.06	12.79	42.29	9.46
Ubuntu scale- Department	43.25	12.67	41.23	13.34	41.43	8.37

Scale/ subscale	Cellular Phone Contact Centre (N=42)	
	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S)
Describing Your Divisions Culture	33.07	7.93
The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation	26.93	2.74
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE)	90.96	19.06
Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB)	22.91	2.62
Manager interaction scale (MIS)	9.91	2.43
Informal Communication scale (IIC)	7.21	1.91
Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS)	7.26	1.69
Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS)	6.26	1.41
Culture Questionnaire	33.07	7.93
Ubuntu Scale- Organisation	35.5	11.44
Ubuntu scale- Department	34.07	13.12

For the purpose of the results of the ANOVAs which now follow, the scales and subscales were the dependant variables and the seven departments were the independent variables.

Table 4.5: Results of the ANOVA analysis

Scale	F-Value	Significance Level
Describing Your Divisions Culture	4.64	< .01*
The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation	1.78	0.1
Ubuntu Scale-Organisation	2.17	< .05*
Ubuntu scale- Department	3.26	0.04*
Subscale of Culture Questionnaire		
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE)	5.15	< .01*
Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB)	5.61	< .01*
Manager Interaction scale (MIS)	4.64	< .01*
Informal Communication scale (IIC)	2.82	< .01*
Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS)	3.01	< .01*
Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS)	4.63	< .01*

* indicates significance at alpha=0.05.

The results of the ANOVA's across the seven departments are presented in Table 4.5 above. All the scales listed above and all the subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire" were significant at $p > .05$ except for "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" that was not significant. As a result, this scale was not included in the Tukey's post hoc analysis.

Results of Levene's Test for equality of variance

The Levene's test for equality of variance revealed that all the scales met the assumptions for the equality of variance.

Table 4.6: Results of Tukey's Test showing between which groups the significant differences occurred within the ANOVA

Scale	Departments where differences exist	Differences in the Means *(M)*
Describing Your Divisions Culture	Private Bank Contact Centre & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	8.24
	Private Bank Middle Office & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	7.80
	Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	6.80
Ubuntu - Department	Private Bank Contact Centre & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	9.19
	Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	9.18

Subscale of Culture Questionnaire	Departments where differences exist	Differences in the Means *(M)*
Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE)	Private Bank Contact Centre & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	22.87
	Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	19.46
	Private Bank Middle Office & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	17.46
	Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD) & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	14.84
Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB)	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs)	2.55
	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	2.80
	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Forex Team	3.23
	Asset Management Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs)	2.17
	Asset Management Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	2.42
	Asset Management Contact Centre & Retail Bank Forex Team	2.85
Manager Interaction scale (MIS)	Asset Management Contact Centre & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	2.18
	Asset Management Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	2.32
	Private Bank Contact Centre & Cellular Phone Contact Centre	1.91
	Private Bank Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	2.05
Informal Communication scale (IIC)	Private Bank Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.39

Table 4.6 continued: Results of Tukey's Test showing between which groups the significant differences occurred within the ANOVA

Non-Prescriptive scale (NPS)	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.47
	Private Bank Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.27
Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS)	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburb)	1.20
	Private Bank Middle Office & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.37
	Asset Management Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.11
	Private Bank Contact Centre & Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD)	1.03

Only the significant results are displayed in Table 4.6. The table lists the scales and subscales where significant differences occurred and lists across which departments differences exist. The differences of the means between the two departments are presented above.

This table will be discussed in depth in Chapter Five.

Chapter 5 Discussion

<u>Overview</u>

This chapter is initiated by a discussion on organisational climate and organisational culture and seeks to affirm the constructs measured within this research project. This is followed by a discussion of the results emanating from the four scales used in this research, namely: "Describing Your Division's Culture;" "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation;" "Value of Ubuntu" and the "Culture Questionnaire."

Discussions on the theoretical and practical implications of this research are then discussed as well as the limitations of the research and directions for future research.

<u>5.1 Organisational Climate and Organisational Culture</u>

Organisational culture and climate were clearly distinguished in the Introduction of this research project. Payne and Pugh (1976) listed elements including risk-taking, warmth, support and controls as defining concepts of an organisation's climate.

Culture was defined as a set of values that influence employer behaviour that are deep-rooted and difficult to change (Schwartz & Davis, 1981). The culture is said to be constructed from the commonly held attitudes, beliefs and values within the organisation. According to Schein's Model, it is only Level 1 (Artefacts and Manifestations) that contains observable characteristics at the most basic level of awareness. Thus, Levels 2 (Values and Beliefs) and 3 (Assumptions) would require higher levels or awareness in order to identify the elements of culture at this level.

According to Schein (1990), Level 1 constitutes both material and non-material objects and patterns that communicate the organisation's beliefs, values and way of doing things. The researcher is acutely aware that the ten subscales that comprise the "Culture Questionnaire," namely: individual initiative, risk tolerance, directions, integration, management contact, control, identity, reward systems, conflict tolerance and communication patterns may be viewed as elements of climate. To counter this, it

could be claimed that these 10 dimensions are elements of culture and to this effect; Robbins (1997) claimed that these 10 elements were common cultural dimensions across organisations.

However, to be cultural elements, these 10 elements would need to be conceptualised into a theoretical model of culture. Based on Schein's model (1990), these elements would need to be visible (Level 1: Artefacts and Manifestations) and become values, beliefs and assumptions at a deeper level of consciousness. By means of "cognitive transformation," if the element serves an employee's needs or solves problems; it becomes accepted and eventually taken for granted. This process ensures that the element over time guides behaviour.

At this point, it is argued that once these elements become deep-rooted within the organisation and can influence employer behaviour, there has been a transformation of elements that may be viewed as "climate" evolving to a final state of "culture." Organisational culture thus evolves from experience and learning (Schein, 1985). Schein (1980) and Robbins (1997) both claim that behaviour and attitude do not shape culture alone but that structural factors contribute to the determination of each organisation's culture.

Once the factor analysis had been performed on the "Culture Questionnaire," the number of subscales was reduced from ten to six. These subscales were: Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial (PPE) scale; Traditional Rule- Base (TRB) scale; Manager Interaction scale (MIS); Innovative and Informal Communication (IIC) scale; Non-prescriptive scale (NPS) and the Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS).

The researcher believes that the clustering of the 61 items into these new subscales reflects constructs that are a reflection of employees' behaviour and the result of deep-seated and sustained behavioural patterns- the basis of organisational culture. These six dimensions influence behaviour as opposed to elements of climate that are physical constructs (Schwartz & Davis, 1981).

5.2 Discussion on "Describing your division's culture" scale

The aim of this scale was for the researcher to gain a basic understanding of how employees view their departments. Employees were able to classify their department into either a warm, open, trusting and supportive environment or a department that is closed, cold, task orientated and autocratic (Robbins 1998). While leadership is essentially climate as opposed to organisational culture, it is the leaders who build a culture by sharing their views, values, beliefs and assumptions. The leader thus builds and shapes a cold or a warm work environment (Ott, 1989).

The results of this scale indicate between which department differences exist in terms of the classification of this scale. The closed, cold, task-orientated and autocratic description that Robbins (1998) makes use of can be articulated in terms of Fernie and Metcalf (1998) who described contact centres as: "tiny pig pens," "battery farms" or "dark satanic mills" (Fernie & Metcalf, 1998, p. 2).

Table 4.6 indicates that the Private Bank Contact Centre, Private Bank Middle Office and the Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) are all significantly different to the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. These differences are not surprising based on the actual work environments that were observed while this research was conducted. The Cellular Phone Contact Centre was typical of a call centre as discussed earlier. Within call centres, the queries tend to be of a similar nature; no relationship is built between the call centre agent and the client; management is autocratic and the layout of the department indicates continuous and intense performance monitoring and isolation from colleagues by means of desk partitioning. The absence of leadership, managers and team-leaders was also noticed within the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. Each had their own office away from the contact centre and were not available to assist, mentor or interact with their teams. .

The three departments that were different to the Cellular Phone Contact Centre (i.e. Private Bank Contact Centre, Private Bank Middle Office and the Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs)) were all characterised by available leadership that sat within the team, a greater amount of team interaction and no desk partitioning or

61

much lower partitioning where individuals could still interact with each other. The key differentiator between these departments was the *job* and *work design*. According to Frenkel et al, (1999), the Cellular Phone Call centre would be Taylorist as opposed to Empowered. The Taylorist description is characterised by repetitive, lowly-skilled and task orientated work. Based on the statistical analysis and the researchers insight into the organisations researched, it is thus not surprising that the Cellular Phone Contact Centre would be viewed as closed, cold, task orientated and autocratic.

5.3 Discussion on "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" scale

This scale investigated whether the individual's beliefs match those of the organisation. Also, the scale sought to establish whether leaders are recruiting individuals like themselves to enhance and sustain the organisation's culture. The scale was included in order to gain a better qualitative view of the departments in order to strengthen the discussion that follows regarding the "Culture Questionnaire."

An ANOVA was performed in order to establish whether there were statistical significant differences in mean scores across the scales. As a result of there being no significant difference as shown in Table 4.5, a post hoc Tukey's test was not performed and no differences between the departments could be determined.

From the research reviewed, organisational founders and select new entrants who tend to share their views, values, beliefs and assumptions (Ott, 1989). In this way, the founding culture maintains itself unless the founders or dominant members alter the existing culture. Due to the fact that leaders and founders mould the culture themselves and select similar individuals, there should be a "fit" between the employee and the organisation. If there is a "misfit" then this may initiate a counterculture that would be destructive to the achievement of the organisation's goals (Sathe, 1985).

Due to the fact that the reliability for this scale was .63, a more reliable test or edited version of this scale should be used in future to assess the fit between an individual and the organisation.

5.4 Discussion on the "Value of Ubuntu" subscale.

Ubuntu focuses on the human aspects of an organisation as opposed to the structural factors that define Robbins' (1997) and Schein's (1980) models. With the key role that leaders play in facilitating, strengthening and enhancing an organisation's culture, Ubuntu enables the researcher to describe the overarching human aspects in each department that are at play with an organisation's culture. South African organisations have been characterised by high- power distance, uncertainty avoidance and strong masculine traits in the past. However, with advances in employment equity and affirmative action at all levels of organisations (including leadership), it was of interest to investigate whether there are differences between departments and organisations.

The Ubuntu scale at an organisational and departmental level both had reliability co-efficients of .79 and .80 respectively. These values are high enough for the scale to be reliable. The ANOVAs for both were significant while the post hoc Tukey's test only indicated differences between the Private Bank Contact Centre and the Cellular Phone Contact Centre as well as between the Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) and the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. There was no differences found on the Ubuntu scale at an organisational level.

The discussion on the "Culture Questionnaire" will follow but these findings are similar to the results found on the "Culture Questionnaire" scale. Ubuntu, as an African value system similar to Organisational Culture, is consistent across an organisation and may differ rather across departments in different organisations. There is thus no suggestion that there are subcultures of Ubuntu in the organisations that were researched.

According to Teffo (1998), the focus of Ubuntu is at a communal instead of an individual level i.e. the group is more important than the individual. Also, Khoza (2000) indicates that Ubuntu manifests through behavioural patterns. As a result of this, it is not surprising that no differences exist within the same organisation as the department and the organisation as a whole could be viewed as a community.

No research found has studied Ubuntu within and between organisations within the realm of organisational culture. The findings of this research paper support the theoretical, communal view of culture and are consistent with the Western theme of Organisational Culture that this research project investigates.

5.5 Discussion of the "Culture Questionnaire"

Multiple researchers have investigated the variations in culture between organisations and within the same industry. According to Chatman and Jehn (1994), organisational culture varies across organisations, including those within the same industry. Buono et al (1985) argued that cultural differences between organisations in the same industry can be greater than the culture experienced across industries.

Research by Guzman et al, (2008) suggested that IT personnel have a unique subculture within the greater organisation. Caudron's (1992) research found that similar subculture differences exist within organisations based on job functions, departments or social interests. Hofstede (2002) made a similar finding when 3 400 employees participated in research that indicated that different subcultures existed- all related to job functioning. However, no research found indicates that contact centres have the same or different organisational culture with the rest of the organisation.

The researcher believes that if much of the published research suggests that inter-organisational culture is functionally specific, then contact centres ought to have their own unique subculture. Characteristically, contact centres are unique in terms of all work processes are facilitated by computer and telephone based technologies (Garson, 1988). Invasive performance monitoring is a second defining functional characteristic. The service model is the third defining characteristic (Holman, 2005). Standardised scripting, high monitoring and minimal training in the mass service call centres to the upskilling of a specialist consultant for the high commitment contact centre, both are defining functional aspects of contact centres. The last defining feature is the job and work design (Holman, 2005). The majority of work is undertaken on the phone but can vary from repetitive, short calls to lengthier calls where product support or sales offerings may take longer and require skills such as negotiation and sales skills. Based

on the four defining features above, it is obvious that contact centres are unique functional areas within organisations.

Based on the six subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire," no differences were found between contact centres and other departments within the same organisation. Differences were found between contact centres and administration areas but across different organisations. Differences were also established between contact centres in different organisations. The departments between which differences exist are presented in Table 4.6. The specific differences will be discussed in terms of the literature based on the subscales of the "Culture Questionnaire" discussed below.

Many of the research studies highlighted in this paper suggest that there would be organisational culture differences between contact centres and other departments within the same organisation due to the functional uniqueness and specificity of contact centres (Caudron, 1992). Much of the literature focuses on subcultures and how they tend to focus on specific contextual issues within specific domains of expertise (Luthans, 198). Subcultures also complement the core values of an organisation but this research did not establish that any subcultures exist within the participating organisations.

The highest and most significant differences were found on the Positivist, Passionate and Entrepreneurial scale (PPE). The largest difference was between the Private Bank Contact Centre and the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. This subscale alludes to positive factors that most employees expect from organisations e.g. fair remuneration, clear and effective communication, trust and quick decision-making. Secondly, it covers the enjoyment of one's role and the entrepreneurial flair of taking risks, changing processes and innovating to make the role more exciting and efficient. The research suggests that the consultants within the Private Bank Contact Centre are more positive and passionate about their roles than those in the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. Both Retail Bank Contact Centres also have significant differences to the Cellular Phone Contact Centre. The Private Bank Middle Office also rated significantly differently to the Cellular Phone Contact Centre on the same subscale.

Based on these results, it would be appear that the organisational culture within the Cellular Contact Centre is fairly negative, with little passion or enjoyment in their roles.

This finding indicates that the Private Bank appears to have passionate, positive and entrepreneurial employees while those in the Cellular Phone Contact Centre are the least content and happy in their roles. When this research was conducted, the absence of leadership and guidance was obvious in this contact centre. The mood was also subdued and quiet with little interaction with fellow employees. The amount of performance monitoring indicated that the environment was rigid and this is discussed now in terms of the results of the next subscale.

Many organisations have a strong culture of being rule-based and a top-down leadership style with very little employee involvement. This aspect would be supported by the Traditional Rule-Base scale (TRB). On this scale, the Private Bank Middle Office and Asset Management Contact Centre (from the same organisation) differed when compared to the Retail Bank Contact Centres and the Retail Bank Forex team. Within this comparison, there are both administration and contact centre teams thus indicating that this culture subscale is prevalent on an organisational level and not specific to functional departments. It could be suggested that the Retail Bank is very rules based with little input from employees- orders are merely followed.

The interactions between manager and employee are critical for a sound working relationship (Robbins, 1997). If expectations and communication is clear, then trust is built and there is a reduced potential for conflict (Martin & Siehl, 1983). From the analysis, it became apparent that differences in the Manager Interaction scale (MIS) exist with the Asset Management Contact Centre and the Cellular Phone Contact Centre as well as the Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD). The Private Bank Contact Centre experienced differences with the same two contact centres. It is of interest why differences were not established with the Retail Bank Contact Centre (Suburbs) but the questionnaire used did not source this rich information and a qualitative study would potentially be better suited to this investigation.

The Innovation and Informal Communication (IIC) scale found differences in the Private Bank Contact Centre and the Retail Bank Contact centre (CBD). This difference suggests that the Private Bank Contact Centre is more innovative, seeks ways to enhance the client experience and that information is shared "through the grapevine."

This subscale indicates that the work environment within the Private Bank is more *empowered* as opposed to the Retail Bank's Contact Centres which may be classified as *Taylorist*. (Holman, 2005) This is supported by the skill set of the Private Bank consultants to the Retail Bank call centre agents. The Private Bank consultants have autonomy, a wide-skill set and may use initiative to resolve queries. Within the Retail Bank, the employees have limited knowledge and little control in terms of the service they are able to offer (Holman, 2005). The communication channels within an organisation have an affect on the organisational culture (Holman, 2005). While the Retail Bank's mission statement does not discuss communication, the Private Bank's cultures and values discuss 'open and honest dialogue as well as "Breaking China for the Client. " This means that employees must do what is necessary and be innovative in order to service clients (within the legal and ethical framework of banking laws and regulations). There is a also a strong focus on organisational culture and Induction within the Private Bank and this may be the sources of these differences.

The next scale, namely, the Non-Prescriptive scale investigates the freedom that exists within an organisation and between its employees. Taking responsibility for one's actions and the pace of work as well as using first names, is a deep-rooted cultural aspect in "how we doing things around here" (Bower, 1966). Differences were found between the Private Bank Contact Centre and the Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD) as well as between the Private Bank Middle Office and the Retail Bank Contact Centre (CBD). This is consistent with the organisational culture of the Private Bank which is less rule-based and the employees are autonomous. The researcher was able to experience this while conducting the research as the contact centre consultants were able to make their own decisions and think independently. There was a different scenario in the Retail Bank Contact Centres where many of the calls were scripted and where the calls deviated from a standard operations procedure, the call was escalated to team leaders.

The last scale, the Situational Responsiveness scale (SRS) measures how one is responsible for and has the ability to respond to particular situations. Differences were found between the Private Bank Middle Office and both the Retail Bank's contact centres as well as between the Asset Management Call centre and both the Retail Bank's contact centres. Based on the researcher's experiences when conducting this research, the Private Bank's contact centre consultants enjoyed autonomy to make decisions as opposed to the Retail Bank where calls are scripted and any escalated query has to be dealt with by a team-leader. This may be the difference in how different consultants in different organisations respond to different situations.

Based on the results of these subscales, it may be suggested that the Private Bank had a stronger organisational culture characterised by independence, autonomy, open and honest dialogue and the freedom to take risks in order to service clients and be innovative. The Cellular Phone Contact Centre appeared to be the least culturally sensitive department. The area lacked a value system, cohesion and belief in what they were working towards. This sense was gained from the moment of entry into the contact where the mood was sombre, few emotions were expressed and according to Kjellerup (2000), contact centres are "toxic environments" and the place one works, in order to make money to leave.

5.6 Theoretical Implications

This research project supports the fact that organisational culture is unique to an organisation and is not unique to each department within the organisation. An organisational identity is thus created for the all organisation's members. This allows for a sense of belonging and guides employee's behaviour and attitude towards their roles, workplace and organisation (Robbins, 1998).

The findings of this research contradict the research by Caudron (1992) who claimed that subcultures exist within an organisation based on the functional requirements of each employee's role and interfere with the organisation's overall mission due to the different values inculcated into each department. Research by Hofstede (2002), Buono et al (1985) and Guzman et al (2008) all support Caudron's (1992) findings.

While the multiple studies listed above having similar conclusions, no past research has focussed on contact centres to investigate the organisational culture within such a unique and technologically specific department. While Hatch (1993) challenged Schein's (1985) assumption that organisational culture is unitary and instead suggested that organisations are differentiated by their departments, the results of this research project assert that culture is an integrating function within an organisation (Martin & Siehl, (1983). Contact centres have a distinctive operating environment similar to no other department including stringent performance monitoring, telephone and computer based interactions and unique workplace design- thus making them a unique functional department in any organisation. The findings of this research thus do not support the findings of other research but does support the work of Schein (1985).

This research supports Schein's (1985) theories on culture but the number of practical research papers contradicting the great theorists of the "organisational culture" realm is a valid concern. Further research should be done on validated scales and across large samples in multiple organisations in order to confirm whether culture is universal across a company or whether subcultures do exist. The answer to this has great practical implications for organisations and will be discussed below.

5.7 Practical Implications

There are enormous benefits to having an organisational culture supporting the correct behaviours and having the same beliefs. If the culture is aligned to performance and success, then the organisation will be successful (The Merchant Group, 1998).

Smircich's (1983) view is that culture influences the development and re-enforcement of beliefs. Culture is thus a single feature in an organisation which is influenced by, and exerts influence on other features of the organisation such as strategy, leadership and innovation. The overarching role of culture can be used to drive the strategic goals of an organisation, across the entire organisation. Based on the results of this research that organisational culture is unique to the entire organisation, it can be used to initiate and drive and change within the whole organisation.

The role of the employee also needs to be considered and should be specific and appropriate to the role and the environment. Socialisation and induction needs to occur so that culture can be lived. It is difficult to "learn" culture, so it either needs to be experienced or the individual's own culture must be congruent with that of the organisation (Ott, 1989).

The results of the "Value of Ubuntu" scale suggest that this value system has become more noticeable within organisations as Employment Equity, Affirmative Action and transformation has taken place. It is of utmost importance for leaders to be representative of the population as leaders are responsible for managing culture. Employees become partners in the culture if they can identify with leadership and the organisation's goals.

The challenge when seeking to transform an organisation is that founding members or leaders seek to appoint those that match their own culture (Ott, 1989). Culture may be learnt but it needs to be congruent with the values and culture of the new employee. Individuals who do not identify with the organisation's culture tend to lose influence and leave the organisation (Ott, 1989). There is thus challenge for Human Resource professionals and leaders to transform organisations and to ensure that new employees are inducted and socialised into the organisation effectively.

5.8 Limitations of the research

There are certain methodological limitations relevant to this research project that may have impacted on the findings of this research.

The sample size was appropriate for this type of social research. However, with a concept that is difficult to define and contradictory research findings from past studies, it is essential that a larger sample be considered that is representative of multiple functions across multiple organisations. The researcher also needs to be aware of generalisability. The specific results that were obtained for this research project should not be generalised to other research settings or findings. The differences or measured variance within the departments researched may be unique

across a number of variables including sample composition, the organisation's history and current leaders or changes that may be occurring. A range of factors could affect the results.

The Cellular Phone Contact Centre had multiple differences to the other departments and organisations. This department also maintained the most significant differences across the scales and subscales. It is worthy of further research to establish whether similarities exist across the organisation or whether the organisational culture is specific to that Contact Centre.

It is also challenging to access contact centres as they are task driven and contact centre employees are monitored closely. Their ability to assist with research during their normal working hours is difficult. Future researchers will need to be innovative in order to access information from contact centre employees. While questionnaires are most suited, information that could only be gleaned from a qualitative interview is lost.

Also, Schein's, Level 2 and 3 of his theory are deep and require qualitative analysis to probe deeper into the subconscious aspects of organisational culture. Schein (1987) in fact suggests a triangulation approach. This involved the verification of information gained from the analysis against other sources of information until a pattern emerges.

The use of paper-and pencil self-report inventories is a limitation. Anastasi (1988) claims that the responses provided by participants may be influenced by response tendencies, inconsistency, short-term changes being experienced by the participant, faking and social desirability. This is certainly a limitation of the research but such a method remains the most economical and highly suited to large groups of participants.

Three of the measuring instruments used, "Describing your Division's Culture," "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" and the "Value of Ubuntu" do not have published reliability and validity scores. "The Cultural Fit Between You and Your Organisation" had a relatively low reliability score of .63 and future research should seek to use alternative more reliable scales.

An item analysis of the questionnaire should have been performed at the *pilot study* phase of this research. Firstly, a correlation matrix would have indicated whether there was evidence of excessively high relationships (i.e. $r > .80$). Such high relationships would indicate whether any items were unnecessarily duplicated. This may have shortened the length of the questionnaire.

The distribution of scores across a response format would also have indicated whether there was a high percentage of scores in any response category (Kerlinger, 1981). This item response analysis ensures that responses are not skewed and thus lack discriminability between the items.

Based on the notion that culture is learnt by new staff, an analysis of length of tenure and knowledge of the organisation's culture could be done in order to study this process in new and longer-serving employees. Subsequent studies may wish to do longitudinal studies in order to investigate this.

5.9 Directions for Future Research

The ambiguity as to whether organisational culture differs within organisations with a focus on contact centres is a key area for future research as it is a growing industry within the developing world. The benefits of having employees that are "cultural-fits" will ensure improved productivity, savings and long term benefits to both employer and employee.

Also, many studies have focussed on culture within South Africa but very few have researched organisational culture and how diversity impacts on that culture. With the critical role that founders and leaders play in building and continuing an organisation's culture, it would be worthwhile to investigate the role of African leaders in such a process. A risk to this process is the slow transformation of many organisations, especially at the senior management level. If the benefits of having diversity at senior management can be outlined and its subsequent impact on culture being established, this may be a means of indirectly speeding up the transformation process and enhancing an organisation's culture.

5.10 Conclusion

The aims of this research project were to investigate whether organisational culture is different in a contact centre as opposed to the greater organisation and whether contact centres share a common subculture across organisation. After a thorough review of the theoretical literature and past relevant studies, the research was conducted in three organisations and the data analysed using reliability statistics, factor analysis and analysis of variance. The results of this research suggest that organisational culture is consistent within an organisation and that differences in culture were established across organisations and across functional areas. There was no suggestion that contact centres have their own unique subculture within or between organisations. Based on the limitations of this research, it is suggested that further research be conducted in order to confirm the validity of organisational culture theories as many recent studies challenge the theories based on organisational functionality.

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Appendix A: The Invitation to Participate (Organisation)

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Telephone: +27 11-717-4500/2/3/4. Fax: +27-11-717-4559

September 2007

Hello

My name is Brett Abramowitz and I am a postgraduate student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for my Master of Arts Degree in Industrial Psychology.

The aim of my research is to investigate whether organisational culture differs across divisions within organisations. It is hoped that through this research, I may be able to suggest whether unique cultures exist within organisations and how these should be managed in furthering the goals and values that an organisation represents. A focus will be on the contact centre in order to establish whether a unique culture exists within such a division as opposed to the greater organisation and how this should be managed.

Your organisation is being invited to participate in this study and participation in this research is entirely voluntary. There is no disadvantage or advantage in any way by participating in this study. Should your organisation agree to participate in this study, please may I request that you sign the attached form confirming access to your organisation.

The questionnaire takes about 30 minutes to complete. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires requires anonymity and confidentiality for all participants. We can meet to discuss how we can implement this research while ensuring that it is ethically sound.

Anonymity is guaranteed as there are no identifying questions on the questionnaire. At no time are participants required to identify themselves. Once the questionnaire has been completed, it needs to be placed in an envelope that would be addressed to the researcher, i.e. myself. On each envelope is a reference e.g. "M" which means for example that the questionnaire was handed out in the Marketing Department. The reference is specific to each area within your organisation. This is merely for research purposes and would not compromise the participant's anonymity.

Once sealed, the questionnaire needs to be placed in a sealed box that the researcher will provide. This box will be placed strategically within the relevant work area, allowing for the discreet return of questionnaires. No one will have access to this box other than the researcher. The box will be periodically cleared by myself. By taking these cautionary measures, confidentiality is assured.

Returning of a completed questionnaire indicates the employee's consent to participate in the study.

Feedback will be given in the form of a research summary to each employer. No individual responses will be reported- only a global summary of the key research findings. The employer may choose to distribute the findings or use it for developmental purposes. A copy of the feedback would be placed within the refreshment area of the division allowing for participants to read the feedback at their leisure. Copies will also be printed and available to take away and read at a later time.

Your organisation will remain anonymous and other organisations will not know the names of other organisations participating in this study.

You may contact me should you have any other queries regarding this study. I can be reached at postgrad@webmail.co.za. My supervisor can be contacted at james.fisher@wits.ac.za if you have any questions you would like to direct to him.

Yours Faithfully

_____   _____
Brett Abramowitz   Prof James Fisher
Masters Student   Supervisor

Appendix B: Organisation Acceptance Form for Access

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development

Organisation Acceptance Form for Access

I, _____, in my capacity as _____

hereby allow Brett Abramowitz to conduct his research as outlined in the 'Invitation

to Participate."

_____   _____

Signature   Brett Abramowitz

_____

Date

Appendix C: The Invitation to Participate (Individual)

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Telephone: +27 11-717-4500/2/3/4. Fax: +27-11-717-4559

September 2007

Hello

My name is Brett Abramowitz and I am a postgraduate student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for my Master of Arts Degree in Industrial Psychology.

The aim of my research is to investigate whether organisational culture differs across divisions within organisations. It is hoped that through this research, I may be able to suggest whether unique cultures exist within organisations and how these should be managed in furthering the goals and values that an organisation represents.

You are being invited to participate in this study and participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You will not be disadvantaged or advantaged in any way by participating in this study. Should you wish to participate in this study, please may I request that you complete the attached questionnaire as accurately and honestly as possible.

With this invitation to participate is a biographical questionnaire and questions based on the relevant theory. This should take about 30 minutes to complete. Please mark the correct answer that first comes to mind and complete it as honestly as possible.

Anonymity is guaranteed as there are no identifying questions on the questionnaire. At no time are you required to identify yourself. Once you have completed the questionnaire, please place the questionnaire in the envelope that is addressed to myself. On each envelope is a reference letter e.g. an "M" for Marketing, indicating that the questionnaire was handed out in the Marketing Department. The reference is specific to each area within your organisation and your envelope would correspond with your department. This is merely for research purposes and would not compromise your anonymity.

Please seal the envelope and place it in the box situated within your work area. This box is sealed and no one will have access to it other than myself. I will clear this box periodically. By taking these cautionary measures, confidentiality is assured.

Returning of a completed questionnaire indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Feedback will be given in the form of a summary of the research to each employer. No individual responses will be reported- only a global summary of the key research findings. The employer may choose to distribute the findings or use it for developmental purposes. The research findings will be displayed within the refreshment area of your division and you are welcome to read this at your leisure. Copies will also be available to take away for future reading.

You may contact me should you have any other queries regarding this study. I can be reached at postgrad@webmail.co.za. My supervisor's email address is james.fisher@wits.ac.za if you would like to direct any questions to him.

Yours Faithfully

_____   _____
Brett Abramowitz   Prof James Fisher
Masters Student   Supervisor

BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Please mark the answer that best describes you. I have asked certain questions based on demographic variables such as race and home language. This has been done in order to establish whether differences exist in how organisational culture is perceived by different groups within society.

Personal Details

Gender:
☐ male   ☐ female

Age:
___ years

Marital Status:
☐ Single   ☐ Married   ☐ Widowed   ☐ Divorced
☐ Co-habiting

Number of children:
☐ 0   ☐ 1-2   ☐ 3+

Home Language:
☐ English   ☐ Afrikaans   ☐ Zulu   ☐ Xhosa
☐ Pedi   ☐ N. Sotho   ☐ S. Sotho   ☐ Venda
☐ Tsonga   ☐ Siswati   ☐ Tswana   ☐ Other

Race:
☐ Black   ☐ White   ☐ Coloured
☐ Indian   ☐ Other: please specify _____

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Highest Qualification:
☐ Grade 10 or below
☐ Matric/ Grade 12
☐ Certificate
☐ Diploma
☐ Undergraduate Degree
☐ Postgraduate Degree

WORK HISTORY

In this section, I ask for the name of your organisation as well as your department.
- The organisation is the name of your company.
- The department is related to the work you do i.e. if you do marketing for the organisation, then you are in the Marketing Department/ Division

Please complete the questions below:

Name of Organisation: _____

Department/ Division: _____

How many years have you worked at your present employer?
□ < 1 year   □ 1-3 years   □ 4-6 years   □ 7 + years

How many of these years have been in your current department?
□ < 6 months   □ 6 months –1 year   □ 2-4 years
□ 4+ years

What is your job level within your position?
□ management   □ supervisor   □ operational

How many employees are there in your current department?
□ Upto 20   □ 20-50   □ 50-100   □ Over 100

What is your job status?
   □ Permanent   □ Contractor   □ Other: please specify_____

Does your organisation have an induction/ orientation programme?
   □ Yes   □ No   □ Don't know

Have you attended such a programme since joining the organisation?
   □ Yes   □ No   □ Don't know

If your answer is YES, did the programme outline your organisation's culture and values?
   □ Yes   □ No   □ Can't Remember

What is your organisation's "motto" or "pay-off- line"?

Theoretical Questionnaire

Describing your Division's Culture

Using a scale of 1 to 5, circle each statement below according to how much you agree with the statement.

.   Strongly agree   =   5
        Agree   =   4
        Uncertain   =   3
        Disagree   =   2
        Strongly disagree   =   1

1) My colleagues are friendly and supportive
        1   2   3   4   5

2) My manager is friendly and supportive
        1   2   3   4   5

3) My manager encourages me to question and challenge him or her as well
   as my colleagues
        1   2   3   4   5

4) My manager clearly expresses his or her expectations to the department
        1   2   3   4   5

5) I think the performance grading system is based on clear standards of
   performance
        1   2   3   4   5

6) My manager's behaviour shows that he trusts me and views me as honest
   and trustworthy.
        1   2   3   4   5

7) My manager provides regular and quick feedback on my performance
        1   2   3   4   5

8) My manager gives credit based on merit
        1   2   3   4   5

9) My manager is open to ideas how the work environment and processes
   may be improved
        1   2   3   4   5

10) My manager encourages me to learn and develop
        1   2   3   4   5

The cultural fit between you and your organisation

For each statement below, circle the level of agreement or disagreement that you personally feel:

.   Strongly agree   =   5
        Agree   =   4
        Uncertain   =   3
        Disagree   =   2
        Strongly disagree   =   1

1) I like being part of a team and having my performance assessed in terms of my contribution to the team
        1   2   3   4   5

2) No person's needs should be compromised in order for a department to achieve its goals
        1   2   3   4   5

3) I like the thrill and excitement from taking risks
        1   2   3   4   5

4) If a person's job performance is inadequate, it's irrelevant how much effort he or she made
        1   2   3   4   5

5) I like things to be stable and predictable
        1   2   3   4   5

6) I prefer managers who provide detailed and rational explanations for their decisions
        1   2   3   4   5

7) I like to work where there is not a great deal of pressure and where people are essentially easygoing
        1   2   3   4   5

The Value of Ubuntu

Ubuntu has been described as the "humanness" displayed within society.

You must rate your feelings about "Ubuntu" in terms of:
- The organisation or the company that you work for and
- The department that you belong to within the whole organisation e.g. call centre, marketing department etc

Below, rate the elements of Ubuntu on a scale of 1 to 7 where:

1= none
7= lots

My organisation has the following: My department has the following:

	My organisation	My department
Humanness	_____	_____
Care	_____	_____
Understanding	_____	_____
Compassion	_____	_____
Empathy	_____	_____
Solidarity	_____	_____
Respect	_____	_____
Dignity	_____	_____

Culture Questionnaire

Thinking about your department, circle a response below to each statement.
5= strongly agree
4= agree
3= neutral
2= disagree
1- strongly disagree

1. My division is aware of my needs and career aspirations
    1   2   3   4   5

2. The better I perform, the more I will be rewarded
    1   2   3   4   5

3. In my division, there is open and honest communication
    1   2   3   4   5

4. I am encouraged to question how things are done in my division
    1   2   3   4   5

5. I believe that my division initiates change

                             1   2   3   4   5

6. I am encouraged to use my initiative

                             1   2   3   4   5

7. My colleagues will support and encourage me if I propose new ideas

                             1   2   3   4   5

8. My division takes lots of risks when doing work

                             1   2   3   4   5

9. My manager shares office space with me

                             1   2   3   4   5

10. To get my work done, I need the support or help of other divisions

                             1   2   3   4   5

11. Communication of new information is always from management down to the worker

                             1   2   3   4   5

12. Conflict is seen as positive in my division to build relationships

                             1   2   3   4   5

13. The reward system is fair across my division

                               1   2   3   4   5

14. My division is a good representation of my own values

                             1   2   3   4   5

15. I am able to identify with the goals of my division

                             1   2   3   4   5

16. My division has rules and regulations that control my behaviour

                             1   2   3   4   5

17. The objectives of my division are clear

                             1   2   3   4   5

18. I feel at ease to contact my manager at any time

                             1   2   3   4   5

19. My division is innovative

                             1   2   3   4   5

20. As a division, we are encouraged to communicate our thoughts and feelings to co-workers

                             1   2   3   4   5

21. I feel that I am being monitored to ensure that I follow the rules

                    1   2   3   4   5

22. My division relies on other divisions to get the work done

                    1   2   3   4   5

23. I am responsible for my own actions

                    1   2   3   4   5

24. I have complete control over how I do my work

                    1   2   3   4   5

25. In this division, management readily shares information with me

                    1   2   3   4   5

26. This division has a large number of reporting lines

                    1   2   3   4   5

27. I am very closely supervised

                    1   2   3   4   5

28. This division views the customer as a priority

                    1   2   3   4   5

29. If I have a query, I communicate with the person involved regardless of their status or position

                    1   2   3   4   5

30. Management tends to suppress or avoid conflict

                    1   2   3   4   5

31. I feel that I am remunerated adequately for the type of work I do

                    1   2   3   4   5

32. I am proud of the division I work for.

                    1   2   3   4   5

33. I am expected to follow instructions and procedures closely

                    1   2   3   4   5

34. My communication with other areas is restricted by my reporting lines

                    1   2   3   4   5

35. I identify more closely with my division than the whole organisation

                    1   2   3   4   5

36. Most decisions in this division are made by those who are personally involved or affected

                    1   2   3   4   5

37. I believe this division places importance on the development of skills and abilities of employees

                       1   2   3   4   5

38. There is continual feedback by management on how well the division is doing

                       1   2   3   4   5

39. I am allowed to deviate from stipulated rules if circumstances warrant it

                       1   2   3   4   5

40. I am encouraged to find new and better ways of serving my clients

                       1   2   3   4   5

41. In this division, creative thought is valued

                       1   2   3   4   5

42. In this division there is mutual trust and honesty

                       1   2   3   4   5

43. Management is more concerned about the business than its people

                       1   2   3   4   5

44. I am allowed to challenge my manager

                       1   2   3   4   5

45. My managers are always in meetings and never available

                       1   2   3   4   5

46. The division's policies and procedures make sense and support the work to be done

                       1   2   3   4   5

47. I work at my own pace

                       1   2   3   4   5

48. Managers within my division are addressed by their first names

                       1   2   3   4   5

49. Paths for promotion are very clear

                       1   2   3   4   5

50. I believe that my division is a top performer

                       1   2   3   4   5

51. The most effective means of communication within my division is "through the grapevine."

                       1   2   3   4   5

52. Decision making is rapid and effective

                       1   2   3   4   5

53. I can justify my salary to myself

                 1   2   3   4   5

54. My manager is willing to help me with a complex task

                 1   2   3   4   5

55. I know what management expects of me

                 1   2   3   4   5

56. I have the support of my superiors for the risks I take

                 1   2   3   4   5

57. I will defend the work I do as the best in the industry

                 1   2   3   4   5

58. The rules that guide my behaviour are formally presented

                 1   2   3   4   5

59. My division does things as they were always done- we don't challenge the status quo

                 1   2   3   4   5

60. My manager trusts me to take control of a difficult situation

                 1   2   3   4   5

61. I feel that I am remunerated adequately for the qualification I have

                 1   2   3   4   5