CONFLICT, IDENTITY AND SENSE OF COHERENCE IN MANAGERS. A CASE STUDY FROM SOUTH AFRICA

C-H Mayer (Department of Management, Rhodes University)
CM Boness (Pädagogisches Seminar, Georg-August-Universität)

The purpose of this paper is to initiate the discourse on conflict, identity and health, specifically with regard to the sense of coherence (SOC) in South African Coloured managers, thereby contributing towards improving these issues in a culture-specific, organisational context. More specifically, the aim is to present selected research results from an explorative qualitative case study in the frame of recent theoretical discourses.

Certain components of the SOC contribute to managers' coping with, and staying healthy in cross-cultural conflict situations. Results from the case study demonstrate how the identity of South African Coloured managers is affected in (cross-cultural) conflicts, as well as how these managers create SOC components, such as comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness, to constructively cope with cross-cultural conflicts, thereby enhancing their personal health.

Key phrases: Coloured managers, conflict, health, identity, sense of coherence, South African organisation

INTRODUCTION

In the new paradigm of globalisation, diversity and health concept organisations have changed both the way business is conducted and how organisations are managed. Simultaneously, the potential for cross-cultural conflicts is increasing. Such organisational changes require a new focus, as well as new research approaches, to better understand the complexity of the situation, particularly as there is an increase in organisation-specific cross-cultural conflicts.

Identity has been highlighted as a conflict research topic (Alvesson 2000; Dutton *et al* 1994) and is viewed, in constructivist theories, as 'patchwork identities' (Keupp 1988:425) which form the depending equivalent to the social and organisational multiplicity which either create synergies and 'Kreativitätsspielräume' (creativity spaces) (Keupp 1994; Keupp 1997) or conflict and tension (Rahim 2002:207), thereby rendering an impact on health. Variables associated with (ill-) health and stress in occupational settings has been discussed (Michie & Williams 2003; Spector *et al* 1998; Vahtera & Kivimäki 2008); however, research on (cross-cultural) conflict, identity and health is rare.

The need for this research is obvious: Organisations are riddled by conflict (Pondy 1992), often rooted in identity (Kriesberg 2003), which can result in intra- and interpersonal distress; distraction from work; difficulties in decision-making and interpersonal contact; and a negative affect on effectiveness, productivity and creativity (Cowan 1995:24).

Mayer & Boness

**Conflict, identity and sense of coherence in managers.
A case study from South Africa**

These phenomena have rarely been explored in the South African context in the past (Mayer 2008; Mayer 2008a). The study of (cross-cultural) conflict in South African organisations, subsequent to South Africa undergoing tremendous change through globalisation and post-apartheid changes at societal, political, economic and individual levels (Hart 2002), has grown (Booysen 2007); however, such studies were rarely with regard to aspects of identity and health (Mayer 2008).

The purpose of this article is to provide a deeper understanding of the described contents, by exploring perceptions of South African Coloured managers in a selected organisation in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. More specifically, the aim is to contribute to culture-specific research on the above mentioned issues, within a selected South African organisational context, and to present selected research results from an exploratory, qualitative single case study. This study aims to fill the void in management research on Coloured managers and their attitudes towards the above-mentioned issues. To achieve this aim the article focuses on the following research questions:

- Which cross-cultural conflicts do the selected managers experience?

- Which identity aspects are mentioned in these conflicts?

- Which health components play a role for the managers?

The research results introduce new perspectives and stimuli on cross-cultural conflict, identity and health in the South African managerial context of Coloured managers and can serve both the development of a follow-up research study and to create cross-cultural training tools.

In the following, the theoretical background, the research methodology and selected research results will be presented. Finally, a conclusion will be drawn and recommendations will be given.

CONFLICTS ACROSS CULTURES

A wide range of research on (cross-cultural) conflict and its management, particularly in organisational contexts and management (Francis 2003; Pondy 1967; Rahim 2001; Rahim 2002), has been developed worldwide (Coleman 2003; Miall *et al* 2000).

This study focuses on conflict research in the frame of constructivist theories which view the reality as a construct created by the mutual inter-relationships between individuals and the environment (Aggestan 1999; Applefield *et al* 2000; Demmers

2006; Lederach 2000; Wallensteen & Sollenberg 1995). Conflict can be defined as 'a feeling, a disagreement, a real or perceived incompatibility of interests, inconsistent worldviews, or a set of behaviours' (Mayer 2000:3). 'Conflict is a psycho-social process' (Northrup 1989:54), which includes social interactions and which is shaped by individual and cultural meanings (Augsburger 1992; Avruch 1998; Lederach 2000). These cultural meanings are constructed through 'perceptions, interpretations, expressions and intentions' (Lederach 1996:9) which can create conflict and 'conflict situations are those unique episodes when we explicitly recognize the existence of multiple realities and negotiate the creation of a common meaning' (Lederach 1988:39).

Conflict is linked to the inner processes of individuals and their relationship with the environment and is an integral part of organisational life. It is not only an external reality, but rather a result of how each individual perceives and approaches existing problems (Gaziano *et al* 1996). Conflict is, therefore, at least partly a result of a 'cognitive-affective process dynamics' (Mischel & Shoda 1998:251) in relation to the organisational and socio-cultural context (Kumar & van Dissel 1996; Rahim 2002; Schermerhorn *et al* 1997).

Intra- and interpersonal conflict processes are created through the human mind and consist of 'different parts … the psyche, the value system and the behaviour' (Folger *et al* 2001:45). According to Rahim (2002:207), 'an interactive process does not preclude the possibilities of intra-individual conflict, for it is known that a person often interacts with self'. Conflict in organisations, therefore, often relates to issues of identity and may start when an individual or a group perceives differences to, and opposition between the self and the other about interests, beliefs, needs and values (De Dreu *et al* 1999).

MANAGING CONFLICT AND IDENTITIES

Conflict management is the art of appropriate intervention for settling conflict (Nye 2005). It is the positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence. Conflict management 'addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict, namely, how to deal with it in a constructive way; how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process; and how to design a practical, achievable and cooperative system for the constructive management of difference' (Bloomfield & Reilly 1998:18). Consequently, conflict management assists in designing effective strategies toward both minimising the dysfunctions and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict, thereby increasing learning and effectiveness (Rahim 2002:208).

Conflict management theories and practical tools (Miall *et al* 2000) have been developed toward this end.

In management studies, the notion of multi-layered (organisational) identity constructs has recently gained weight (Albert *et al* 2000; Ashforth & Mael 1989; Pratt & Rafaeli 1997). Identity has become a well-explored and prominent domain (Albert & Whetten 1985; Albert *et al* 2000a; Gioia *et al* 2002; Hatch & Schulz 2002; Rothman 1997; Whetten & Godfrey 1998) within constructivist theories (Cobb 2003:Internet; Kriesberg 2003) which promote the idea of identity as an external-internal reality process (Beech 2008; Sennett 1998; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Watson 1994; Watson 2008), impacting positively on organisational conflict management (Mayer 2008; Mayer 2008a).

Research on identity in organisations emphasises the valuable contribution of identity, revealing shared organisational identity as an attractive resource (Brown 2001), both essential to organisational success (Collins & Porras 1996) and enhancing pro-activity (Gioia & Thomas 1996:396). It serves as a major tool for managing critical incidents in organisations (Oliver & Roos 2003). Simultaneously, it provides a major force for activating, prioritising and deploying core capabilities and resources in the organisation (Glynn 2000:295).

The relevance of identity in constructing, de-constructing and managing conflict, whilst still underestimated when attempting to understand and manage conflict issues, are becoming more important (Lederach 2003; Seymour 2003:Internet). Understanding the increased complexity of identity patterns and conflict (Williams & O'Reilly 1998) has gained significance, especially in view of global trends (Burton 1990).

CONFLICT AND HEALTH

Parallel to conflict and identity issues, conflict is often viewed as a potential 'stressor' with destructive health effects for the individual (El-Sheikh & Harger 2001; Kiecolt-Glaser *et al* 1993; Kiecolt-Glaser *et al* 1997).[1] Individuals involved in conflict develop more health problems; higher cardiovascular reactivity (El-Sheikh & Harger 2001); immunological down-regulation (Kiecolt-Glaser *et al* 1993; Kiecolt-Glaser *et al* 1997); and psychological ill-health and sickness (Michie & Williams 2003). Cross-cultural

---

[1]   Selye (1957) defines stress as the pressures, efforts and nuisances that a person experiences on a daily basis and that bring the person into a state of inbalance (Vester 1976:14). It is a 'reaction to adapt' (Possemeyer 2002:148). Critical changes in life situations (Schaufler 2000) can cause stress, reduce general manageability for a person and lead to physical illness (Zimbardo 1995). Minor stress experiences, such as those caused by conflicts, can accumulate and lead to a reduction of physical and psychological health (Zimbardo 1995).

communication and conflict, particularly, create tension and stress (Berry 1992; Oberg 1960) which is detrimental to health (Berry & Kim 1988). It has been pointed out (Newsome 2003:Internet; Ren *et al* 1999; Williams & Collins 2001; Williams *et al* 1997) that racial, cultural or social discrimination cause stress, resulting in a decline in health status. Compas *et al* (1993) emphasise that chronic stressors play a key role in health. Constructively managed conflict, however, (re-) contributes positively to job satisfaction, the experience of work-related stress (Friedman *et al* 2000:32), well-being and health (De Dreu *et al* 2004:15).

A change in health sciences (Hurrelmann & Laaser 1993) towards to end of the past century led to the concept of 'positive health' (Breslow 1972). This emboldened the World Health Organization (1946) to define health more comprehensively as 'physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. Health has become a social category, defined through the relationship of body and psyche (Faltermaier 1994) which depends on both one's perception and existing means of dealing with stress. Thus, health is not only a physical phenomenon, but a socio-cultural and individual construct. It is 'the subjective well-being and the health-oriented behaviour of a person' (Bengel *et al* 1999:15).

Antonovsky (1979) revolutionized health research by asking 'What keeps people healthy?'. With this question he introduced the concept of salutogenesis, viewing health as an active, dynamic self-regulating process in a human being (Bengel *et al* 1999). An individual's state of health or disease is largely determined by a single psychological factor which is very much connected to a person's identity: His/her general attitude toward the world and his/her own life (Antonovsky 1993:972; Blättner 2007). Even if there are external factors that are detrimental to health, such as war, starvation or poor hygienic conditions, individuals experiencing the same conditions may display different states of health. If the external conditions are comparable, then the individual state of health depends on how pronounced one's cognitive and affective motivational perspective is on life. This life-orientation, in turn, influences the strength of one's position to utilise the resources available to maintain one's health and well-being. This basic life-orientation is called 'sense of coherence' (SOC) (Antonovsky 1979).

THE SENSE OF COHERENCE

The SOC as a life-orientation refers to consistency, congruence and harmony. The more pronounced a person's sense of coherence, the healthier s/he will be and the more quickly s/he will regain health. Antonovsky (1987) describes the SOC in a metaphor as follows:

> The sense of coherence is a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that (1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (3) these demands are challenges worthy of investment and engagement).

The SOC consist of three main components (Antonovsky 1979):

1. The sense of comprehensibility

This component describes the expectation or the ability of a person to process familiar and unfamiliar stimuli as ordered, consistent, structured information and not as chaotic, random, accidental and inexplicable. This comprehensibility component results from experiences of consistency that support the classification, categorisation and structuring of information.

2. The sense of manageability

A person with 'the sense of manageability' is convinced that difficulties are solvable. The sense of manageability consists of confidence and '...the extent to which one perceives that resources are at one's disposal, which is adequate to meet the demands posed by the stimuli that bombard one' (Antonovsky 1987:17). This SOC component develops through the experience of one's own resources and the belief that strains can be kept in balance and managed. It also depends on the assumption that other people or a higher power will help to overcome difficulties.

3. The sense of meaningfulness

This component describes '...the extent to which one feels that life makes sense emotionally, that at least some of the problems and demands posed by living are worth investing energy in, are worthy of commitment and engagement, are challenges that are 'welcome' rather than burdens that one would much rather do without' (Antonovsky 1987:18). Meaningfulness is fostered by the feeling of having influence on the shaping of situations. It is considered to be the most important component, because without meaningfulness life is experienced as a burden (Bengel *et al* 1999).

The strength of the SOC is dependent on the environmental, historical and living circumstances, socialisation and acculturalisation, as well as the individual processes and the availability of 'general resistance resources' (GRRs) in society (Antonovsky 1993). 'What the person with a strong SOC does is to select the particular coping strategy that seems most appropriate to deal with the stressors being confronted' (Antonovsky 1987:138).

This process serves the intention of salutogenesis, 'the self-organisation and the self-renewal of the health system of an individual' (Mussmann *et al* 1993:9). A high SOC provides a person with a fundamental confidence that the situation will work out (Antonovsky 1990). It is associated with less subjective body complaints, somatoform symptoms and, in general, with minor health-related problems (Eriksson & Lindström 2006; Schumacher *et al* 2000). A strong SOC enables a person to:

- judge a particular stimulus to be neutral, when the same would cause tension in persons with a weak SOC (primary appraisal I);

- judge a stimulus to be a stressor, while at the same time determine whether the stressor is threatening, favourable or irrelevant (primary appraisal II);

- classify the stressor as favourable or irrelevant which means that tension is perceived, but simultaneously expected to cease without the activation of resources (Antonovsky 1979). The stressor is thus redefined as a non-stressor (primary appraisal III) and individuals experience and define problems and conflicts in a more differentiated way. They experience emotions as less diffuse, more focused and less paralysing than individuals with low SOC (Faltermaier 1994:53). High SOC individuals react flexibly to threatening situations with appropriate and directed feelings that can be influenced by actions.

It is obvious that the SOC is highly interlinked with an individual's identity (Keupp 2003) and his/her cultural schemes – all which render an impact on health (Landrine & Klonhoff 1992). Cross-cultural training can both reduce health disparities and contribute to the improvement of SOC in diverse organisations (Mayer 2007; Mayer 2008a).

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Identity has become a topic of major research interest (Roefs 2006, Thom & Coetzee 2004) in South Africa, partly indicating that 'South Africans are schizophrenic about their identity' (Nuttall & Michael 2000:110) and highlighting an 'identity crisis in the new South Africa' (Alexander 2002:82).

South African managers face the challenge of attempting to bridge differences in social identity groups, as well as identity crises and conflicts in organisations which might be based on societal conflicts that spill over into organisations (Booysen & Nkomo 2007; Chrobot-Mason *et al* 2007). Such conflicts and identity crises often relate to the process of 'double transition' (Webster & Adler 1999) created by post-apartheid South Africa and globalisation transformation. These transformations result in South African managers' exposure to a high level of diversity deriving from

multiplicities in cultural origins, racial constructions and differences in identity and can lead to managers experiencing identity-related conflict. The often contradictory processes of globalisation have led to wide-ranging changes in identity formation, particularly in members of minorities and/or marginalised groups (Bornman 2003). These identity changes are often bound to changes in perception, experience or definition of identities (Korf & Malan 2002), identity constructions, social norms and power shifts (Booysen 2007; Cilliers & May 2002).

COLOURED IDENTITIES

The identity issue in recent literature is often bound to Coloureds and Coloured identity which is seen as a social and racial construct between the Black and White groups (Du Toit 2002:Internet; Erasmus 2001; Martin 2001). This study focuses explicitly on Coloured managers, both to resume the debate on Coloured identities (Frenkel 2008; Golding 1987; Seekings 2008) and to expand it to the issues of cross-cultural conflict and SOC in the managerial context.

South African history shows the emergence of a clear racial order from the earliest stages of European settlement in South Africa (Elphick & Giliomee 1989). In the 19th and 20th century a specific cultural group, the Coloureds, was created through colonial forces and inherited members of different cultural groups and mixed origins. By the end of the 1880s, the concept of 'Colouredness' was firmly entrenched in the South African society and particularly in the Western Cape (Adhikari 1994:104). After the end of Apartheid, the term Coloured was seen as a political and socio-cultural construction implying negative stereotypes (Mayer 2005). Sonn and Fisher (1998) highlight that Coloureds often refuse to be labelled 'Coloured' due to the colonial impact and negative associations and stereotypes from within the group itself and from members of other cultural groups; however, they still have internalized negative labels and stereotypes associated with their racial status.

At present, for most South Africans, the existence of four distinct racially-defined races, namely White, Coloured, Indian and Black, remains a normal state of affairs (Vincent 2008:2). At the same time, the meanings of these racial categories change even if they seem resilient in the new 'rainbow nation' (Ansell 2004:4). Bekker *et al* (2000:7), however, point out that 'race is rarely the primary source of meaning and indeed only becomes primary in specific circumstances'. Cultural affiliations, defined by ethnic origin, language, cultural belonging and tradition, are viewed in contrast to racial affiliations and emerge as particularly meaningful. Also, religion seems to be more important than ethnic belonging in selected groups (Hanson 2003).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given the qualitative nature of this research, the phenomenological and interpretative paradigms are most relevant (Collis & Hussey 2003). Within these paradigms, the theoretical and methodological approaches used are founded on the epistemological tradition of constructivism (Berger & Luckmann 2000) and interpretative hermeneutics (Gadamer 1990; Habermas 1999) which postulate the objective world as a construct of social interaction (Jonassen 1991). Various theoretical stances reflect a post-modern epistemology and can be grouped under terms such as 'constructivism' or 'social constructivism which share the notion of multiple realities'.[2]

This case study is based on the post-modernist premise that not one true reality exists, that there is no absolute truth (Becvar & Becvar 2006) and that different 'realities' vary quite dramatically across cultures, time and context (Gonzalez *et al* 1994:Internet) and through constantly changing relationships (Becvar & Becvar 2006).

This qualitative research focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of the research issue (Cheldelin *et al* 2003), deep data and 'thick descriptions' (Geertz 1987). Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003:1164) assert that few studies address 'the understanding of specific processes and situations of identity construction in and around work and organizations'. This single-case exploratory study was used to collect and evaluate data on conflict, identity and SOC by employing research questions; focusing on the subjective experiences of managers; and developing useful explanations and interpretations of the described subject, according to the following levels of text reconstruction (Ricoeur 1979; Wolff 2000:87):

Level 1: The manager experienced the conflict situation.

Level 2: The manager narrated the 'story' during the interview.

Level 3: The researcher transcribed the in-full-length recorded interviews and categorised this transcribed text through content and key word analyses.[3] The transcripts were viewed as selective constructions and were transcribed according to Steinke (2000:327) in a 'manageable' way which is 'simple to write, easy to read, easy to learn and to interpret'. The transcription procedure focused mainly on the verbal aspects of the communication in the interest of analysis and evaluation controlled by

---

[2]   Here, constructivism is used as an umbrella term for both constructivism and social constructivism (McLeod 1996).

[3]   Key words are defined as words that occupy key positions in text through the import of their content, their significance in the text structure and conception or repetition or other emphasis.

factual words. Analytical data evaluation was implemented (Level 4), subsequent to the texts being transcribed.

Level 4: The researcher interpreted the categorised text through content analysis (Mayring 2003) based on a systematic approach to accidental perceptions.[4]

Depth and understanding of reality in this research was achieved by the researcher and managers through their mutual relationship. Research results were created through the inter-dependent relationship between the 'issue of research' and the 'process of research' (Stellrecht 1993:36). In this study, the issue of research pertained to conflict, identity and health, while the 'process of research' encompassed the identification of keywords and the hermeneutical reconstruction, presentation and interpretation of the mentioned concepts.

Sample and sampling procedure

Data was collected through in-depth individual interviews (Babbie & Mouton 2006:291) with a sample of ten South African Coloured managers from a selected business organisation operating in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, as well as document and text analysis. Coloured managers were selected as target group due to the strong theoretical debate on conflict and, particularly, identity in the Coloured community of South Africa. The selection of this organisation as a case study was based on the following reasons:

- regional organisational involvement and standing in business;
- diversity and conflict-handling policies were in place and well managed;
- management profile; and
- permissible access to the organisation.

The managers were selected by the Human Resource Department of the organisation according to the specific selection criteria, namely (1) interviewees viewed themselves as 'Coloured' and belonging to the 'Coloured' community; (2) they were managers from top, middle and lower management; and (3) they proved willing to participate voluntarily in the research.

Eight of ten managers originated from Port Elizabeth (PE) and two from Cape Town (CT). Table 1 summarises the biographical data of the ten managers.

---

[4] Content analysis comprises a subjective process between the text and the person coding the text: 'Verifying the reliability of content analysis is primarily done by inter-individual and intra-individual verification' (Yin 2002:45). Objectivity in analysis was guided by adhering to particular rules and regulations of content and key word analysis.

Table 1:   Biographical data

No.	Place of birth	Nationality	Age	Gender	Marital wtatus	Level of education	Occupation
1	CT	SA	42	F	Single	MA	HR Manager/Consultant
2	PE	SA	40	M	Married	MA	Instruction Manager
3	PE	SA	29	F	Single	MA	HR Manager
4	PE	SA	40	F	Single	MA	Director
5	PE	SA	43	F	Single	MA	HR Manager/ Consultant
6	PE	SA	29	M	Single	MA	Research manager
7	PE	SA	41	M	Married	MA	Deputy Director/ Supervisor
8	PE	SA	27	M	Single	MA	Director
9	CT	SA	37	F	Single	MA	Production manager
10	PE	SA	36	F	Married	MA	Sales manager

Source: Author's own construction.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The research results contain 18 narrated conflicts relating to identity and health from the managerial perspective. The research questions will be answered in the following sections.

Cross-cultural conflict

By answering the research question on which cross-cultural conflicts the selected managers experienced, 18 conflicts could be identified and clustered into six conflict categories, namely (1) work, (2) class, (3) socio-cultural environment, (4) family, (5) political history and (6) spirituality. Not all of the conflicts are explicitly bound to culture or race, but are rather classified as cross-cultural conflict as the narrator defined the conflict as such.

Table 2:   Identity's impact on conflict and its management

Conflict category	Interview number and conflict issues	
1. Work	I3:	Old leadership styles
	I7:	Affirmative action
	I8:	Radio station manager's behaviour
	I9:	Racial issues at work
	I10:	Accused of being perpetrator
	I4:	White lady speaking on behalf of blacks
2. Class	I2:	Middle class structure
	I3:	Middle class
3. Socio-cultural environments	I2:	Assisting people
	I2:	My own resources
	I4:	Educational settings for children
	I5:	Racial issues at party

Conflict category	Interview number and conflict issues
4. Family	I1: My uncle, my father and God I3: Family responsibility I3: 'Peaceful family' being unpeaceful
5. Political history	I1: My political struggle I2: Being part of the oppressed groups
6. Spirituality	I1: Difference is created by God

Source: Author's own construction.

In category 1, managers described work-related conflicts which were invariably related to racial identities, the country's history and politics. These conflicts were related to experiences of 'old' leadership styles; 'affirmative action' in the organisation; treatment of a Coloured-Chinese manager by a White manager; racial issues at work; accusation of perpetuation; and Black-White communication.

The category Class includes conflicts related to the struggle of climbing up the class strata or sustaining the current class status. This is strongly connected to educational and racial identity. Coloured managers acknowledged that they could improve their class status through higher education but, at the same time, felt bound to a class 'lower than whites' due to skin colour. Class is, therefore, strongly determined by birth and can hardly be elevated by education.

In conflict category 3, conflicts in different socio-cultural environments, such as parties, functions and educational settings, were viewed as 'boiling down to race'. At the same time, managers recognized the privileges of being part of the non-poor; as people who can assist others; and who can use their individual resources to overcome conflicts.

Conflict category 4 contains conflicts relating to family issues and included many references to identity and values at work. Family-related conflicts impact strongly on identities and values, such as tolerance, openness, responsibility and peace. These unfulfilled values play a main role in cross-cultural conflicts.

Two conflicts are related to the history of apartheid (I1, I2) in category 5, namely the political struggle and feelings of being oppressed and discriminated against due to race.

Finally, one conflict stands in the context of religion and spirituality (category 6) and is, therefore, categorised in the category Spirituality. The conflict relates to managing cross-cultural conflicts through the spirit of God, mutual respect and the acknowledgement of difference.

Defining identities in managers' narratives

Ten identity categories were developed, namely individual values, race, national belonging, social belonging, political belonging, religion/belief, global belonging, job, being a human being and cultural competence (refer Table 3).

The results demonstrate that each manager's identity definition aims at creating an individual identity through highlighting individual values, such as honesty, equality, justice, integrity, kindness and self-respect. Those values are associated with individual characteristics, such as having a strong personality, being a leader or a person with visions and purpose, goals and desires. Being a human being, as created by God, proved highly important to several of the interviewed managers. This reveals that a person's identity is also part of the spiritual sphere and refers to self-transcending identities.

In addition, race is an important part of identity. Five of the ten managers explicitly viewed themselves as Coloured, whilst one manager (from Coloured-Chinese background) defined himself in negation as 'neither Black nor White'. National and social belonging, including the living environment (location, community and region), as well as family and class belonging further proved important. Four managers mentioned political aspects in their identity: 'being Black' (referring to the concept of 'Black consciousness' of Steve Biko), the 'Southern identity' (referring to Che Guevara) and the African identity (referring to Pan-Africanism). These social identities were viewed as alternatives to racial identities. Religion and belief, such as the Christian faith and a belief in ancestors, spirituality and God, proved important aspects of, and impacted on identity. The concept of the person was directly connected to the creator God, to Christian faith and to the belief in ancestors and spirituality. Two other managers referred to the concept of each person as a human being of God. Only two managers mentioned that the job impacts strongly on their identity. Even though interviews were conducted regarding the work context, the spiritual aspect in creating identities seemed to be more important than the job itself.

Seven managers mentioned cross-cultural competence, gained through family upbringing, as part of their identity. I1 stated that she finds it very 'easy to move between cultures' and that she is 'very aware of her cultural prejudices' due to her open and tolerant family upbringing. Others (I3, I5, I6) stated that they were brought up in a mixed area where they learned to be tolerant and understanding. One manager (I3) highlighted her private school education which supported her developing cross-cultural competence. I6 was shaped through his social environment and his individual identity work: 'I shape myself individually.' Finally, one manager stated that his cross-cultural competence is based on spirituality and on 'having

Mayer & Boness

Conflict, identity and sense of coherence in managers.
A case study from South Africa

peace within oneself': Spiritual people can communicate respectfully and integrate with diverse people openly without any barriers through the power and positive energy of God.

Table 3:   Defining identities in managers

Category	Interview No.	Frequency	Statements included
1. Individual values	I3	10	My values
			Individual identity
			Honesty
	I4		Strong personality and leader
			Honesty, equality, justice
	I5		Person with vision and purpose
			Person with goals and desires
	I6		Rational and cross-cultural
	I7		Self-respect and communicating
	I10		Integrity, kindness, equality
2. Race	I1	6	I am Coloured
	I2		Coloured
	I3		Coloured community
	I5		Coloured background
	I8		Don't belong to blacks or Whites
	I10		Coloured
3. National belonging	I2	5	South African
	I3		South African
	I6		South African
	I8		Chinese/South Africanised Chinese-Coloured
	I10		South African
4. Social belonging	I2	5	Where I live
	I3		Family
	I3		My community
	I1		Western Cape
	I2		Middle class
5. Political belonging	I1	4	Political identity (Che Guevara)
	I2		I am Black
	I7		Black and fighter
	I9		Being African
6. Religion/ Belief	I2	4	Christian faith
	I4		Spiritual person
	I8		Chinese ancestors and cultural belief
	I9		Created by God
7. Global belonging	I1	3	I am internationalist
	I3		Global village person
	I6		Western Universal / Euro-American
8. Job	I3	2	My job
	I5		Work identity

Category	Interview No.	Frequency	Statements included
9. Human being	I2 I9	2	Human Being Human Being
10. Cross-cultural competence	I1, I3, I5, I6 I2, I3, I6, I10 I3 I7	10	Family and upbringing Individual identity work Educational background Spirituality

Source: Author's own construction.

These results show that Coloured managers define themselves mainly through self-transcending and spiritual values, rather than focusing on racial, national, social or political identities. They define their identities both through:

- transcending identity concepts, such as individual, global and spiritual identity aspects; and

- traditional culture-based and national-historic identity concepts, such as racial, national, political and religious identity aspects.

Managers aimed at 'managing the inner diversity constructively' and finding a 'positive balance' (I1, I2). One manager (I2) hoped to improve his cross-cultural competencies; live according to White standards; and use his own Coloured resources.

Four managers expressed the desire to improve on their self-control and severity and turn it into patience and sensitivity. One manager wanted to reflect on her own ethnic origin, whilst two other managers wanted to focus on their gender identity to improve their self-understanding.

Coloured managers try to manage cross-cultural conflicts through religious and spiritual belief: 'Human beings just need to accept that difference is created by God. Then everything would be easier' (I1). Four managers aimed at developing a civil society and overcoming apartheid through changing social interactions.

SENSE OF COHERENCE IN COLOURED MANAGERS

The third and final research question focuses on health and particularly on the SOC components mentioned by Coloured managers.[5] Describing identities in cross-cultural conflicts in organisations, the managers referred to the importance of:

- understanding;

- managing; and

- ascribing meanings to conflicts and identities.

---

[5]   1. Sense of comprehensibility (c), 2. Sense of manageability (m), 3. Sense of meaningfulness (mf)

All narratives included SOC components, as shown in the following two examples provided by I1 and I2.

I1 highlighted that managing conflicts depends on knowing and understanding 'where we come from' (c) and 'who I am now, looking at my vision and my future' (c and mf). At the same time, it is important how 'we relate to people' (m) and 'how we relate to the future, moving forward' (m and mf). She underwent a process of improving her understanding of other cultures (c) and herself (c); reflecting on what she and others do (c); and being tolerant and acting accordingly (m), openly and directly with mutual respect (m).

Another manager (I2) emphasized the importance of understanding his own intentions behind his actions (c) and integrating different realities of people with different racial backgrounds (c, m and mf). He believes that 'if you experience a real diverse and integrated environment, it is better for your self-esteem and your own confidence (mf) if you move in diversity…' I2 is driven to action and to manage cross-cultural issues in society (m), thereby contributing to civil society (mf). He values resources which contribute to cross-cultural conflict management (m), such as:

- meta communication (talking about culture);

- taking action (handle the situation, speak out for yourself, manage your own diversity, learn how to cope with it); and

- strategic management (decide for yourself when you feel the influence of others, always have a plan).

Table 4 shows the number of quotations relating to the managers and their SOC.

Table 4:   Number of SOC-related quotations

Interview number	Sense of comprehensibility (c)	Sense of manageability (m)	Sense of meaningfulness (mf)	Total number of SOC-related quotations
I1	6	5	2	13
I2	2	8	3	13
I3	1	3	1	5
I4	1	2	5	8
I5	1	3	1	5
I6	1	1	1	3
I7	1	2	2	5
I8	1	1	2	4
I9	1	1	0	2
I10	2	1	3	6
I1-10	**17**	**27**	**20**	**64**

Source: Author's own construction.

The above table shows that I1 and I2 referred to SOC components in detail. Generally, managers referred to the components of manageability (27 statements). These are highly important in terms of cross-cultural conflict and identities. This demonstrates that managing conflict appears to be more important than comprehending and ascribing meaning to conflicts and identities.

Twenty statements referring to meaningfulness were obtained from interviewees. Meaningfulness is related to individual and social issues, to spirituality, religion and belief. Meaning is created through individual purpose (vision and future, e.g. I1, I4), social responsibility (civil society, e.g. I2) and spirituality (spiritual purpose, created by God, e.g. I4). These results show that creating meaning is of importance to Coloured managers and their identity in cross-cultural conflict management. The component of comprehensibility was mentioned the least and, therefore, seems to be less important than manageability and meaningfulness.

CONCLUSION

South African Coloured managers described cross-cultural conflicts, not only relating to their work, but within six different conflict categories, including class, socio-economic environment, family, political history and spirituality. Class and spirituality were of particular importance due to the managers' culture-specific, South African background in post-apartheid South African organisational contexts.

Managers experienced their identities as a form of 'multiple identity' which is created like a 'patchwork' (Keupp 1988; Keupp 1994) and which includes different identities based on individual, racial, national, social, political and spiritual belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. Finally, belonging to the global community, the job, 'being a human being' and cross-cultural competence were important for identity constructions. The impact of apartheid is visible throughout the (racial) identity constructions which strive towards a global orientation, experiencing inner diversity and the desire to become culturally aware and competent in cross-cultural interactions. Identity concepts can, however, be distinguished into either individual orientations or traditional, culture-bound, historic orientations. Most of the managers tried to integrate both of the orientations as equivalent to the post-apartheid 'double transition'.

With regard to health and SOC components, it is obvious that managers contributed to their health through constructing manageability (27 statements), meaningfulness (20 statements) and comprehensibility (17 statements) to cope successfully and

Mayer & Boness

Conflict, identity and sense of coherence in managers. A case study from South Africa

constructively with cross-cultural conflicts and live according to new, post-apartheid challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research results and conclusion lead to the following recommendations:

- Organisations in the South African context need to be aware of the specific needs, challenges and concepts of Coloured managers in terms of cross-cultural conflict, identity and health. Organisational structures need to be developed to care for individual identities in cross-cultural conflicts and the management thereof. Through these organisational identity structures, diverse concepts of managing cross-cultural conflict can be supported and can contribute to health by improving cross-cultural comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness.

- Even though South African Coloured managers seem to be highly aware of their identities and the challenges of coping with identity-related cross-cultural conflicts, improvements are required in comprehending and managing identities, feelings and emotions which correspond with the different identity aspects. Through organisational and individual identities meaningfulness can then be created.

- Identity work, such as self-reflection, collegial discussions, coaching sessions, supervision and cross-cultural mediation can increase comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness collectively and individually to strengthen identities in cross-cultural conflict and, therefore, contribute to empower SOC components.

- In particular, culturally-adapted cross-cultural mediation could support the creating of a diverse organisation, reflecting multiple identities and constructive cross-cultural conflict management.

- Culture-specific cross-cultural training, which focus on cross-cultural conflict management, mediation and identity work in post-apartheid South African organisational contexts, need to be developed. By improving cross-cultural understanding, manageability and meaningfulness, cross-cultural trainings in business organisations can contribute towards improving SOC components and health in managers.

- According to these recommendations, further follow-up research is needed with regard to

    - culture-specific concepts in cross-cultural communication and conflicts, identity and health, specifically with regard to SOC in South African organisations;

- culture-specific concepts of cross-cultural mediation; and

- conflict management within and across cultural groups in South African organisations.

The future of South African organisations lies in culture-specific cross-cultural conflict management through identity work which moves beyond the organisational structure and supports components of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness of the individual and organisational identity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADHIKARI M. 1994. Coloured identity and the politics of coloured education: the origin of the teachers' league of South Africa. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 27(1):101-126.

AGGESTAN K. 1999. *Reframing and Resolving Conflict*. Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations 1988-1998. Lund: Lund University Press.

ALBERT S., ASHFORTH B. & DUTTON J. (eds). 2000. Special topic forum on organizational identity and identification. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1):13-152.

ALBERT S., ASHFORTH B. & DUTTON J. (eds). 2000a. Organisational identity and identification. Charting new waters and building new bridges. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1):13-17.

ALBERT S. & WHETTEN D.A. 1985. *Organizational identity*. In CUMMINGS LL & STAW MM (eds). Research in organizational behaviour. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press. pp. 263–295.

ALEXANDER N. 2002. *An ordinary country*. Issue in the transition from Apartheid to democracy in South Africa. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

ALVESSON M. 2000. Social identity and the problem of loyalty in knowledge-intensive companies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 37(8):1101-1123.

ANSELL A. 2004. Mapping racial ideologies. *Politikon*, 31(1):4.

ANTONOVSKY A. 1979. *Health, stress, and coping: New perspectives on mental and physical well-being.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

ANTONOVSKY A. 1987. *Unraveling the mystery of health: How people manage stress and stay well*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

ANTONOVSKY A. 1990. *Pathways leading to a successful coping and health*. In ROSENBAUM M (ed). Learned Resourcefulness. New York: Springer Publishing Company, pp.31-63.

ANTONOVSKY A. 1993. *Gesundheitsforschung versus Krankheitsforschung.* In FRANKE A & BRODA M (eds). Psychosomatische Gesundheit. Versuch einer Abkehr vom Pathogenese-Konzept. Tübingen: dgvt-Verlag, pp. 3-14.

APPLEFIELD J.M., HUBER R. & MOALLEM M. 2000. Constructivism in theory and practice: Toward a better understanding. *The High School Journal*, 84(2):35-53.

ASHFORTH B. & MAEL F. 1989. Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy Of Management Review*, 14(1):20-39.

AUGSBURGER D.W. 1992. *Conflict mediation across cultures*. Kentucky: John Knox Press.

AVRUCH K. 1998. *Culture and conflict resolution*. Washington D.C.: USIP Press.

BABBIE E. & MOUTON J. 2006. *The practice of Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BECVAR D.S. & BECVAR R.J. 2006. *Family therapy: A systemic integration*. 6th Ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

BEECH N. 2008. On the nature of dialog identity work. *Organization,* 15(1):51-74.

BEKKER S., LEILDÉ A., CORNELISEN S. & HORSTMEIER S. 2000. The emergence of new identities in the Western Cape. *Politikon*, 2(27):221-237.

BENGEL J., STRITTMATTER R. & WILLMANN H. 1999. What keeps people healthy? The current state of discussion and the relevance of Antonovsky's Salutogenic Model of health. *Research and Practice of Health Promotion,* 4:15.

BERGER P.L. & LUCKMANN T. 2000. *Die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit*. Eine Theorie der Wissenssoziologie. 17th Ed. Frankfurt: Fischer.

BERRY J.W. 1992. Acculturation and adaptation in a new society. *International Migration*, 30:69-85.

BERRY J.W. & KIM U. 1988. *Acculturation and mental health*. In DASEN P, BERRY JW & SARTORIUS N (eds). Health and Cross-Cultural Psychology. Newbury Park: Sage. pp.207-236.

BLÄTTNER B. 2007. Das Modell der Salutogenese. Eine Leitorientierung für die berufliche Praxis. *Prävention und Gesundheitsförderung*, 2(2):67-73.

BLOOMFIELD D. & REILLY B. 1998. *The changing nature of conflict and conflict management*. In HARRIS P & REILLY B (eds). Democracy and Deep-rooted conflict. Stockholm: Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. p.18.

BOOYSEN L. 2007. Societal power shifts and changing social identities in South Africa: Workplace implications. *Southern African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences,* 10(1):1-20.

BOOYSEN L. & NKOMO S. 2007. The tea incident case study: Lessons in social identity tensions, diversity and social identity conflict management. *The International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations,* 7(5):97-106.

BORNMAN E. 2003. Struggles of identity in the age of globalization. *South African Journal of Communication Theory and Research*, 29(1&2):24-47.

BRESLOW L. 1972. A quantitative approach to the World Health Organization definition of health: Physical, mental and social well-being. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 1(4):347-355.

BROWN A. 2001. Organization studies and identity. Towards a research agenda. *Human Relations*, 54(1): 113-121.

BURTON J.W. 1990. *Conflict: Human Needs Theory.* London: MacMillian.

CHELDELIN S., DRUCKMAN D. & FAST L. 2003. *Conflict: From analysis to intervention.* New York: Continuum.

CHROBOT-MASON D., RUDERMAN M.N., WEBER T.J., OHLOTT P.J. & DALTON M.A. 2007. Illuminating a cross-cultural leadership challenge: when identity groups collide. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(11):2011-2036.

CILLIERS F. & MAY M. 2002. South African diversity dynamics: Reporting on the 2000 Robben Island diversity experience. A group relations event. *South African Journal of Labour Relations,* 26(3):42-68.

COBB S. 2003. *Narratives and stories, values and neutrality*. Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University. [Internet: www.beyondintractability.org/audio/sarah_cobb/?nid=2423; downloaded on 2007-10-22.]

COLEMAN P.T. 2003. Characteristics of protracted, intractable conflict: Toward the development of a metaframework. Peace and Conflict: *Journal of Peace Psychology*, 9(1):1-37.

COLLINS J. & PORRAS J. 1996. *Built to last*. Chatham: Random House.

COLLIS J. & HUSSEY R. 2003. *Business Research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. 2nd Ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillian.

COMPAS B.E., OROSAN P.G. & GRANT K.E. 1993. Adolescent stress and coping: Implications for psychopathology during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence,* 16:331-349.

COWAN D. 1995. *Taking charge of organizational conflict: A guide to managing anger and confrontation*. Spring Valley: Inner Choice Publishing.

DE DREU C.K.W., HARINCK F. & VAN VIANEN A.E.M. 1999. Conflict and performance in groups and organisations. In COOPER CL & ROBERTSON IT (eds). *International review of industrial and organisational psychology*, 14:369-414.

DE DREU C.K.W., VAN DIERENDONCK D. & DIJKSTRA M.T.M. 2004. Conflict at work and individual well-being. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 15(1):6-26.

DEMMERS J. 2006. Conflict research: Lancunas, mantras and pitfalls. *ISYP Journal on Science and World Affairs*, 2(2):99-102.

DU TOIT F. 2002. *Distrust and fear stand in the way of reconciliation*. [Internet: www.ijr.org.za/art_pgs/art43.html; downloaded on 2008-08-12.]

DUTTON J., DUKERICH J. & HARQUAIL C. 1994. Organizational images and member identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39:239-263.

ELPHICK R. & GILIOMEE H. (eds). 1989. *The shaping of South African society*, 1952-1840. Cape Town: Longman.

EL-SHEIKH M. & HARGER J.A. 2001. Appraisals of marital conflict and children's adjustment, health, and physiological reactivity. *Developmental Psychology*, 37:875-885.

ERASMUS Z. 2001. *Re-imagining Coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa*. In ERASMUS Z (ed). Coloured by history, shaped by place. New perspectives on Coloured identities in Cape Town. Social identities South Africa Series. Cape Town: Kwela Books, pp.13-28.

ERIKSSON M. & LINDSTRÖM B. 2006. Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale and the relation with health. A systematic review. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health,* 60(5):376-381.

FALTERMAIER T. 1994. *Gesundheitsbewusstsein und Gesundheitshandeln*. Über den Umgang mit Gesundheit im Alltag. Weinheim: Psychologie Verlags Union.

FOLGER J.P., SCOTT POOLE M. & STUTMAN R.K. (eds). 2001. *Working through conflict: Strategies for relationships, groups and organizations*. 2nd Ed. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

FRANCIS D. 2003. People, peace and power: Conflict transformation in action. *Peace Review*, 15(2):241-243.

FRENKEL R. 2008. Performing race, reconsidering history: Achmat Dangor's recent fiction. *Research in African Literatures,* 39(1):149-165.

FRIEDMAN R.A., TIDD S.T., CURRALL S.C. & TSAI J.C. 2000. What goes around comes around: The impact of personal conflict styles on work conflict and stress. *The International Journal of Conflict Management*, 11(1):32-55.

GADAMER H.G. 1990. *Wahrheit und Methode*. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik. 6th Ed. Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck.

Mayer & Boness

**Conflict, identity and sense of coherence in managers.
A case study from South Africa**

GAZIANO W.G., JENSEN-CAMPBELL L.A. & HAIR E. 1996. Perceiving interpersonal conflict and reacting to it: The case of agreeableness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(4):820-835.

GEERTZ C. 1987. *Dichte Beschreibung*. Beiträge zum Verstehen kultureller Systeme. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

GIOIA D., SCHULTZ M. & CORLEY K. 2002. On celebrating the organisation identity metaphor: A rejoinder to Cornelissen. *British Journal of Management*, 13(3):269-275.

GIOIA D.A. & THOMAS J.B. 1996. Identity image and issue interpretation: Sensemaking during strategic change in academia. *Administrative Science*, 11(3):285-298.

GLYNN M. 2000. When cymbals become symbols: Conflict over organizational identity within a symphony orchestra. *Organization Science*, 11(3):285-298.

GOLDING I. 1987. *Making race: The politics and economics Of Coloured identity in South Africa*. New York: Longman.

GONZALEZ N., MOLL L.C., FLOYD-TENERY M., RIVERA A., RENDON P., GONZALES R. & AMANTI C. 1994. *Funds of knowledge: Learning from language-minority househo*lds.
[Internet: www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed367146.html; downloaded on 2008-07-19.]

HABERMAS J. 1999. *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns*. 3rd Ed. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

HANSON E.M. 2003. *Educational Administration and Organizational Behavior*. 5th Ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

HART G.P. 2002. *Disabling globalization: Places of power in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

HATCH M. & SCHULZ M. 2002. The dynamics of organizational identity', *Human Relations*, 55(8):989-1018.

HURRELMANN K. & LAASER U. 1993. *Gesundheitswissenschaften*. Handbuch für Lehre, Forschung und Praxis. Juventa: Weinheim.

JONASSEN D.H. 1991. Evaluating constructivistic learning. *Educational Technology,* 28(11):13-16.

KEUPP H. 1988. Auf Dem Weg Zur Patchwork-Identität. Verhaltenstherapie and Psychosoziale Praxis. *Mitteilungen Der Dgvt,* 4(88):425-438.

KEUPP H. 1994. *Ambivalenzen Postmoderner Identität*. In BECK U & BECK-GERSHEIM E (eds). Riskante Freiheiten. Individualisierung In Modernen Gesellschaften. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. pp. 336-350.

KEUPP H. 1997. Von Der (Un-)Möglichkeit Erwachsen Zu Werden - Jugend Zwischen Multioptionalität Und Identitätsdiffusion. *Gemeindepsychologie-Rundbrief,* 1(97):10-15.

KEUPP H. 2003. *Identitätsbildung in der Netzwerkgesellschaft: Welche Ressourcen werden benötigt und wie können sie gefördert werden?* In FINGER-TRESCHER U & KREBS H (eds). Bindungsstörungen und Entwicklungschancen. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, 15-50.

KIECOLT-GLASER J.K., GLASER R., CACIOPPO J.T., MACCALLUM R.C., SNYDERSMITH M., KIM C. & MALARKEY W.B. 1997. Marital conflict in older adults: Endocrinological and immunological correlates. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 59(4):339-349.

KIECOLT-GLASER J.K., MALARKEY W.B., CHEE M., NEWTON T., CACIOPPO J.T., MAO H. & GLASER R. 1993. Negative behavior during marital conflict is associated with immunological down-regulation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 55(5):395-409.

KORF L. & MALAN L. 2002. Threat to ethnic identity: The experience of White Afrikaans-speaking participants in post-apartheid South Africa. *The Journal of Social Psychology,* 142(2):149-69.

KRIESBERG L. 2003. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. 2nd Ed. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

KUMAR K. & VAN DISSEL H. 1996. Sustainable collaboration: Managing conflict and cooperation in interorganizational systems. *MIS Quarterly,* 20(3):279-300.

LANDRINE H. & KLONHOFF E.A. 1992. Culture and health-related schemas: A review and proposal for interdisciplinary integration. *Health Psychology*, 11(4):267-76.

LEDERACH J.P. 1988. *Of nets, nails and problems: A folk vision of conflict in Central America*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Colorado: University Of Colorado.

LEDERACH J.P. 1996. *Preparing for peace. Conflict transformation across cultures*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

LEDERACH JP. 2000. *The cultural dimension*. In mediation and facilitation training manual. 4th Ed. Akron: Mennonite Conciliation Service.

LEDERACH J.P. 2003. *The little book of conflict transformation.* Intercouse: Good Books.

MARTIN D.C. 2001. What's in the name "Coloured"? In ZEGEYE A (ed). Social identities in the New South Africa. After Apartheid. *Social Identities South Africa Series*, 1:249-268.

MAYER B. 2000. *The dynamics of conflict management: A practitioner's guide*. San Franscisco: Jossey-Bass.

MAYER C.H. 2005. *Artificial walls. South African narratives on conflict, difference and identity*. An exploratory study in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Stuttgart: Ibidem.

MAYER C.H. 2007. *Ressourcen interkultureller Identitäten*. In KRAUSE C, LEHMANN N, LORENZ F & PETZOLD TH (eds). Verbunden gesunden - Zugehörigkeitsgefühl und Salutogenese. Heckenbeck/Bad Gandersheim: Verlag Gesunde Entwicklung, pp.251-262.

MAYER C.H. 2008. *Managing conflict across cultures, values and identities*. A case study in the South African automotive industry. PhD Dissertation, Department of Management, Faculty of Commerce, Rhodes University. Marburg: Tectum.

MAYER C.H. 2008a. *Identity and health in transcultural mediation*. The model of Culture-Synergetic Transcultural Mediation and its impacts. In press.

MAYRING P. 2003. *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse*. 8th Ed. Weinheim: Beltz Verlag.

MCLEOD J. 1996. The emerging narrative approach to counselling and psychotherapy. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 24(2):173-195.

MIALL H., RAMSBOTHAM O. & WOODHOUSE T. 2000. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution.* Cambridge: Polity.

MICHIE S. & WILLIAMS S. 2003. Reducing work related psychological ill health and sickness absence: A systematic literature review. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 60(1):3-9.

MISCHEL W. & SHODA Y. 1998. Reconciling processing dynamics and personality dispositions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49(3):229-258.

MUSSMANN C., KRAFT U., THALMANN K. & MUHEIM M. 1993. *Die Gesundheit gesunder Personen*. Eine qualitative Studie. Bericht Nr. 2. Zürich: Technische Hochschule, Institut für Arbeitspsychologie.

NEWSOME G.K. 2003. *Racial identity attitudes, race-related stress, coping and gender among African American Students attending historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUS)*. [Internet: www.lib.ncsu.edu/theses/available/etd-11202003-123438/; downloaded on 2007-05-30.]

NORTHRUP T.A. 1989. *The dynamic of identity in personal and social conflict*. In KRIESBERG L, NORTHRUP TA & THORSON SJ (eds). Timing the de-escalation of international conflict. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. pp.55-82.

NUTTALL S. & MICHAEL C. (eds). 2000. *Senses of culture: South African culture studies*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

NYE J.S. 2005. *Understanding international conflicts*. An introduction to theory and history. 5th Ed. New York: Longman.

OBERG K. 1960. Cultural shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthropology*, 7(4):177-182.

OLIVER D. & ROOS J. 2003. Dealing with the unexpected: Critical incidents in the Lego Mindstroms Team. *Human Relations*, 56(9):1055-1080.

PONDY L.R. 1967. Organizational conflict: Concepts and models. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 12(2):296-320.

PONDY L.R. 1992. Reflections on organizational conflict. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour,* 13(2):257-261.

POSSEMEYER I. 2002. *Stress - Luxusproblem der Satten?* Oder akutes Volksleiden? *GEO*, 3:148.

PRATT M. & RAFAELI A. 1997. Organizational dress as a symbol of multilayered social identities. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(4):862-898.

RAHIM M.A. 2001. *Managing conflict in organizations*. 3rd Ed. Westport: Quorum Books.

RAHIM M.A. 2002. Toward a theory of managing organizational conflict. *The International Journal of Conflict Management,* 13(3):206-235.

REN XS, AMICK BC & WILLIAMS DR. 1999. Racial/ethnic disparities in health: The interplay between discrimination and socioeconomic status. *Ethnicity and Disease,* 9(2):151-165.

RICOEUR P. 1979. *Der Text als Modell: hermeneutisches Verstehen*. In BRUEHL WL (ed). Verstehende Soziologie. Grundzuege und Entwicklungstendenzen. München: Nymphenburger Verlag.

ROEFS M. 2006. *Identity and race relations*. In PILLAY U, ROBERTS B & RULE S (eds). South African social attitudes: changing times, diverse voices. South Africa: HSRC Press. pp. 77-97.

ROTHMAN J. 1997. *Resolving identity-based conflict in nations, organizations and communities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

SCHAUFLER B. 2000. *Frauen in Führung*. Von Kompetenzen, die erkannt und genutzt werden wollen. Göttingen: Hans Huber Verlag.

SCHERMERHORN J.R., HUNT J.G. & OSBORN R.N. 1997. *Conflict and negotiation*. In SCHERMERHORN JR, HUNT JG & OSBORN RN (eds). Organizational behavior. New York: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 378-396.

SCHUMACHER J., WILZ G., GUNZELMANN T. & BRÄHLER E. 2000. Die Sense of Coherence Scale von Antonovsky. Teststatistische Überprüfung in einer repräsentativen Bevölkerungsstichprobe und Konstruktion einer Kurzskala. *Psychotherapy*, 50:472-482.

SEEKINGS J. 2008. The continuing salience of race: Discrimination and diversity in South Africa. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 26(1):1-25.

SELYE H. 1957. *Stress beherrscht unser Leben*. Freiburg: Rombach & Co.

SENNETT R. 1998. *The corrosion of character*. Norton: New York.

SEYMOUR C. 2003. *Social psychological dimensions of conflict*.
[Internet: www.Beyondintractability.Org/Essay/Social_Psychological, downloaded on 2007-10-22.]

SONN CC & FISHER A.T. 1998. Psychological sense of community in a politically constructed group. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(4):417-430.

SPECTOR P., JEX E. & STEVE M. 1998. Development of four self-report measures of job stressors and strain: Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale, Organizational Constraints Scale, Quantitative Workload Inventory, and Physical Symptoms Inventory. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 3(4):356-367.

STEINKE I. 2000. *Gütekriterien qualitativer forschung*. In FLICK U, VON KARDOFF E & STEINKE I (eds). Qualitative forschung. Ein handbuch**.** Hamburg: Rowohlts Enzyklopaedie, pp.319-331.

STELLRECHT I. 1993. *Interpretative Ethnologie: Eine Orientierung*. In SCHWEIZER T, SCHWEIZER M & KOKOT W (eds). Handbuch der Ethnologie*.* Berlin: Reimer, pp.29-73.

SVENINGSSON S. & ALVESSON M. 2003. Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations*, 56(10):1163-1193.

THOM D.P. & COETZEE C.H. 2004. Identity development of South African adolescents in a democratic society. *Society in Transition*, 35:183-193.

VAHTERA J. & KIVIMÄKI M. 2008. Reducing sickness absence in occupational setting. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, (65):219-220.

VESTER F. 1976. *Phänomen Stress. Wo liegt sein Ursprung, warum ist er lebenswichtig, wodurch ist er entartet?* Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

VINCENT L. 2008. The limitations of 'inter-racial contact': Stories from young South Africa. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 31(1):1-26.

WALLENSTEEN D.P. & SOLLENBERG M. 1995. After the Cold War: Emerging patterns of armed conflict 1989-94. *Journal of Peace Research*, 32(3):345-360.

WATSON T.J. 1994. *In search of management*. Routledge: London.

WATSON T.J. 2008. Managing identity: Identity work, personal predicaments and structural circumstances. *Organization*, 15(1):121-143.

WEBSTER E. & ADLER G. 1999. Towards a class compromise in South Africa's "Double Transition". Bargained liberalization and the consolidation of democracy. *Politics and Society*, 27(3):347-385.

WHETTEN D. & GODFREY P. (eds). 1998. *Identity in organizations*. Sage: London.

WILLIAMS D.R. & COLLINS C. 2001. Racial residential segregation: A fundamental cause of racial disparities in health. *Public Health Report*, 116(5):404-416.

WILLAMS K.Y. & O'REILLY C.A. 1998. *Demography and diversity in organizations: A review of 40 years of research*. In STAW BM & CUMMINGS LL (eds). Research in organizational Behaviour. Greenwich: JAI Press.

WILLIAMS D.R., YU Y., JACKSON J.S. & ANDERSON N.B. 1997. Racial differences in physical and mental health: Socio-economic status, stress and discrimination. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 2(3):335-351.

WOLFF S. 2000. *Cliffort Geertz*. In FLICK U, VON KARDOFF E & STEINKE I (eds). Qualitative Forschung. Ein Handbuch*.* Hamburg: Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, pp.64-96.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. 1946. *Constitution*. Geneva: WHO.

YIN R.K. 2002. *Case study research: design and methods*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage.

ZIMBARDO P.G. 1995. *Psychologie*. Berlin: Springer Verlag.