Fungai B. Chigwendere

Towards Intercultural Communication Congruence in Sino-African Organisational Contexts

Tectum

Fungai B. Chigwendere

Towards Intercultural Communication Congruence in Sino-African Organisational Contexts

Fungai B. Chigwendere

Towards Intercultural Communication Congruence in Sino-African Organisational Contexts

Tectum Verlag

Fungai B. Chigwendere

Towards Intercultural Communication Congruence in Sino-African
Organisational Contexts

Abstract

Despite the prevalence of theories and research that could serve as guidelines for addressing intercultural communication challenges such as misunderstanding, ineffectiveness and inappropriateness in communication in Sino-African organisational contexts, the continued existence of these challenges suggests the inadequacy of such theories. Accordingly, in consideration of African and Chinese cultural perspectives, the aim of this study was to develop *a hybrid intercultural communication congruence (HICC) framework* in order to enhance intercultural communication and achieve intercultural communication congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. In this study, intercultural communication congruence means effectiveness and appropriateness in intercultural communication. To achieve the study aim, an interpretive pragmatism paradigm was adopted, comprising a two-pronged approach of a synthesis of extant literature and theory as well as an empirical qualitative study, both underpinned by cross-cultural management theory. Based on the synthesis of literature and theory, a generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework underpinned by intercultural communication awareness – a state where communicants understand *communication orientation* and *manner of communication* in their own and their counterparts' culture – was developed. A further contribution was a theoretical contextualisation of the generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework, resulting in a theoretical framework for intercultural communication awareness in Western, African and Chinese cultures and a theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*. Thereafter, with the aim of validating the intercultural communication awareness dimension of the theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*, an empirical study was conducted with a sample of seven African and eight Chinese experts using in-depth interviews with open-ended and semi-structured questions. Based on qualitative content analysis, six intercultural communication awareness enablers or conditions that enable people to understand communication in different cultures and contexts for the purposes of attaining intercultural communication awareness emerged. These were *cultural orientation, manner of communication, orientation to rules and protocol, individual dispositions, intercultural communication influences* and *intercultural communication variations*. An integration of the intercultural communication awareness enablers into the generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework results in an updated generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework. Then, informed by the updated generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework, a further contribution of this study was an empirical verification of the intercultural communication awareness dimension of the

theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* to result in a final hybrid intercultural communication congruence framework for Sino-African organisational contexts supported by the perspectives of those involved in interaction, rather than predetermined standards of other cultures. Empirical findings suggest that both African and Chinese colleagues maintain a sense of collectivism in the Sino-African organisational context, although this is demonstrated differently. In addition, African colleagues display a blended manner of communication characterised by a mix of Western and African ways while the Chinese manner is contextual and governed by roles and relationships. In African culture, rules and protocol are negotiated, aimed at social maintenance, while strong cultural patriotism ensures strict adherence in Chinese culture. In respect of individual dispositions, African people are seen as open and accommodating while the Chinese disposition could be described as closed and ambiguous. Also evident in the findings is the existence of within-culture differences and influence of non-cultural factors on intercultural communication that should be addressed in order to achieve intercultural communication congruence. Finally, the frameworks developed and the methodological processes followed will stimulate academic debate and raise numerous questions for future research. Immediate future research could be geared towards refining the concepts of intercultural communication awareness, intercultural communication congruence and the hybrid intercultural communication congruence framework for Sino-African organisational contexts. At a management practice level, intercultural communication awareness insights provide a reference point for intercultural communication enhancement strategies and interventions in Sino-African organisational contexts.

Key Words: intercultural communication congruence, intercultural communication awareness, awareness enablers, Chinese, African, communication, culture.

Acknowledgements

I owe a debt of gratitude to a number of people who made the completion of this thesis possible through their encouragement and support. Particularly, I would like to thank:

- My mom and late father for planting the seed, and instilling the belief that nothing is impossible.
- My supervisors, Professor Lynette Louw and Professor Terence Jackson, for their patience, guidance and support throughout the study.
- My daughter, Tanya for the little notes of encouragement when I was weary, *"mom, when you wake up please read your books, I know you can do it!"*
- My husband Mark, for your patience and 'playing mommy' when I could not be there.
- My siblings, Kudzai, Tinashe, Tatenda, Tandizani and late Gamuchiral for the prayers and encouragement when it was difficult to carry on.
- The men and women who took time to participate in the study.
- Li Yue and Angelique for the insights into Chinese culture and being reliable and dedicated research assistants.
- Judy and Naomi for all the administrative assistance and encouragement.
- Ruth Coetzee for the language and technical editing.
- The Lord Almighty, the author and finisher of my life, the giver of all things good.
- The Rhodes University Sandisa Imbewu Fund.
- Finally the financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF. This work is based on the research supported in part by the National Research Foundation of South Africa for the Grant No. 93636.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1
Introduction and Orientation

Introduction

The global outlook of many contemporary businesses makes the notion of intercultural communication (IC) effectiveness increasingly relevant as home and host country employees interact in organisations. More specifically, the global workplace is a microcosm of wider society (Nair-Venugopal, 2015, p. 31) and one of the most important contexts of intercultural interaction in the twenty-first century (Ladegaard and Jenks, 2015, p. 2; Martin and Nakayama, 2015, p. 14). Consequently, the ability to communicate across cultural boundaries has become more important for global businesses, in order to understand how to communicate with employees and customers from diverse cultures to fulfil the organisation's mission and build value for their stakeholders (Mathews and Thakkar, 2012).

The need for ability to communicate across cultures arises from the suggestion that when communicators share the same cultural scripts, communication between them is likely to be smoother and more effective compared to when they do not (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998, p. 70). Critically in a foreign environment, understanding the manner of communication, or "knowing how to listen, how to interrupt, how to praise, and how to scold, are more important to a foreign manager than learning the language" (Berger, 1987 cited in Dean and Popp, 1990, p. 405). Likewise, host country managers and employees should also strive to minimise intercultural communication challenges, such as using ineffective or inappropriate language behaviours in communication.

The aforementioned IC challenges are made worse by traditionally understood barriers, which include differences in language, cultural values, worldviews, as well as ethnocentrism (Okech et al., p. 271), anxiety felt by the "strangers" (Gudykunst, 1995) stereotyping, prejudice, ambiguity and non-verbal misinterpretations (Washington, 2013; Beebe, Beebe and Redmond, 2011; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak, 2005). Tellingly, while the expectation in IC is of a good understanding between the interactants (Neuliep, 2012), experience has taught that misunderstandings often arise from differing expectations regarding communication. Again, these expectations can differ as a result of the influence of different values and worldviews of cultures shaping and dictating communication rules, behaviours and meaning in communication – hence the proclamation by Hall (1959, p. 159), that "culture is communication and communication is culture". In the Si-

no-African organisational context, reports of the loud African people simply talking, not necessarily to reach a particular conclusion (Matondo, 2012), and of Chinese people who are too quiet and rude, are likely to be a reflection of unknown or misunderstood cultural norms. China's ambassador to South Africa, Zhong Jianhua (2007–2012), asserts that IC challenges between African and Chinese people arise from the gap between Chinese culture and the varied cultures of Africa's diverse population (Von Schirach, 2012).

Challenges brought about by the gap between African and Chinese cultures are compounded by inadequacy of basic in-depth research of the African market, making it impossible for the Chinese to avoid potential cultural complications (Von Schirach, 2012). Dietz, Orr and Xing (2008) concur, stating that successfully combining Chinese and foreign forms of communication and cultural norms is one of the biggest challenges facing Chinese companies going abroad. African and Chinese managers and employees engaged in IC should therefore continually aim to improve the way they communicate, by reducing IC barriers and challenges. Rather than seeking IC effectiveness, this study advocates for IC congruence – viewed as potentially of a higher order than IC effectiveness, and where communication is likely more effective and appropriate. "Effective" refers to the sense that one's communication goals are achieved with maximum understanding in an interaction with others; "appropriate" refers to the use of messages that are expected in a given context, and actions that meet the expectations and demands of different situations (Dainton and Zelley, 2015; Wiseman, 2003, p. 193; Spitzberg, 2000, p. 380). Effectiveness and appropriateness in communication will be further discussed in Chapter 2 sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.

The present chapter gives an overview of the study, beginning with a description of the context and background. The significance of the China-Africa relationship and IC communication challenges experienced in Sino-African organisations is noted. A discussion regarding the state of research on IC in Sino-African organisational contexts follows, leading to identification of research gaps, articulation of the research problem, and a presentation of the aims and objectives of the present study. The remainder of the chapter introduces the research methodology, delimits the study, defines key terms and outlines the structure of the thesis. The context and background for this study follows.

1.1   Context and Background

1.1.1   Significance of the Sino-African context

China has become an important player in many African economies. Illustrative of the extent of China's involvement with Africa, is the fact that only two African countries – oil-rich Libya, and Swaziland (which has always had official diplomatic ties with Taiwan) – have not benefited from Chinese aid (Brautigam, 2011). In addition, China's non-discriminatory approach to financing development and infrastructure projects in various sectors has had positive spin-offs for various African economies (Baah and Jauch, 2009). South Africa and China, for instance, regard each other as "strategic partners" (Guli-

we, Mkhonta and Vickers, 2009, p. 300). This is evidenced by a strong Chinese commitment to strengthening ties, as symbolised by its sponsorship of South African membership to BRICS (Alden and Park, 2013).

Continuing with the example of South Africa as representative of the continent, trade has grown progressively, with two-way trade rising from ZAR5.2 billion (US$800 million) in 1998, to ZAR188 billion (US$20.2 billion) in 2011 (Alden and Park, 2013). China assumed the position of being South Africa's top trading partner in 2009. It is reported that, in 2013, China became sub-Saharan Africa's largest export and development partner; its trade with South Africa increased by 32% to ZAR270 billion from ZAR205 billion in 2012 (Pigato and Tang, 2015, p. 1). In 2014, South African Minister of Trade and Industry, Rob Davies, reported that although total trade between South Africa and China experienced decreases to ZAR261 billion by the end of 2014, it has generally been on an upward trajectory since 2009, growing from ZAR118 billion to ZAR271 billion by the end of 2013. However, as China's presence in Africa continues to grow, so too have the complexities of the engagement. Alden and Park (2013) use the metaphor of a double-storey building, where engagement "upstairs" at the macro level involves the bilateral, multilateral, political and economic engagement between South Africa, China and other international partners. "Downstairs" (meso and micro levels) refers to the organisational context and interaction between ordinary people (Alden and Park, 2013, p. 1). The meso level is the focus of the present study.

Towards articulation of the research problem, the next section discusses IC and IC congruence research in general, narrowing down to the Sino-African organisational context to determine the gaps in research pertaining to IC congruence.

1.2   The Research Problem

Despite the prevalence of theories and research that could serve as guidelines for addressing IC challenges such as misunderstanding, ineffectiveness and inappropriateness in communication, the continued existence of these challenges in Sino-African organisations suggests the potential inadequacy of such theories. Furthermore, theories have been criticised for their ethnocentric tendency to assume superiority over other cultures in recommending the adoption of Western styles as a solution to world problems (Blommaert, 1998), hence threatening the agency of other cultures. Agency in African and Chinese cultures signifies "self-definition, self-determination, and self-representation" (Miike, 2013, p. 199). This study therefore advances the need for more indigenous approaches to IC congruence based on the cultures of African and Chinese managers and employees in interaction. The following section provides a background understanding of the research problem by considering, contemporary approaches and theories to IC.

1.2.1 Contemporary approaches to and theories of intercultural communication

The contemporary understanding of IC that could contribute towards understanding IC congruence in the Sino-African context comes predominantly from Western cultures (Miller et al., 2013; Mutere, 2012; Chen, 2011; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 6; Huang, 2010; Asante, 1987; Miike, 2006; 2007; Mazama, 2001; Schiele, 1990; Yum, 1988). As such, some authors view contemporary IC theories as largely irrelevant particularly in non-Western contexts (Miller et al., 2013, p. 320). That said, despite support for indigenous context-focused approaches and theories such as Afrocentricity and Asiacentricity as popularised by Asante (1987; 1991; 1999) and Miike (2003; 2004; 2007) – for African and Chinese cultures, application of these approaches and theories is still in its infancy (Miller et al., 2013, p. 317), hence the continuing reliance on Western theory and approaches.

Martin and Nakayama (2010) distinguish between three approaches to IC (Chapter 2, section, 2.2.2), forming different perspectives from which to view the complexities of the subject (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 76). The first of these is the social science approach, aimed at predicting and describing human behaviour (Martin and Nakayama (2010, p. 51). Theories represented in this approach are uncertainty anxiety management theory (Gudykunst, 1998; 2005), face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1985; 2005), conversational constraints theory (Kim, 2005), communication accommodation theory (Gallois et al., 1995) and the diffusion and innovations theory (Rogers, 2003).

Second is the interpretive approach whose goal is to understand and describe communication behaviour, as represented by Afrocentric and Asiacentric approaches and theories mentioned above. The Afrocentric approach represents themes shared by people of African descent (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 63). These themes include "a common origin and experience of struggle … an element of resistance to European legal procedures, medical practices and political processes" (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 63), traditional values of humaneness and harmony with nature, a fundamentally African way of knowing and interpreting the world and an orientation towards communalism (Maomeka, 1989). Mazama (2001, p. 394) proposes that from an academic standpoint, Afrocentricity is an approach where African social and cultural experience is the ultimate source of reference. An Asiacentric approach (Miike, 2003; 2007) on the other hand, represents themes of circularity, harmony, other-directedness, reciprocity and relationality (Miike, 2003; 2004).

Third is the critical approach aimed at understanding and positively influencing the lives of communicators through behavioural change (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, pp. 65–66) with proponents including Halualani and Nakayama (2013), Halualani, Mendoza and Drzewiecka (2009), Kubota (2012), Leeds-Hurwitz (2013), Mendoza (2013), Moon (2013), Ono (2013). Approaches and theories of IC are discussed in Chapter 2, sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3

The next section presents a further understanding of the problem statement by giving an overview of the state of research into Sino-African interactions in general, and IC congruence in particular.

1.2.2 Intercultural communication congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts: the state of research

Monson and Rupp (2013) report that, following China's declaration of the year of Africa in 2006, scholarship on Africa-China relationships was dominated by a desire to understand China's policies, strategies, and their significance for international affairs (Monson and Rupp, 2013, p. 25). Apart from this focus, numerous other studies have been conducted on Chinese investments in Africa (Sun, Jayaram and Kassiri, 2017; Shen, 2015; Lampert and Mohan, 2015; Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2011; Gu, 2009; Baah and Jauch, 2009; Kaplinsky and Morris, 2009; Alden and Davies, 2006; Brautigam, 2003). However, few studies have focused on overall management dynamics at the meso or organisational level (Jackson, Louw and Zhao, 2011), or on Sino-African cultural values and their influences on organisational practice (Matondo, 2012).

The novelty of the Sino-African organisational context in research may be the general reason for scarcity of literature on IC congruence at the meso level. Until fairly recently, owing to the colonial history of most African countries, there has been a predominance of Western organisations operating in Africa. Correspondingly, there has been an abundance of literature on interaction of Western and African cultures. Despite the flow of Chinese investment into Africa and an increasing number of Chinese organisations setting up operations in Africa, Chinese-African relations in the Sino-African organisational context is in its infancy. It is therefore plausible that the body of knowledge regarding interactions at the meso level is limited (Alden, Large and de Oliveira, 2008, p. 1).

To add to that, the limited existing research is largely philosophical, at times stereotypical, and potentially not reflective of the realities on the ground (Giese, 2014, Jackson, Louw and Zhao, 2011; Brautigam, 2011). Often the Sino-African relationship receives negative reports in the media. Alden and Park (2013) attribute this negative reporting to potential biases of Western media, reflecting the policies and engagement at government level. However, negative reporting could also reflect the challenges faced at the meso level of relations that include difficulty in attaining IC congruence.

Studies related to Sino-African interactions in organisational contexts focus on topics such as: leadership style and quality of work life (Handley, 2016), intercultural cooperation (Mayer, Boness and Louw, 2017), organisational culture and commitment (Mabuza, 2015), employee relationships (Arsene, 2014), cultural adjustment and adaptation (Men, 2014), organisational commitment (Paterson, 2014), comparison of African and Chinese cultural values (Matondo, 2012; Westropp, 2012), culture differences in business relations (Anedo, 2012), and work ethic (Slabbert and Ukpere, 2011). For the sake of brevity however, only the studies relevant to IC are discussed.

Men (2014, p. 131) explores interaction challenges faced in a Chinese organisation in Tanzania, suggesting that Chinese managers and employees should adapt to local needs and the Tanzanians should adapt to Chinese work ethic and goals. Advancing a different view based on a Ugandan study, Arsene (2014) posits that the extent to which Chinese employ-

ers understand and accept local practices determines the nature of the relationship between the Chinese employers and African employees. Anedo (2012) and Westropp (2012) concur, holding the view that knowledge and understanding of differences in values, priorities and expectations of those in interaction enhances their chances of success in business. The position adopted in this study is that knowledge and a better understanding of practices and values by both African and Chinese managers and employees may enhance IC and the interaction between them.

Significantly, Matondo (2012) identifies synergies between African and Chinese values, thus beginning to shape an understanding of African and Chinese values in relation to each other. In exploring communication between African and Chinese people, Matondo (2012) reports differences in verbal communication styles. A preference for non-verbal styles by Chinese people is reported in contrast to the rich language of African people – who at times talk just for the sake of enjoyment and not to reach any particular conclusions (Matondo 2012, p. 43). Differences can lead to difficulty in conveying and comprehending information appropriately and accurately (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 2). A point of similarity, however, is the richness of African and Chinese languages, often difficult to understand and laced with proverbs, idioms and riddles (Matondo 2012, p. 43). This study proposes that, despite obvious language difficulties where similarities in communication are present, they likely present opportunity to find "common ground" (Chen, 2015) and these may serve to enhance IC congruence. Greater understanding of the similarities and differences in African and Chinese communication is therefore likely to enhance IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context.

In seeking common ground, some authors have reflected on African and Chinese philosophies of Ubuntu and Confucianism (such as Metz, 2014; 2015; Bell and Metz, 2011). Prominent among the similarities noted in Ubuntu and Confucianism are the moral importance of the community, respect accorded to elders and pursuit of harmony. Interestingly however, important differences within the similarities are also evident. For example, while community under Ubuntu requires consensus in politics, Confucianism does not. It is important therefore to be aware of subtle differences within similarities to understand the dynamics of Sino-African interactions – especially concerning IC in the context of this study. It is suggested that, in order to better understand and enhance IC congruence between African and Chinese managers and employees, an understanding of the similarities and differences of communication in their respective cultures is established (see Chapter 5 of this study).

Given the increasing number of Chinese organisations in Africa, in the face of continuing IC challenges and limited research at the meso level, justification for this study comes to the fore. First, there is a scarcity of research focused on understanding IC in the Sino-African organisational context. Second, the inadequacy of Western approaches to understand IC and IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context warrants development of indigenous context-focused approaches that build on existing theory, while considering perspectives on African and Chinese culture and communication as well as viewpoints of African and Chinese managers and employees in interaction. There are currently no ap-

proaches in this context which incorporate such multiple perspectives for understanding IC and IC congruence. Third, there is no framework or reference point comparing communication in African and Chinese cultures that managers, employees and management practitioners can readily to draw on, to ensure that they communicate in the most appropriate manner.

Understanding the similarities and differences in African and Chinese cultures is important because cultural groups differ in their judgments of intra-cultural rules and outcomes in interaction (Collier, Ribeau and Hetch, 1986, p. 442). In addition, increased knowledge and understanding of each other's culture and practices by those in interaction is likely to enhance the intercultural relationship and its chances of success (Arsene, 2014; Anedo, 2012; Matondo, 2012; Men, 2014; Westropp. 2012).

Essentially, this study proposes that when people from different cultures communicate, poor intercultural awareness or a lack of understanding of cultural, behavioural and social norms of each other's culture (Chen, 2015, p. 467) heightens IC barriers such as stereotyping, prejudice and ethnocentrism. These barriers in turn perpetuate challenges such as ineffectiveness and inappropriateness in communication, therefore resulting in poor IC congruence. Alternatively, good knowledge and understanding of cultural, behavioural and social norms of communication in one's own culture and that of one's counterparts, cultivates IC awareness that fosters a responsive and adaptive mindset, practical for enhancing IC (Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998, p. 84).

Extending Chen's (2015) definition of intercultural awareness, the present study suggests that IC awareness is conceptualised as the reciprocal understanding of communication orientation and manner of communication by people from interacting cultures. IC awareness centres on criteria which can be termed "IC awareness enablers" defined as conditions that enable people to understand communication in different cultures and contexts for the purposes of attaining IC awareness. Communication orientation, manner of communication and enablers are defined in section 1.7 of the present chapter.

Further to establishing communication orientation and the manner of communication, the present study also suggests that IC awareness potentially engenders individual dispositions such as cultural sensitivity and mindfulness –that help mitigate IC barriers and challenges (Burgoon, Berger and Waldron, 2000; Chen, 2011; 2015; Francesca and Gold, 2005; Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998; Koester and Olebe, 1988). Finally, IC awareness may enable formulation of strategies and interventions for enhancing IC towards IC congruence. The view of poor and enhanced IC congruence suggested in the context of this study is represented in Fig. 1.1.

Fig. 1.1: Hypothetical view of poor and enhanced IC congruence
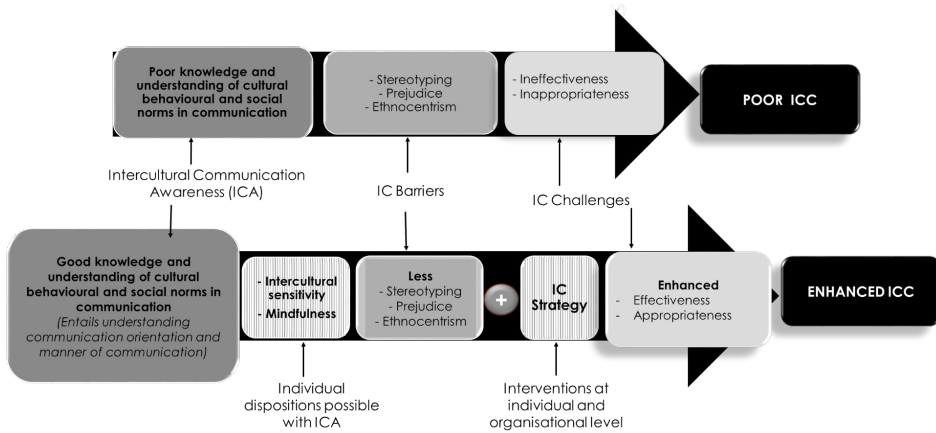
Source: Author's own contribution

This hypothetical view is discussed in further detail in Chapter 2, section 2.5.

The next section presents the aims and objectives of this study.

1.3   Research Aims and Objectives

In light of the criticism levelled at contemporary approaches to IC and IC congruence, this study aligns itself with indigenous context-focused approaches, with aims as listed in the following sections.

1.3.1   Main study aim

- To develop a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework in order to enhance IC and achieve IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. In this study, IC congruence means *effectiveness and appropriateness* in intercultural communication.

To achieve this aim, the research follows a two-pronged approach consisting of a study of theory (literature study) and an empirical study.

1.3.2   Study of theory (literature study) aim

Because IC is a widely researched field of study, the proposed final hybrid IC congruence framework (HICC) needs to be grounded in existing IC approaches, theories and knowledge while being cognisant of the actual communication experiences of African and Chi-

nese managers and employees. As such, in the first instance through a study of theory, the present study set out to,

> Propose a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework on the basis of which extant culture and communication literature in Western, African and Chinese cultures is synthesised, resulting in a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures as well as a theoretical IC congruence framework *specific to Sino-African organisational context*s.

In order to achieve the theoretical aim of this study, a number of theoretical objectives and research questions were stated, while others arose in the course of research. Given that the aim of this research is underpinned by progressing from "knowing less" towards "knowing more" (Payne and Payne, 2004, p. 114), research questions enable the gaining of requisite knowledge of IC, IC barriers and challenges as well as potential considerations for enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts. The theoretical objectives and research questions of this study are stated in section 1.3.2.1 and section 1.3.2.2.

1.3.2.1 Objectives of the study of theory (literature study)

T1: Conceptualise and describe IC congruence.

T2: Discuss the approaches to understanding IC and explore theories for enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts.

T3: Identify and describe the barriers and challenges in IC.

T4: Identify and explain the considerations for enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts.

T5: Describe the relationship between culture and communication as well as dimensions of cultural variation in communication.

T6: Propose and explain criteria for conceptualising cultural variation in communication orientation and the manner of communication in different cultural contexts *(where cultural variation refers to cultural similarities and differences).*

T7: Identify a framework for comparing the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts

T8: Describe communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts, according to the criteria proposed in T6.

31

T9: Compare the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts.

1.3.2.2 Theoretical (literature study) research questions

Theoretical research questions T1 to T9 as shown in Table 1.1 are stated to help achieve the theoretical research objectives and to ensure that the proposed generic theoretical IC congruence framework – as well as successive theoretical frameworks for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures, and for theoretical IC congruence (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* – are grounded in a solid understanding of the concept of IC as well as in communication in African and Chinese cultures.

Table 1.1: Theoretical research questions

RQ-T1	What is IC congruence?
RQ-T2	What are the approaches to understanding IC and the theories for enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts?
RQ-T3	What are the barriers and challenges of IC?
RQ-T4	What are the considerations for enhancing IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts?
RQ-T5	How are culture and communication related, and what are the dimensions of cultural variation in in communication?
RQ-T6	What are the criteria for conceptualising cultural variation in communication orientation and the manner of communication in different cultural contexts?
RQ-T7	What framework can compare the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures?
RQ-T8	How is communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts described according to the criteria proposed in RQ-T6?
RQ-T9	How does the manner of communication differ in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts?

Source: Author's own contribution

1.3.3 Empirical aims

The main empirical aim is to validate the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in respect of African and Chinese cultures as reflected within the theoretical IC congruence framework (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* presented in Chapter 5. The validation process leads to the generation of the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts. Specifically, the following aspects representing IC awareness are validated:

- Communication orientation in African and Chinese cultures.
- Manner of communication in African and Chinese cultures.

To achieve the main empirical aim, the following empirical aims are stated:

    i.   To determine the similarities and difference between "*own*" and "*other*" perspectives of IC awareness in African and Chinese cultures.

    ii.   To determine the similarities and differences in IC awareness in both African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context.

    iii.   To develop new IC awareness categories that emerge from the data.

1.3.3.1 Empirical objectives

To achieve the above-mentioned empirical aims, the following empirical objectives are stated:

E-1   Describe perspectives on "own" IC awareness in the Sino-African organisational context:

    a.   *African experts*
    b.   *Chinese experts.*

E-2   Describe perspectives on "other" IC awareness in the Sino-African organisational context:

    a.   *African experts*
    b.   *Chinese experts.*

E-3   Identify and describe the similarities and differences in IC awareness perspectives in African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context.

E-4   Identify and describe new categories of IC awareness that emerged from the data (RQ-E1 to RQ-E3).

1.3.3.2 Empirical research questions

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the following empirical research questions are posed and summarised in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Empirical analytical research questions

RQ-E1	What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their own culture?
	a. African experts
	b. Chinese experts
RQ-E2	What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their counterparts' culture?
	a. African experts
	b. Chinese experts
RQ-E3	What are the similarities and/or differences in own and other IC awareness perspectives in African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context?
	a. African culture
	b. Chinese culture
RQ-E4	What new categories of IC awareness emerge from the data (RQ-E1 to RQ-E3)?

Source: Researcher's own contribution

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in the following respects:

- It builds on existing IC theory frameworks (for example Asante, 1987; 1991; 1999; Chen, 2011; 2015; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988; Miike, 2003; 2004; 2007; 2013; Yum, 1988), as well as on the viewpoints of African and Chinese experts to develop a context-focused framework for IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts: the hybrid intercultural communication congruence framework (HICC). Currently, such a framework does not exist.
- The literature meta-synthesis conducted in the present study results in a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts (Chapter 5, section 5.4) which could be applied to organisational contexts. African and Chinese managers, employees as well as management practitioners could potentially benefit from a readily available framework that compares communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures. Managers and employees are potentially better informed to make adjustments and/or adaptations, resulting in IC congruence. On the other hand, practitioners are better able to develop suited interventions and strategies for IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.
- In adopting a cross-cultural approach to IC congruence, this study contributes to the body of knowledge of IC in general and in a Sino-African context in particular.

The next section provides a brief overview of the research design and methodology for this study.

1.5   Research Design and Methodology

To realise the aims of this study, the research strategy has been divided into two main components, namely a study of theory and an empirical study, because multiple approaches to IC result in comparatively more complete results (see Hu and Fan, 2011; Chen and Starosta, 1997; Korzenny and Korzenny, 1984). In addition, the novelty of the Sino-African context amid limited research calls for loose designs that allow for objectivity, creativity and innovativeness (Brinkmann, 2014, p. 724). Details of the research design and methodology are presented in Chapter 6. Below, the theoretical and empirical methods engaged are discussed.

1.5.1   Study of theory

The theoretical study follows a two-staged approach: a traditional literature review and synthesis to develop the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, followed by a quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis to develop the theoretical framework for intercultural awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures using a deductive approach. The review has been termed quasi-systematic to indicate its flexibility in execution despite being systematic in nature. Such an approach was adopted in this study because strict adherence to the systematic review process as prescribed in the Cochrane Handbook (Higgins and Green, 2011) was not entirely practical owing to limited available research specific to IC, and to IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context. The quasi-systematic review process is further explained in Chapter 6, section 6.3.2. Meta-synthesis is a non-statistical technique that conforms to methodological standards used in primary research, essentially meeting the criteria of transparency, rigour, comprehensiveness and replicability in literature synthesis (Daigneault, Jacob and Ouimet, 2014; Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). Meta-synthesis is further explained in Chapter 6, section, 6.3.3.

First came a search through literature on culture, communication, IC and IC effectiveness theory in electronic multi-disciplinary databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, Emerald, SABINET JSTOR, and Scopus using key words determined from an initial scoping study (Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003). Other sources included edited books, the library catalogue, published and unpublished conference papers, past theses, newspapers, topical opinion pieces, as well as university and institution websites and research repositories. The output of searching was a corpus of literature used to conceptualise IC congruence and its contributors (Chapter 2).

Various key sources as indicated in the references section were analysed, resulting in the proposing of IC awareness enablers (Chapter 3, section 3.2.1). The IC awareness enablers serve as predetermined categories (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009; Srivastava and Thomas, 2009) representing a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework (Chapter 4) for deductive meta-synthesis of culture and communication in Western, African and Chinese culture results which are presented in the form of the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures (Chapter 5, Fig. 5.1). As

a next step, the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese culture was built into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework to form a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* (Chapter 5, section 5.4). IC awareness as depicted in the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* was then empirically validated through a qualitative study as introduced in section 1.5.2 of the present Chapter and further described in Chapter 6, part B of this study.

The synthesis of literature was an iterative process that led to tabulations of evidence by identifying common core elements and themes that transformed individual findings into new concepts and interpretations (Polit and Beck, 2006 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008, p. 39). Notably, the literature synthesised in the deductive meta-synthesis was heterogeneous, consisting of empirical and non-empirical, theoretical, anecdotal, peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed papers, primarily guided by availability (Boyne, 2009, p. 7).

No timeframes were set in the selection of literature given the view that a society's culture and values do not change suddenly, but rather progressively over time (Hofstede, 1980, 1997). Furthermore, despite the quasi-systematic approach allowing for exploration, discovery and development (Brinkmann, 2014; Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003), a mirroring of the best practices of the systematic literature review ensured rigour and validity. In addition, inclusion of seminal literature in the analysis provided a credible base for the study. The outcome of the deductive meta-synthesis was the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures applicable to organisational contexts.

At this point in the development of the thesis, it is important to note that reference is made to cultures and to organisational contexts. This distinction is intentional and aims to differentiate the premise of the discussion. In the study of theory, the discussion is informed largely by general national culture perspectives not necessarily limited to the organisational context. It is then the general national culture perspectives that are extrapolated to organisational contexts. The researcher therefore acknowledges the potential influence of other factors within the organisation and sees this as an area for future research. In instances where the discussion is informed by insights specific to organisational contexts, however, this is clearly stated.

The next section briefly introduces broad methodological considerations of the empirical study.

1.5.2   Empirical study

To achieve the empirical aims of this research as stated in section 1.3.3, a qualitative study was undertaken in the form of in-depth interviews using open and semi-structured questions with 15 experts (seven of whom are African and eight who are Chinese) from diverse industry sectors. A number of considerations informed the decision to conduct a qualita-

tive study. First, given the dearth of research on IC in Sino-African organisational contexts, a qualitative study allows one to explore "significant truth" (Bakan, 1996, p. 6) regarding IC awareness in African and Chinese culture through direct interaction. Second, because the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* is based on a consideration of the values and worldviews of those in interaction, in-depth interviews which are dominant in the interpretive paradigm (Golafshani, 2003), are an appropriate method of data collection. In-depth interviews help to capture the views of the interviewee that are rooted in their own values and beliefs (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002).

Regarding the decision to interview experts, Bernard (2006, p. 146) maintains that cultural data requires experts who are able to offer expert explanations about a cultural norm and variations on that norm. In the context of this study experts also provide the opportunity of identifying and describing new IC awareness categories and insights into IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. Following a qualitative approach therefore allows the study to come alive (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 267; Hu and Fan, 2011; Miller et al., 2013, p. 320) through the construction of reality from the collective contributions of the African and Chinese experts and the researcher (Ponterotto, 2005; Sarantakos, 1993; Wahyuni, 2012) as is reflected in the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework presented in Chapter 8.

A guanxi-orientated approach to sampling and data collection (Kriz, Gummesson and Quazi, 2014; Gu, Hung and Tse, 2008, p. 14) was adopted. This is elaborated on in Chapter 6, section 6.4.2 and premised on the Chinese emphasis on rules and relationships in data collection for enhanced data accuracy. In the African sense, a guanxi orientation equates to the relational aspects of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2005; 2011). The researcher made use of pre-existing relationships with some Chinese and African managers and employees with experience working in Sino-African organisations to identify initial potential participants. The use of this approach increased the researcher's access to more experts through snowball sampling, in which interviewees referred other suitable respondents who were willing to participate (Welman and Kruger, 2001). In addition to the use of a guanxi-orientated approach, judgmental sampling was applied to determine whether the identified experts met the selection criteria as described in Chapter 6, section 6.4.1.1

Two cultural groups – one comprising African experts and the other Chinese experts – are the units of study, while the individual African and Chinese experts form the units of analysis. Data analysis predominantly focuses on content analyses and descriptions of "thick data" emerging from the interviews evaluated through in-depth analyses, as demonstrated in Chapters 7 and 8. In the final analysis, the findings in the study of theory and those of the empirical qualitative study are integrated to form the hybrid IC congruence framework (HICC) for Sino-African organisational contexts presented in Chapter 8.

1.6 Demarcation of Study

This study is principally a management study viewed through the lens of a management scholar with a focus on enhancing IC and achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. This context refers to the setting for which the study is purposed – principally African and Chinese managers and employees interacting in the organisational setting in Africa, specifically in South Africa. In the context of this study, Africa adopts a regional outlook, specifically of sub-Saharan or "black" Africa.

Although Africa has many cultures and is characterised by a variety of ethnicities, a diversity of languages, religions and cultural identities – the fundamental values, norms and mores of Africa remain unique and transcend ethnic boundaries (Asante, 1987; Maomeka, 1989). The common themes transcending African borders include a common origin and experience of struggle, resistance to European legal practices and political processes, shared traditional values of humanness and harmony with nature, a fundamentally African way of interpreting the world, and an orientation towards communalism (Asante, 1987; 1999; Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 63). As such, it is possible to refer to an authentic African culture as distinct from European, American or other cultures (Maomeka, 1989)

For the purpose of the current research, the view adopted is that distinctively African cultural patterns exist that transcend ethnic characteristics. It is therefore plausible to speak of "an African culture". This approach provides broad insights upon which more focused research can be conducted in future studies. A similar stance to that adopted in the classification of African culture is adopted in respect of Chinese culture, where common themes – particularly Confucianism (Chen and Chung, 1994; Gan, 2014; Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Yum, 1988) – legitimise the existence of "a Chinese culture" despite the multiple ethnicities of China's population.

In referring to an African or Chinese expert, reference is to a "psychological member" (Shuter, 2012, p. 1) of the African (sub-Saharan Africa) or Chinese society. They are born and socialised in the African or Chinese society speaking any of the native African or Chinese languages as their first languages, inclusive of all ethnic groups. In addition, they have had experience working in the Sino-African organisational context for at least one year.

While the theoretical frameworks developed in this study are quite detailed in cultural orientations and worldviews in Western, African and Chinese cultures, it is only the high-level classification of the IC awareness that is validated empirically where communication orientation and manner of communication are inferred. Owing to time and resource limitations, the underlying influences for each identified communication orientation are not empirically validated as this would require detailed ethnographic study – which deviates from the main purpose of this management study.

Furthermore, the present research acknowledges that, over and above the influence of culture and values on IC, there are potentially other influences within the internal business environment and in macro and micro environments that potentially have a bearing on in-

teractions between people, and by extension, on IC congruence. These environments, while important, are not the focus of this study, which is rather the role of IC awareness in the drive towards achieving IC congruence.

Finally, this study does not focus on a specific industry sector, but rather adopts a general across-industry approach, interviewing experts from different industry sectors to provide a general framework adaptable to organisational contexts in different industry sectors. This research provides a starting point from which to aim for IC congruence in the sparsely researched Sino-African organisational context.

1.7   Definition of Terms

Study of theory: A broad term used in the current research to refer to the study of theories or literature pertaining to the review synthesis and meta-synthesis of IC literature theory, as well as culture and communication literature, in order to develop:

- a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework – Chapter 4;
- a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures – Chapter 5;
- a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* – Chapter 5.

IC congruence: Hypothetical ultimate state in IC where communication is both effective and appropriate. The terms "IC congruence" and "enhanced IC" are often used interchangeably in the context of the present study

IC challenges: In the context of the present study, IC challenges are the communication difficulties of ineffectiveness and inappropriateness arising from unaddressed IC barriers and which result in poor IC congruence.

Communication orientation: Basic attitudes and beliefs towards and about communication as reflected through IC awareness enablers and manifesting in the manner in which people communicate.

Manner of communication: How people interpret the way people communicate (Chigwendere, 2017). For example, people with a preference for using the minimum talk to convey messages may be described as having a succinct manner, as opposed to those using many words having an elaborate manner (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988) (see Chapter 3 section 3.2.3).

IC awareness: A reciprocal understanding of communication orientation and manner of communication by people from interacting cultures.

IC awareness enablers: The conditions that enable people to understand communication in different cultures and contexts for the purposes of attaining IC awareness.

Cultural variation: This refers to cultural similarities and differences. The terms cultural similarities, differences and variation are used interchangeably in the thesis.

Theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures: Enabler-based representation of the results of a meta-synthesis of literature culture and communication literature in Western, African and Chinese cultures depicting communication orientation and manner of communication (hence IC awareness) in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Multi-view approach: In the current research, the multi-view approach is an approach that considers the viewpoints of all parties to the IC encounter as well as the prevailing contextual considerations. Principally, this view circumvents the risk of basing understanding on mono-cultural views not representative of viewpoints of all cultures engaged in IC.

Hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework: A framework proposed to serve as a guide for achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. The HICC framework integrates IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese culture emanating from the study of theory, with those of African and Chinese experts emanating from the empirical study.

IC congruence enhancers: Individual dispositions or prevailing circumstances in the broader context of the IC encounter that result in enhanced IC congruence.

IC congruence detractors: Individual dispositions or prevailing circumstances in the broader context of the IC encounter that result in poor IC congruence.

1.8 Structure of Thesis

The thesis is in eight chapters as depicted in Fig. 1.2 below. The figure reads from left to right and top to bottom. A brief introduction to each chapter as represented in the figure follows.

Fig. 1.2: Structure of the thesis

CHAPTER 1: Introduction and orientation

1. STUDY OF THEORY

CHAPTER 2: Conceptualising IC congruence *(Theoretical objective T1-T4)*
CHAPTER 3: Conceptualising IC awareness *(Theoretical objective, T5-T6)*

CHAPTER 4: Generic Theoretical Intercultural Communication Congruence (TICC) Framework

CHAPTER 5: IC awareness: *Understanding communication orientation (CO) and manner of communication (MC) in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts* **(Theoretical objective T7-T9)**

OUTCOME: i. Theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) depicting CO and MC in Western, African and Chinese cultures
ii. Theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* (TFICA builds into the generic TICC framework)

CHAPTER 6: Research design and methodology

2. EMPIRICAL STUDY

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH AFRICAN AND CHINESE 'EXPERTS'

Iterative process   *Iterative process*

CHAPTER 7: Findings and discussion (validation of updated TICC *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*)
- Experts' own IC awareness in African and Chinese culture (E**1** a and b)
- Experts' IC awareness of others in African and Chinese culture (**E2** a and b)
- Similarities and differences in IC awareness perspectives: African and Chinese culture (**E3**)
- New categories emerging from the data material (**E4**)

3. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 8: Conclusion
Hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts:
(*The multi-view approach*)

Scholarly and practical implications
- Stimulates academic debate on the concept of IC congruence and related concepts
- Addition to the body of knowledge on IC
- Future confirmatory ethnographic research

Reference point for:
- African and Chinese colleagues engaged in IC
- Management practitioners in developing IC enhancing intervention strategies

Source: Researcher's own contribution

Source: Researcher's own contribution

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the context of the study.

Chapter 2 clarifies the concepts of IC and IC congruence (theoretical objective T1). Barriers and challenges to IC are then identified and described (theoretical objective T3). In addition, approaches and theories to understanding and enhancing IC are discussed (theoretical objective T2), in so doing identifying and explaining potential considerations to be made in achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts (theoretical objective T4). A cross-cultural approach to achieving IC congruence is proposed and described.

In **Chapter 3**, the relationship between culture and communication is explored. Aspects of cultural variation in communication are highlighted, and the ways in which communication may differ across cultures are discussed (theoretical objective T5). In addition, criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and the manner of communication seen as pillars of IC awareness (theoretical objective T6) are proposed. Furthermore, a framework for comparing manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts is identified (theoretical objective T7).

Chapter 4 presents the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework. The framework is a culmination of the review and synthesis in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 in which theoretical objectives T1 to T7 have been addressed.

Chapter 5: Following a meta-synthesis of literature based on a portion of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, this chapter describes and compares communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts, thus addressing theoretical objectives T8 and T9. The outcome of this chapter is a theoretical framework for intercultural awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures and a theoretical intercultural congruence framework (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.*

Chapter 6 retrospectively discusses the methodological process for conducting the study of theory and futuristically that of the empirical qualitative study. Following the introduction, the interpretive pragmatism paradigm and qualitative approach adopted in this study is discussed. The chapter is in two parts, one focusing on the study of theory, and the other on the empirical study. For each of the studies, data collection and analysis procedures including ethical concerns are discussed. Excerpts from the meta-analysis process of the theoretical study and content analysis of the empirical study are provided. Finally, a summary of the research design and methodologies employed is given.

Chapter 7 presents the findings of the empirical qualitative study aimed at validating the IC awareness aspect of the theoretical IC congruence framework (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*, hence addressing empirical research objectives E1 to E3. Specifically, own and others' perspectives on IC awareness in Sino-African organisational contexts by African and Chinese experts are described, highlighting similarities and differences and influence on IC congruence. In addition, other emerging perspectives re-

garding IC awareness, as mentioned by African and Chinese experts, are listed and discussed. Finally, new IC awareness categories emerge from that data to address the fourth empirical research objective, E4.

Chapter 8 presents a summary of findings the study of theory and empirical study. The new IC awareness categories (also referred to as IC awareness enablers) that emerged from the data in Chapter 7, section 7.8 are built into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework presented in Chapter 4, hence updating the framework. Furthermore, the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific for Sino-African organisational contexts* presented in Chapter 5 is updated with insights from the empirical study. This results in the final outcome of the study: a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework in order to enhance IC and achieve IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. A conclusion for the research that includes contributions, limitations and recommendations for future research is presented.

Chapter 2
Conceptualising Intercultural Communication Congruence

Introduction

In the context of the present study, it is necessary to understand IC in order to conceptualise IC congruence, which is a proposed hypothetical ultimate state in IC. As such, this chapter is aimed at understanding IC and conceptualising IC congruence.

This chapter therefore begins with defining the concept of IC (theoretical objective T1). Next is a deliberation on approaches to understanding and theories for enhancing IC (theoretical objective T2), highlighting historical shifts in conceptualisation of IC and approaches to its study. Understanding theories and approaches to IC helps provide a reference base for developing a theoretical framework for IC congruence. Following this is a description of the barriers and challenges faced in IC (theoretical objective T3). In the ensuing review and synthesis process, potential considerations for achieving IC congruence are inferred (theoretical objective T4) – notably IC awareness. The chapter ends with a summary of the relationship between IC barriers, IC challenges, and considerations for IC congruence as identified, hence providing a preliminary conceptualisation of IC congruence. In that process, a cross-cultural approach is proposed (see section 2.5.1) as appropriate for building a theoretical IC congruence framework.

The next section begins by developing an understanding of the concept of IC through discussion of a number of definitions of IC (and in so doing, addressing theoretical objective T1).

2.1   Defining Intercultural Communication

There are many definitions of IC (Zhang, 2014, p. 917). For example, IC is defined as dialogue or exchange of information between people from different cultures (Croucher, Sommier and Rahmani, 2015; Nair-Venugopal, 2015). It is a symbolic, interpretative, transactional and contextual process (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011; Lustig and Koester, 1993). People from different cultural groups attempt to share meanings (Aneas and Sandin, 2009; Gudykunst, 2003; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Ristic, 2013), achieve communication goals or create and preserve social relationships (Nair-Venugopal, 2015;

Okech et al., 2015; Hill and Faulk, 2005) by overcoming certain personal and/or contextual barriers to achieve effective communication.

Elaborating on IC, Alexander et al. (2014) suggest that inter-culturality underpins IC, where inter-culturality consists of cultural humility (Oetzel, 2014; Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998) and intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is concerned with ability to effectively communicate in an appropriate manner with those from other cultures, while cultural humility refers to a respectful approach to others and their world views in the intercultural encounter (Oetzel, 2014).

There are multiple definitions and conceptualisations of IC, implying the need for many considerations for enhancing IC. Furthermore, themes of effectiveness and appropriateness re-occur, suggesting these are important considerations in enhancing IC. Communication effectiveness and appropriateness are discussed in sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 respectively.

The view adopted in this study is that multiple perspectives on IC provide a holistic understanding that could contribute to understanding and enhancing IC in the Sino-African organisational context. The study therefore adopts a holistic view geared towards the achievement of effectiveness and appropriateness in IC.

The next section looks at paradigm shifts that have occurred in the study of IC, describing the different approaches and theories for understanding and enhancing IC, hence addressing theoretical objective T2.

2.2   The Study of Intercultural Communication

Halualani and Nakayama (2013, p. 3) observe that approaches to understanding IC have evolved from being predominantly focused on horizontal and cultural differences, to being more critical and complex, as well as simultaneously horizontal and vertical in addressing issues of inequality. This study seeks to understand contemporary perspectives on IC in light of the historical developments that have led to shifts in thinking and approach (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 30). Adopting a historical perspective for this research (learning from the past) can assist the development of theoretical frameworks for IC congruence in new contexts, as is intended for the Sino-African organisational context (Merton, 1968, pp. 35–37 cited in Bourgeois III, 1979, p. 446). In the next subsection, the history of the study of IC and the different approaches as categorised by Martin and Nakayama (2010) are discussed in an integrated manner.

2.2.1   History of the study of intercultural communication

The study of IC has been influenced by developments from the 1930s and 1940s when an effort was made to understand communication across cultures (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 21).

This period saw the application of anthropological concepts such as culture in addressing world problems of interaction between people from different cultures (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 23). The prominent scholars of the time included Margaret Mead and Clyde Kluckhohn. In the 1950s, the concept of culture assumed a more national character and scholarship witnessed the prominence of scholars such as Edward Hall whose book *The Silent Language* (1959) influenced many later culture and communication scholars (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 30; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011). Notably, literature from this period reflects an interconnectedness between the concepts of IC and intercultural effectiveness, suggesting that effectiveness was a major concern in intercultural interaction at the time. For example, Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman (1978) identify a set of dimensions thought to be critical for intercultural effectiveness, with communication ranked as the most important. In the discourse of the day, the terms IC and intercultural effectiveness were largely interchangeable as reflected in literature. Other factors considered to contribute to intercultural effectiveness included the establishment of interpersonal relationships, understanding others, adjustment to different cultures and adjustment to different societal systems (Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman, 1978; Abe and Wiseman, 1983; Hannigan, 1990; Cui and Awa, 1992; Mendenhall et al., 2008).

Martin and Nakayama (2010) identify three broad approaches to the study of IC which are useful for this study. They are the social science, the interpretive and the critical approaches which are now discussed.

2.2.2   Contemporary approaches to intercultural communication

Table 2.1 below presents and describes three broad approaches to IC (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 51) while highlighting their strengths and limitations, beginning with the social science approach.

Table 2.1: Approaches to intercultural communication

	Social science	Interpretive	Critical
Discipline on which approach is founded	Psychology	Anthropology, sociolinguistics	Various
Research goal	Describe and predict behaviour	Describe behaviour	Change behaviour
Assumption of reality	External and describable	Subjective	Subjective and material
Assumptions of human behaviour	Predictable	Creative and voluntary	Changeable
Method of study	Survey, Observation	Participant observation, field study	Textual analysis of media
Relationship of culture and communication	Communication influenced by culture	Culture created and maintained through communication	Culture a site of power struggles

Contribution of the approach	Identifies cultural variations, recognises cultural differences in many aspects of communication but often does not consider context	Emphasises that communication, culture and culture be studied in context.	Recognises the political and economic forces in culture and communication; asserts that all intercultural interactions are characterised by power

Source: Martin and Nakayama (2010, p. 51)

2.2.2.1 The social science approaches

As reflected in Table 2.1, social science approaches of the 1970s and 1980s and founded on the disciplines of psychology and sociology, emphasise statistical measures in describing and predicting human behaviour (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 51). The main assumption underpinning social science approaches is that reality is external and describable, and that culture influences communication (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 51). However, while social science approaches can show variations in communication patterns between people, they do not consider the context in which communication takes place. As a result, social science approaches often fail to predict why some intercultural interactions seem to succeed and others do not (Martin and Nakayama, 2010). A further limitation of social science approaches can be "culture distance", when researchers do not fully understand the cultures they are studying (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 58).

Because the limitations of social science approaches provide partial justification for new or enhanced approaches to IC, it is worth exploring some examples of this train of thought, such as the psychosocial, skills, behavioural, knowledge of the "other" and the common ground and acceptance of differences approaches.

a.   The psychosocial approach

With a concern for improving effectiveness in IC, Koester and Olebe's (1988) psychosocial approach links personality traits with performance, envisioning a prototype of an effective and successful intercultural communicator. However, it focuses on conditions prior to the intercultural interaction, rather than on the communication behaviours themselves (Koester and Olebe, 1988, p. 234). It also assumes that acceptable characteristics and personalities are similar across cultures. The present study posits that a prototype developed in one cultural context may not necessarily apply to another, and is likely to result in unmet communication expectations.

b.   The skills approach

The skills approach to IC emphasises skills seen as contributing to IC effectiveness (see Abe and Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman, 1978). While the skills approach

may be more practical than psychosocial approaches (Koester and Olebe, 1988, p. 235), it does not consider the possibility that perceived essential skills for communication effectiveness might differ across cultures. The present study suggests that communication skills are more likely to be culture-specific than culture-general.

c. Behavioural approach

Within the behavioural approach to IC, focus is on specific communicative behaviours during IC encounters. The aim here is to identify the gap between knowing what ought to be, and what is actually done in communication. Koester and Olebe (1988) propose eight factors for assessing communication of another person, namely: display of respect, interaction posture, empathy, task-related roles, relational roles, interaction management, orientation to knowledge and tolerance of ambiguity.

As is the case with skills approaches, the limitation of this view lies in the likelihood that, as cultures vary, so too will the specific behaviours representing effective communication. Thus, while dimensions of communication effectiveness and IC effectiveness may be universal, their expression is not likely to be (Koester and Olebe, 1988, p. 237), which hinders the achievement of IC congruence. For example, in a study exploring intra-cultural communication rules and outcomes in three domestic cultures (Mexican-American, Black, and White), Collier, Ribeau and Hetch (1986) conclude that people from different cultures may define similar rules with different behaviours, and prefer certain types of behaviours over others in seeking to achieve desired communication outcomes. While respect, politeness, and empathy may be universally expected communicative behaviours, their expression and interpretation may vary from culture to culture. Such may indeed be the case with African and Chinese managers and employees engaged in IC in Sino-African organisational contexts.

d. Knowledge of the "other" approach

Premised on the view that people engaged in IC must be knowledgeable about each other's culture, this approach includes assessments of IC effectiveness by the interactants themselves (Koester and Olebe, 1988). The knowledge of the "other" approach underscores the importance of consideration of perspectives on communication effectiveness of all parties in the interaction. Chen (2015) concurs, emphasising the need to understand distinct characteristics of one's culture and that of one's counterparts, as is next discussed.

e. Common ground and acceptance of differences approach

According to Chen (2015, p. 446), intercultural awareness is the state of "knowing the distinct characteristics of one's own culture and that of one's counterparts" by understanding values and worldviews. Chen (2015) proposes that intercultural awareness combined with

intercultural sensitivity on the part of the interactants enhances IC. This happens when individuals willingly seek to understand, acknowledge, respect, tolerate and accept cultural differences of their counterparts (Chen, 2015).

Essentially, intercultural awareness and sensitivity occur when individuals are mindful of cultural differences in their interactions (Chen 2015, p. 468; Neuliep. 2012; Burgoon, Berger and Waldron, 2000, p. 106). Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998) concur, positing that "shared knowledge and bilateral understanding between the peoples of the different cultures, as we all as a responsive and adaptive mindset, paying particular attention to the impact of cultural differences on speaking practices are practical ways of enhancing IC" (*Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998, p. 84).*

In the context of the present study, the argument is put forward that even though knowledge of cultural differences and similarities in communication may be attainable, the challenge could still lie in finding common ground and a standard of communication effectiveness that is acceptable to all interacting parties. When such a standard can be established, African and Chinese managers and employees may come closer to IC congruence.

2.2.2.2 The interpretive approaches

As reflected in Table 2.1 interpretive approaches to IC are rooted in the fields of anthropology and sociolinguistics, and premised on the assumption that reality is external to humans but can also be constructed by humans. The interpretivist researcher focuses on subjective understanding of phenomena from within a cultural context. Descriptions of communication of a given people must be grounded in those people's own beliefs and values (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, pp. 59–63). Interpretive approaches enable in-depth understanding of communication patterns through qualitative research (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 64). While interpretivist research is likely best done by researchers who are themselves part of a cultural community, this is not always possible. When interpretivist researchers are outsiders to the communities under investigation, they may fail to represent the communication patterns of members of the community accurately (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 64).

In spite of interpretive limitations, however, the present study contends that when interpretive approaches to IC are engaged, an understanding of communication in different cultures from the perspective of each culture's representatives can result. In that state of reciprocal understanding, it is likely possible to seek common ground and find ways of accepting and/or tolerating differences in communication (Chen, 2015).

Chen's (2015) approach of looking for common ground and accepting differences – which has parallels to Koester and Olebe's (1988) knowledge of the "other" approach – may be the useful in the endeavour to find IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context. This is because IC congruence is sought in Sino-African organisational contexts where Af-

rican and Chinese managers and employees with distinct cultures, are engaged in IC amid the challenges as alluded to in Chapter 1 of this study.

2.2.2.3 The critical approaches

As reflected in Table 2.1, critical approaches to IC ascribe to the notion of a subjective reality. Opposing the use of dichotomies in describing communication, critical approaches argue that the complex realities of IC must not be overlooked (Blommaert, 1998; Collier et al., 2001; Guest, Bunce and Johnson 2006; Halualani and Nakayama, 2013; Halualani, Mendoza and Drzewiecka, 2009; Kubota, 2012; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; 1999; Moon, 2013, p. 5; Ono, 2013; Starosta and Chen, 2013). Critical approaches also question the assumed assumptions about culture and similarity of communication patterns within nations. Instead, these approaches reflect on taken-for-granted ideas to uncover the unequal power relations in communication (Collier et al., 2001; Halualani and Nakayama, 2013; Holliday, Hyde and Kullman, 2010; Kubota, 2012; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Moon, 2013). Critical approaches to IC therefore challenge the status quo that elevates some cultures and groups above others, also interrogating the politics behind cultural differences and their ideological implications for research (Kubota, 2012, p. 105).

2.2.2.4 Summary

These varying approaches to IC, as discussed, can inform an approach to IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context. First, the social science approach shows the importance of identifying and understanding cultural variations in communication. Second, the interpretive approach highlights the value of investigating communication in context in order to provide in-depth understanding and description of communication, enabling accurate representations that can be compared. Third, the critical approach to IC cautions against generalisations based on static reductionist representations of culture (Halualani and Nakayama, 2013; Moon, 2013; Kubota, 2012; Halualani, Mendoza and Drzewiecka and 2009; Collier et al., 2001; Martin and Nakayama, 1999).

Finally, while there exist different approaches to the study of IC, each with strengths and limitations, there is a potential to use the different approaches in a dialectical manner, providing a lens through which to view the complexities of IC (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 76). A dialectical approach emphasises that culture is a relational, dynamic and changing process; therefore, cultural knowledge should be in relation to other cultures (Martin and Nakayama, 2013, p. 65). In the current study, a predominantly interpretive approach dialectically considering insights from African and Chinese cultures is advocated, hence avoiding misuse of stereotypical knowledge in understanding intercultural interactions (Martin and Nakayama, 2013, p. 75).

Following the preceding overview of historical developments and contemporary approaches to IC, the next section examines theories for effective outcomes in IC.

2.2.3 Theories for enhancing intercultural communication

Throughout the historical study of IC (section 2.2.1), numerous scholars emphasise the importance of effectiveness in intercultural interactions (see Abe and Wiseman, 1983; Cui and Awa, 1992; Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman, 1978; Hannigan, 1990; Lee, 2010; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Mendenhall et al., 2008). This emphasis is also evident in contemporary approaches to IC as discussed in section 2.2.2, as well as emphasis on the issue of appropriateness.

This section focuses on theories of IC effectiveness to provide a starting point towards developing a theoretical IC congruence framework. Although theories of IC effectiveness have originated largely in Western cultures (see Yoshitake, 2002) this study argues that non-Western theory that has been formative in the study of IC cannot be overlooked. In addition, conceptualisations of effectiveness within different cultural contexts considered in the IC encounter, may enhance chances of achieving IC congruence

Some of the important theories aiming to enhance IC at an individual level will now be discussed. These are the cultural convergence theory (Barnett and Kincaid, 1983), the anxiety uncertainty management theory (Gudykunst, 1995) and the face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988).

2.2.3.1 Cultural convergence theory

The cultural convergence theory, formulated by Barnett and Kincaid (1983), focuses on the effects of communication on cultural differences, predicting convergence on mean collective patterns of thought (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 167). The theory posits that it may be possible to achieve effective IC in relatively closed systems where communication between members is unrestricted because the system tends towards greater cultural uniformity. By the same token, in restricted systems, communication would tend towards diversity. The present study hypothesises a restricted communication system in the Sino-African context owing to differences in language as well as the "in-group" versus "out-group" emphasis of Chinese culture. In the restricted communication system, it is likely therefore that each cultural group maintains its own core cultural values, resulting in differences in communication.

While the cultural convergence theory may be useful in explaining findings in the current research, its limitation lies in the lack of identified IC-enhancing considerations, other than the passage of time. On its own, however, the cultural convergence theory may not be adequate for conceptualising IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

2.2.3.2 Anxiety uncertainty management theory

The anxiety uncertainty management theory (Gudykunst,1995) explains effective interpersonal and intergroup communication where uncertainty and anxiety are viewed as mediating variables affecting perceived effectiveness of communication in in-group and out-group relationships (Gudykunst and Nishida, 2001). Accordingly, to communicate effectively with out-groups, uncertainty needs to be controlled and managed as per each culture's dictates (Neuliep, 2012, p. 3). This is because when cultural boundaries are crossed, people step out of their comfort zones and become anxious (Bucker et al., 2014, p. 2073) as they are essentially interacting with "strangers" (Gudykunst, 1995). Challenges experienced in IC between African and Chinese managers and employees in the Sino-African organisational context suggest that they may be operating outside their comfort zones, as they likely do not have knowledge of communication in each other's cultures. The present study proposes that according to the anxiety uncertainty management theory, increased knowledge and understanding may serve to reduce anxiety and uncertainty, thus contributing to IC congruence.

Related to the anxiety uncertainty management theory another approach to reducing anxiety and thereby enhancing IC is proposed by Bucker et al. (2014) based on mindful consideration of one's own and the other's culture. This approach suggests having cultural intelligence and mindfulness. Cultural intelligence is defined as the natural ability to interpret someone's unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures in the way that the person's compatriots and colleagues would, even to mirror them (Earley and Mosakowski, 2004, p. 1). Mindfulness, on the other hand, represents a certain kind of critical thinking and a state of consciousness and sensitivity to different contexts and multiple perspectives (DeVito, 2013, p. 22; Burgoon, Berger and Waldron 2000, p. 106). In mindful communication, when individuals pursue their communication goals, there is an expectation that they speak in certain ways and not others to suit the context (Burgoon, Berger and Waldron, 2000, p. 111). Planned, reason-based communication is mindful. It contrasts with emotional and reactive communication where the assumption is that strangers interpret messages in the same manner as we do (Neuliep, 2012, p. 3) hence detracting from IC congruence.

From these approaches, the present study adopts a perspective that in moving towards achieving IC congruence, it is important to distinguish between conceptualisations of mindfulness in the different cultures.

2.2.3.3 Face negotiation theory

Ting-Toomey's (1985) face negotiation theory is based on the view that negotiating "face" is key to communication in different cultures and that management of face differs across cultures according to variation in value orientation (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, p. 91). Face refers to an acclaimed sense of favourable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, p. 187). It is associated with values such as respect, honour, status, reputation, credibility, competence, family, network

connection, loyalty, trust, relational indebtedness and obligation issues (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, pp. 187–190). Related to face (social self-worth) is the concept of "face work", referring to a set of communicative behaviours that people use to regulate their social dignity and to support or challenge the other's social dignity both verbally and non-verbally (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, pp. 188–190).

Face and face work are understood to be universal phenomena, although the paths to achievement of these differ across cultures (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998). For example, Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) contend that the cultural variability of individualism versus collectivism has a far-reaching influence on face and face work across cultures. Depending on whether a culture is individualistic- or collectivistic-orientated, members may engage in either self- or other-directed face work behaviours. Individualistic are likely to display self-orientated, autonomy-based face work behaviours, while collectivistic cultures are likely to display other-orientated, approval-based face work behaviour (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998, p. 191).

In summary, this research proposes that an understanding of face-saving and face-giving behaviours in different cultures may contribute towards making IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts a reality by ensuring appropriateness in communication. Yet, in spite of the benefits of understanding and adhering to face requirements, complications could still arise in IC. As an example, while in some cultures "white lies" may be told to avoid embarrassing or shameful situations (Dainton, 2004, p. 58), in other cultures this behaviour may be met with disapproval since anything less than the truth is regarded as totally unacceptable.

Various theories have been discussed with a view to enhancing IC, together with suggested challenges experienced in IC. The next section explicitly identifies and describes barriers and challenges faced in IC, hence addressing theoretical objective T3.

2.3 Barriers and Challenges in Intercultural Communication

Traditionally, language differences, non-verbal communication, cultural and value differences, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and anxiety felt by strangers are considered to be IC barriers (Beebe, Beebe and Redmond, 2011; Chen, 2015; Gudykunst, 1995; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Okech et al., 2015; Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak; 2005). These barriers contribute to ineffective and inappropriate IC; therefore, an understanding of these challenges may help in developing a theoretical IC congruence framework. Each of these barriers to effective IC will now be discussed.

2.3.1 Language differences

Differences in language are perhaps the most obvious barriers to IC. When people from different cultures who speak distinctly different languages interact without an interpreter,

effective verbal communication cannot occur because neither party can understand, encode or decode verbal messages from the other. Needless to say even with an interpreter, there are huge areas open for misinterpretation.

In addition to the clear difficulties of language differences in communication, is the challenge of understanding non-verbal communication, discussed in the next subsection.

2.3.2 Non-verbal communication

LaFrance and Mayo (1978, p. 71) articulate the concept of non-verbal communication when they advance that

> *People do not communicate by words alone; there is more to human communication than speech and even speech is a matter of more than words. People utter the same words in different tones of voice with variations in loudness, pitch, pause, and tempo. They look or don't look at each other, stand close or far apart, face each other more or less directly, and move their faces and bodies. Sometimes, they touch and sense each other's breath and warmth. All this behaviour has been subsumed under the rubric nonverbal communication.*

Cruz (2001), Liu, Volcic and Gallois, (2011), and Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak (2005) concur, stating that non-verbal communication is a non-conscious, culture-specific process incorporating use of cues such as facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, physical distance and silence to transmit feelings to co-workers, supervisors and customers in the conduct of their duties.

Communication through body movements such as physical postures, gestures, eye contact and facial expressions may take on different meanings depending on cultural context (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 144; Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000, p. 70). For instance, "beckoning someone or pointing at someone with one finger, looking someone straight in the eye, passing things – especially food with the left hand … are unacceptable in African culture" (Ntuli, 2012, p. 22). Direct eye contact in Chinese or Japanese culture has negative connotations and is indicative of distrust (Francesca and Gold, 2005), as in African culture where it signifies disrespect or defiance. However, in Western cultures, maintaining eye contact is indicative of honesty and good communication (Cruz, 2001, p. 53).

Situations in which touch is acceptable, as well as the use of personal space may also differ across cultures (Cruz, 2001; Francesca and Gold, 2005; Hall, 1976; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011). While "high-contact" cultures are tolerant of and may encourage touching in communication, "low-contact" cultures do not (Hall, 1976). Consequently in IC, if one party feels that their personal space is being invaded, communication may be hindered (Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000, p. 71).

Often overlooked aspects of non-verbal communication include the pitch and volume of one's voice, and even the use of colour in clothing or in one's environment. Colours can represent different things to people from different cultures (Francesco and Gold, 2005, p. 78). An example can be seen in traditional African cultures such as the Shona of Zimbabwe. In the Shona culture, the colour red is associated with stray or alien spirits called *mashavi* [telephonic conversation] (N Chipandambira, personal communication, 15 August 2015), while in Western cultures, red can signify intensity as in romantic passion or danger (Francesco and Gold, 2005, p. 78). The paralinguistic voice cues of pitch and volume can easily be misunderstood because people assign different meanings to different cues (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 149). For instance, it is the norm in Nigerian culture to speak loudly, which can be mistaken for aggression by other cultures.

The proverb "actions speak louder than words" underscores the importance of non-verbal communication (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 153). Cultural systems vary in their interpretation of non-verbal cues. Although all human beings experience basic emotions such as anger, disgust and sadness, the rules governing display of these emotions may vary across cultures. It can be reasoned therefore that non-verbal communication makes IC problematic, given that "to master a thousand nuances for each culture is impossible" (Andersen et al., 2003, p. 74).

2.3.3 Culture and value differences

When communicators share the same cultural scripts, communication between them is likely to be smoother and more effective than when they do not (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998, p. 70; Martin and Nakayama, 2010) as is the case with African and Chinese managers and employees in Sino-African organisational contexts. To illustrate the impact of cultural differences on intercultural interaction, Huang, Davison and Gu, (2008) and Ardichvilli et al. (2006) report challenges in seemingly routine acts such as sharing knowledge between people from different cultures. In these studies, the Chinese cultural characteristics of modesty, hierarchy and collectivistic in-group versus out-group orientation are reported to result in limited knowledge-sharing with those not belonging to the culture Chinese. From the given example, it is possible that Chinese managers and employees may be labelled uncooperative when interacting with people from outside their culture, thus impacting on IC congruence.

On another note, illustrating the prevalence of certain communication styles over others in different cultures, Xie et al. (2009) make use of Hall's (1959; 1976) low-context and high-context schema. A context is the inextricable information surrounding an event (Francesca and Gold, 2005, pp. 33–34). In their study, Xie et al.(2009) report that people in high-context cultures where communication is implicit and meaning is embedded in information surrounding an event (see Hall, 1959; 1976) comprehend nonverbal cues better than their counterparts from low-context cultures. In low-context cultures, communication is explicit and in the verbal code (see Hall, 1959; 1976). This demonstrates that some cultures make use of non-verbal communication more than other cultures, and that this

could present challenges when there is a mismatch of style preference and interpretation of non-verbal cues in communication. In the same study Xie et al. (2009) imply the presence of barriers of ethnocentrism and prejudice in IC. This is seen in a suggestion made that people from high power distance cultures (see Hofstede, 1980) communicate less effectively than those from low power distance cultures (Xie et al., 2009). High power distance cultures are those where there is uneven distribution of power and hierarchy is the norm. Cultural differences and influences on communication are discussed further in Chapter 3, section 3.1.5.

2.3.4 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is pervasive in communication in international business (Okech et al., 2015; Chaney and Martin, 2007). In IC, when a cultural group is ethnocentric, it typically holds the view that everything should be rated with reference to its own way – which represents the only legitimate way of doing things (Washington, 2013; Neuliep, 2012), resulting in misunderstandings and misinterpretations in IC (Hilton and Kameda, 1999; Victor, 1992).

A study by Dunkerley and Robinson (2002) puts the influence of ethnocentrism in IC into perspective as American and British managers both display in-group favouritism and out-group disapproval in their evaluations of communication styles. They both view the communication style of other as being dysfunctional compared to their own. The present study argues that the presence of ethnocentric tendencies in communication may be a contributing factor to poor IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts, and that countering ethnocentric tendencies may contribute to achieving IC congruence.

2.3.5 Stereotyping and prejudice

In IC, stereotyping or judging people on assumptions and generalisations can result in unmet expectations (Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Samovar and Porter, 1995) hence presenting a barrier to IC congruence. People can hold general negative and positive stereotyped ideas of those from other cultural groups, based on little or no experience (Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak, 2005; Verderber and Verderber, 2008), resulting in problematic "us and them" behaviour (Alberts, Nakayama and Martin, 2010, p. 97). Stereotyping perpetuates prejudices that may hamper IC when negative feelings and attitudes reflect in the use of group labels, hostile humour, or speech that alleges the superiority of one group over another (Naidoo, 2011, p. 104). It addition, prejudice may result in a lack of communication where a cultural group that viewing itself as more superior may not see the necessity of communicating with a perceived less superior cultural group hence ignoring any legitimate issues they may raise resulting in poor IC.

2.3.6   Anxiety felt by the "strangers" in communication

When people from different cultures communicate, they may not have full knowledge and understanding of communication and communication nuances in their counterpart's culture and this results in apprehension that hampers IC (Gudykunst, 1995). The apprehension is worse when there are language differences and a fear of non-verbal misinterpretations (Collier, Ribeau and Hetch, 1986, p. 439) thus detracting from IC congruence. The impact of anxiety in IC is articulated in the Gudykunst (1995) AUM theory discussed in section 2.2.3.2.

This section of the thesis has highlighted that a lack of knowledge and understanding is a significant contributor to challenges faced in IC. Gaining knowledge and understanding of communication in the other's culture is therefore necessary if IC challenges are to be minimised. Although the challenges faced in IC are many, the present study focuses specifically on the key challenges of inappropriateness and ineffectiveness which are elaborated on in sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 respectively.

In the next section, considerations for IC congruence accrue from the foregoing definitions of IC, discussion of approaches to IC, theories for enhancing IC, and analysis of IC barriers and IC challenges, hence addressing theoretical objective T4.

2.4   Considerations for Intercultural Communication Congruence

Suggestions for identifying major considerations for IC congruence, as derived from the review and synthesis in this chapter, are summarised in this section. The considerations which follow are IC awareness, intercultural sensitivity, mindfulness, seeking common ground, accepting differences, as well as appropriateness and effectiveness in communication.

2.4.1   Intercultural communication awareness

For this research, consideration of IC awareness entails a reciprocal understanding of the cultural, behavioural and social norms in communication by those in interaction, resulting in an understanding of communication orientation and the manner of communication in the context of the present study. The value of IC awareness is that when people are interculturally aware, they are knowledgeable about themselves and the other (Koester and Olebe, 1988), and are able to identify similarities and/or differences in communication. With awareness of these similarities and differences in communication, it may be possible to find common ground (Chen, 2015) while working towards optimising similarities and reconciling differences in their communication towards a state of IC congruence.

In the following two subsections, communication orientation and manner of communication as components of the IC congruence consideration of IC awareness, are presented.

2.4.1.1 Communication orientation

Communication orientation also defined in Chapter 1, section, 1.7 is basic attitude and beliefs towards and about communication as reflected through IC awareness enablers and manifesting in the manner in which people communicate (Chigwendere, 2017). The criteria for conceptualising communication orientation are proposed and explained in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

2.4.1.2 Manner of communication

As defined in Chapter 1 section 1.7, the manner of communication is how people interpret the way people communicate (Chigwendere, 2017). It is related to the way one verbally and non-verbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered or understood (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 228). The manner of communication also relates to how things are said, rather than to what is said (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 128; de Vries et al., 2009, p. 179; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 100; Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 511; Kang and Hyun, 2012, p. 772). In the present study, the criteria for conceptualising manner of communication are proposed and explained in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1 and a framework for comparing the manner of communication in different cultures is identified in Chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

In summary, when IC awareness is achieved, effective and appropriate IC becomes possible. This greater understanding of similarities and differences between interactants is likely to lead to more mindful communication. Consequently, IC congruence may result.

2.4.2 Effectiveness in communication

In reference to communication behaviour, Ruben (1976 cited in Abe and Wiseman, 1983, p. 53) declares that "systematic attempts to define 'effective,' 'successful,' or 'competent' communication behaviour are relatively scarce". A dictionary definition of effective is "able to cause something" (World Book, 2009, p. 672) while the Online Business Dictionary (WebFinance Inc, 2017) defines effectiveness as the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved.

A simplistic way of framing effectiveness in communication could be the extent to which one achieves one's goals and achieves maximum understanding in an interaction with others by manipulating and controlling their social environment (Croucher, Sommier and Rahmani, 2015; Dainton and Zelley, 2015; Neuliep, 2012; Wiseman, 2003, p. 193). However this definition is essentially one-sided, in that end results are understood to be a primary measure of success (Asante and Vora, 1983, p. 294). This may be at odds with cultures advocating harmony and consensus as an end goal, for example. The present study therefore suggests that it may be possible to be effective, without being appropriate in communication.

Okech et al. (2015) suggest that the key ingredients for effective intercultural interaction are attitudinal and environmental. From this viewpoint, challenges in IC not only represent the problem of communication, but also the attitudes of the people interacting (Xu, 2013).

2.4.3 Appropriateness in communication

World Book (2009, p. 102) defines "appropriate" as that which is deemed suitable, fitting or proper in the circumstance, condition, occasion or place. The current study uses a more holistic perspective, derived from an aggregation of views presented in literature. Appropriate communication therefore entails use of messages that are expected in a given context and actions that meet the expectations and demands of different situations (Dainton and Zelley, 2015; Wiseman, 2003, p. 193; Spitzberg, 2000, p. 380). Appropriateness in communication is also viewed as the ability to communicate in a way that leads to the desired goals (Croucher, Sommier and Rahmani, 2015, p. 74). It therefore translates into a conscious mutual consideration of sender and receiver goals and values by all communicating parties. The concept of values is discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.1 where themes underlying IC are discussed.

While several considerations have been proposed as key to the achievement of IC congruence, if these considerations are absent from the encounter, they may serve as detractors from IC congruence. The next section explores the relationship between barriers, challenges and considerations for enhancing or detracting from IC congruence. In so doing, the concept of IC congruence is clarified.

2.5. Intercultural Communication Congruence

By hypothesising the relationship between considerations for IC congruence as inferred from the literature review and synthesis in this chapter, a hypothetical ultimate state of IC (IC congruence) is proposed. This was illustrated in Fig. 1.1. The relationship is such that when people from different cultures communicate from a point of low IC awareness, IC barriers such as stereotyping, prejudice and ethnocentrism may be heightened. The heightened IC barriers may then in turn perpetuate challenges such as inappropriateness and ineffectiveness in communication, resulting in poor IC congruence. Conversely, high IC awareness may result in greater intercultural sensitivity and mindfulness in individual interactants, therefore contributing towards mitigation of IC barriers and challenges (Burgoon, Berger and Waldron, 2000; Chen, 2011; 2015; Francesca and Gold, 2005; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Koester and Olebe, 1988).

This study further postulates that increased IC awareness at the meso level could inform implementation of strategies and interventions for enhancing IC, hence resulting in IC congruence where communication is appropriate and effective. With this in mind, it is pro-

posed that IC awareness, underpinned by understanding communication orientation and manner of communication, serves as a foundation for IC congruence.

Because it appears that lack of understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences existing in different cultures potentially heightens IC barriers and challenges, a cross-cultural approach to address these challenges is recommended.

2.5.1 A cross-cultural approach to enhanced intercultural communication

A cross-cultural approach to IC involves understanding and comparing communication in the different interacting cultures, with the aim of improving communication between them. This approach is useful in the context of the present study because it allows for "mining of deeply held indigenous values and communication patterns endemic to a society that represent longstanding traditions that function as the cultural signature of a people" (Shuter 2012, p. 1). This can occur without giving judgments on which views are right or wrong (Martin and Nakayama, 2010; 2013,).

Cultural variability frameworks (for example Hall, 1959; 1976; 1990; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; 1994; 1996) propose dimensions along which cultures may differ. These dimensions could be used as a basis for understanding similarities and differences in communication. In this thesis, dimensions of cultural variation often used in explaining differences in communication across cultures, are described later in Chapter 3, section 3.1.5.1. At this point, the distinction between cultural, cross-cultural and IC in the context of the present study is explained.

2.5.2 Cultural, cross-cultural and intercultural communication

Understanding the differences between cultural, cross-cultural and IC in the context of this study is necessary to provide clarity on the chosen approach to understanding and achieving IC congruence. This need is heightened by the existence of debates on similarity and/or difference between cultural, cross-cultural and IC (Alexander et al., 2014).

Cultural communication is concerned with understanding communication within a culture from an insider's point of view (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 7) while cross-cultural communication is concerned with the comparison of communication characteristics of two or more cultures (Hart, 2001 cited in Guitel, 2006; Lustig and Koester, 1993). Intercultural communication on the other hand is concerned with the engagement between culturally different people (Lustig and Koester 1993). The associated fields of cultural and cross-cultural communication should be considered in understanding IC, because they are integral to the domain of IC (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 267). Cultural and cross-cultural communication therefore serve as precursors to the study of IC, providing the multisource data needed to understand the complexities of the interplay of culture and communication in IC

(Salo-Lee, 2006; Hart, 2001 cited in Guitel, 2006). The relationship between, cultural, cross-cultural and IC are as reflected in Fig. 2.1

Fig. 2.1: Culture hierarchies in communication
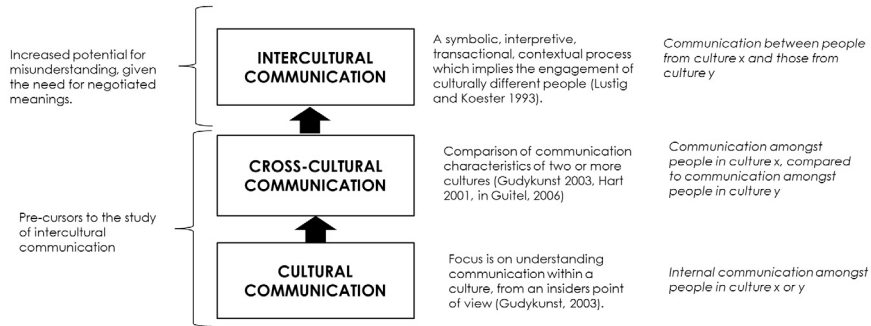
Source: Researcher's compilation from sources: Guitel, (2006), Gudykunst (2003), Hart (2001 cited in Guitel, 2006) Lustig and Koester (1993)

2.6 Summary

The present chapter has introduced and discussed relevant discourses in IC. Various definitions of IC discussed, show its multifaceted nature and emphasise the need for a holistic approach to IC (T1). Approaches to understanding and theories for enhancing IC were considered (T2), showing that while different approaches can be used dialectically in understanding IC, interpretive approaches may be the most suitable for understanding IC in the novel Sino-African organisational context. Furthermore, IC barriers of language differences, non-verbal communication, culture differences, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, anxiety felt by strangers including the challenges of inappropriateness and ineffectiveness described in the present chapter address theoretical objective T3. Finally, considerations for achieving IC congruence including IC awareness, engendered consequences and possibilities in IC were explored (T4).

In conclusion, the present chapter suggests that IC awareness, underpinned by communication orientation and manner of communication, provides the foundation for IC congruence. A further submission is that in the endeavour towards IC congruence, a cross-cultural approach may be the most appropriate for understanding the similarities and differences in communication across cultures. For these reasons, in the next chapter, criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and the manner of communication (termed IC awareness enablers) are proposed and discussed.

Chapter 3
Conceptualising Intercultural Communication Awareness

Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 2, understanding IC awareness is underpinned by communication orientation and manner of communication. In this chapter, the criteria (IC awareness enablers) for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication are proposed, hence addressing theoretical objective T6.

In order to give effect to this objective, however, it is necessary to have an understanding of the themes and subthemes underlying IC (Martin and Nakayama, 2010). The first few sections of this chapter address this need, hence addressing theoretical objective T5. Because this study focuses on the organisational context to provide managers, employees and practitioners with a quick reference point for identifying similarities and differences, a framework for comparing the manner of communication in different cultures is identified. In so doing, theoretical objective T7 is addressed.

In the next section, IC themes and subthemes are discussed.

3.1 Themes Underlying Intercultural Communication (IC)

In this section, the themes identified as underlying IC are discussed, namely culture and values, self-perceptions, worldviews, communication, relationship between culture and communication and dimensions of cultural variation in communication. The concept of culture is unpacked first.

3.1.1 Culture and values

The word "culture" is derived from the same root of the verb "to cultivate", meaning to till the soil and signifying the way people act upon nature (Hofstede, 1991, p. 5; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1993, p. 23). In academic discourse there are numerous definitions of culture (see Allwood, 1985; Barnett and Lee, 2003; Blumentghal, 1941 cited in cited in Krober and Kluckhohn, 1952; Francesco and Gold, 2005; Geertz, 1973; Gudykunst and Ting-

Toomey, 1988; Hofstede, 1991; Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Parsons, 1949 cited in Krober and Kluckhohn, 1952; Schein, 1990; 2010; Schwartz, 2009; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1993). However, despite these multiple definitions, there is no single universally agreed definition (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 27), which illustrates its complexity (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 84). A review of a number of definitions may help one to build an understanding of what culture is.

Culture is the sum total of the life of a people, developed over time and passed on from one generation to the next (Parsons, 1949 cited in Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) further suggest that culture is an expression of how people deal with universal problems such as relationships with time, space and nature, as well as relationships among people, mode of human activity and perceptions of human nature. With this in mind, it follows that human behaviours and actions within a society are guided by rules that serve to uphold culture. These rules also emanate from the society's beliefs, values, traditions and guiding philosophies representing the accepted way of solving its problems (Trompenaars and Hampden Turner, 1993, p. 6). Culture therefore dictates the appropriate, effective behaviour and course of action for different societies. Accordingly, Hofstede (1991, p. 5) views culture as a collective programme inculcated in the minds of societal members and distinguishing them from other societies.

Various images, such an onion or an iceberg, have been used to represent culture (see Hofstede, 1991; 1997; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1993). An iceberg with two-thirds of its mass hidden below the surface of the water suggests hidden danger, and the layers of an onion imply that culture exists at many levels with some aspects less apparent than others (Francesco and Gold, 2005, p. 18). Culture therefore "hides more than it reveals" (Hall, 1959, p. 53).

In his metaphor of culture as an onion, Hofstede cites values as representing the deepest manifestation of culture in the innermost layer. Values represent broad tendencies to prefer certain states over others (Hofstede, 1991, p. 8; Schwartz, 2012, p. 3). Other scholars concur, explaining that values also serve as guiding principles in the lives of people or social entities (Allen and Varga, 2007, p. 20; Schwartz, 1994; 2012). Therefore, while one cannot directly observe values, inferences are possible from the way people act under various circumstances (Francesca and Gold, 2005; Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000, p. 62; Hall and Hall, 1990; Hofstede, 1991; Boafo, 1989; Lasswell, 1948 cited in Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Schein, 2010), with a potential orientation towards individualism or collectivism. Because individuals are the primary unit of analysis in IC, in the next subsection, the concept of self-perception of individuals falling within a cultural group is discussed.

3.1.1.1 Self-perceptions

While culture as usually understood in reference to the group, it is important to understand how people as individuals view themselves, how they perceive the world, and how

they behave (Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000, p. 53), hence how they communicate (Huang, 2010, p. 100). This is because more than belonging to a common cultural group, people are first of all individuals in themselves, each having their own personality, history and life experience (Martin and Nakayama, 2010).

Principally, self-perception relates to how individuals portray themselves to others; the individual is saying "This is who I am" (Collier, 2015, p. 56) and this influences the IC process (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 209). When people interact, they bring more than just their physical body and group cultures to the interaction. Stereotyping – in other words, failing to acknowledge different self-perceptions and making assumptions about individuals based on membership of a particular cultural group – brings forth IC challenges (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 209). Managers and employees engaged in IC should therefore be wary of making assumptions relating to group culture about individuals. However, as a starting point, it is helpful to have an understanding of the broad cultural characteristics of the group. It appears that knowledge of values and guiding philosophies alone may not be enough to ensure that one can communicate successfully with people from other cultures (Jameson, 2007, p. 202; Lovitt, 1999). An understanding of values and guiding philosophies needs to be complemented by understanding self-perceptions to help enhance IC (Jameson, 2007; Varner and Palmer, 2005).

3.1.2 Worldview

Worldview is "the individual's perception of the world that helps him or her locate his or her place and rank in the universe while influencing nearly every action in which the individual engages" (Skow and Samovar, 2015, p. 144). Chen (2015) recommends worldview as a more comprehensive approach to understanding cultural values of individuals and groups of people in interaction.

The concept of worldview is concerned with people's views on the nature of existence, accepted ways of gaining knowledge, perceived goals of existence and reasoning approaches adopted in reaching goals. Essentially, worldview relates to the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions of a group of people (Lee, 2012; Narh, 2013).

Chen (2015) successfully builds an understanding of IC in the United States and China by using a worldview-based framework. Chen's focus is on understanding communication differences between American and Chinese cultures based on ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions (see Chen, 2015, p. 467). In the context of the present study, rather than referring to ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions, reference is made to the nature of communication, degree of interaction in communication, the objective of communication, and the thinking process in communication. These aspects will be discussed in section 3.2.1.

3.1.3 Communication

The word "communication" is derived from the Latin *communicare,* meaning to make common – implying a process of sharing thoughts, hopes or knowledge (Liu Volcic and Gallois, 2011, p. 31). While many definitions of communication exist in academic discourse (Samovar and Porter, 1995), for the purposes of the current study, a constructed definition of communication is adopted. Communication is defined as a process of intentional and unintentional transfer and exchange of information from one individual to another through the use of verbal or non-verbal codes, with the result of mutual understanding and achievement of purpose in any cultural context. Because communication occurs between individuals, the study suggests that examining communication at the individual level can assist in understanding areas of potential challenge or opportunity in communication between cultures.

Scholars have established that communication between individuals is characterised by interdependency when people send messages to initiate, define, maintain, or further relationships (Berger, 2005; Collier, Ribeau and Hetch, 1986; Dainton, 2004). This sending and receiving of messages is in accordance with social expectations of prevailing situations (Berger, 2005) and aims to achieve individual or community goals (Dainton, 2004; DeVito, 2013).

Communication between individuals can be described as relational, purposeful, reciprocal, transactional and interpretive (Collier, Ribeau and Hetch, 1986; Conrad and Poole, 1998; Dainton, 2004, p. 51; Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011). When communication is relational, it implies that what one person says or does has an effect on the other (Dainton, 2004 and DeVito, 2013). By implication, the relationship existing between the communicating parties will also influence their manner of communication. When describing communication as purposeful, there is an indication of an expected end result following communication. Communication is therefore a vehicle that allows people to learn or influence behaviours and attitudes (DeVito, 2013, p. 14). The outcome, however, may not be as desired when other factors such as cultural influences come into play.

Also of significance in communication between individuals is its "give and take" or reciprocal nature where communicants simultaneously serve as speaker and listener, while sending and receiving messages verbally and non-verbally. Different cultures may have different rules for sending and receiving messages as well as for expected behaviours (Collier, Ribeau and Hetch, 1986). The transactional nature of communication is also subject to power relations as people constantly assess one another's power or lack of it on the basis of messages they transmit, shaping their responses accordingly (Berger, 2005; Dainton, 2004; DeVito, 2013, p. 17).

In essence, understanding the characteristics of communication between individuals may help to circumvent the IC barrier of lack of knowledge, when seeking to achieve IC congruence. In the next section the relationship between culture and communication is explored, leading to how communication may differ across cultures.

3.1.4 The relationship between culture and communication

Views from culture and communication discourse suggest an interrelated, reciprocal relationship between culture and communication as seen in the proclamation "Communication is culture" and "culture is communication" (Hall, 1959, p. 169). Culture influences rules, habits, preferences as well as values conveyed in the communication process (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000; Madzingira, 2001; Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 63; Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak, 2005). In addition, culture determines the context and meaning of communication including that of paralinguistic behaviour such as touching, level of voice and body orientation in social interaction (Faniran, 2014; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hall, 1959, Madzingira, 2001; Boafo, 1989). On the other hand, communication has been described as the "live wire" of any culture, dictating appropriate communicative behaviours and reinforcing the cultural reality of a community (Boafo, 1989; Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 107).

Because culture and communication reciprocally influence each other, by implication, when people are from different cultures they will have different ways of communicating. In seeking to enhance IC and to move towards IC congruence it is necessary to understand cultural similarities and differences in communication, as explored in the next section. This leads to identification of dimensions of cultural variation in communication, thereby addressing theoretical objective T5.

3.1.5 Cultural differences and similarities in communication

While the present study makes use of cultural variability frameworks to help understand similarities and differences in communication, it does so in full acknowledgement of the criticism levelled against these frameworks. Criticism relates to their predominantly Western origin, questionable methodological foundations, and assumptions of cultural homogeneity of members of a given culture at all times and in all contexts (see Fang, 2003; Fang and Faure, 2011; Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 106; McSweeney, 2002; Shuter, 2012). The position adopted in the present study is that cultural variability frameworks provide a practical starting point for understanding the similarities and differences in communication in novel settings such as the Sino-African organisational context.

3.1.5.1 Dimensions of cultural variation in communication

Because there exist many dimensions of cultural variation for explaining differences in communication, the present research identifies the most prominent ones. The analysis conducted by Cardon (2008) provides a good point of reference for this.

Of the total number of journal articles related to IC in business as published between the years 1990 and 2006, at 21.88% of the total, Cardon's analysis shows that Hall's (1976) "contexting" model is the most frequently cited in explaining cultural differences in commu-

nication. Next are Hofstede's (1980) individualism vs collectivism and power distance dimensions at 18.30% and 10.71% respectively. Power distance relates to the extent that different cultures accept unequal distribution of culture (Hofstede, 1980). Ting-Toomey's (1988) face negotiation theory discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.3 stands at 10.71% of the articles. Hofstede's (1980) individualism vs collectivism index, Hall's (1976) low- and high-context schema and Ting-Toomey's (1988) face negotiation theory are discussed, as they influence many aspects of interpersonal communication (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 45). The individualism vs collectivism dimension (Hofstede, 1980) is the first to be examined.

a.   The individualism vs collectivism dimension in communication

The individualism vs collectivism dimension is one of Hofstede's (1980) value dimensions among power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity vs femininity and long-term orientation. Individualism vs collectivism has emerged in both Eastern and Western analyses of culture and this universality makes it a robust framework to use when examining cultural differences in communication between people (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 43; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998, p. 3).

Individualism as opposed to collectivism relates to the relationships among people in a society. While an individualistic culture has individuals as being mostly concerned for themselves and their immediate families, collectivist cultures have the community or in-group as their primary concern (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Schwartz, 1992; Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars and Hampden Turner, 1993). At this point, the concept of in-group vs out-group needs some clarification.

In defining in-groups, Triandis (1988 cited in Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 513) proposes that in-groups or insiders are groups of people about whose welfare one is concerned, and with whom one is willing to cooperate without demanding equitable return, except for loyalty. In addition, separation from one's in-group leads to discomfort or even pain. In collectivistic societies, in-groups draw sharp distinctions with out-groups and influence individual behaviour (Gudykunst et al., 1996, pp. 513–514). Therefore, in-group members behave in a manner expected by the group. Because of this phenomenon, communication in collectivist cultures is likely to be predictable; it shows concern for the group and avoids hurting others. It is important to note, however, that in-groups also exist in individualistic cultures. They are smaller in size, very specific and with little influence on individual behaviour (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 513). The expectation is that communication may be unpredictable and focused on individual feelings and interests in individualistic cultures.

Illustrating the different effects of collectivism and individualism on communication, Salo-Lee (2006) cites the communicative practice of greeting, accompanied by an enquiry after the well-being of other family members as a notable in-group communicative behaviour in collectivistic cultures. The value placed on this phenomenon is different in individ-

ualistic cultures, where such an act is an intrusion into another's personal space (Francesca and Gold, 2005).

While it appears there may be a universal understanding of the individualism vs collectivism dimension, it has faced criticism in matters relating to communication. Kashima (1989 cited in Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 514) contends that using dimensions of cultural variability such as individualism vs collectivism to explain individual level behaviour is inappropriate because culture cannot be controlled as if in an experiment. Moreover, the dual existence of individualism and collectivism in cultures may render it impractical for predicting individual communication behaviour with absolute certainty (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 510).

To mediate the influence of cultural individualism vs collectivism on individual behaviour Gudykunst et al. (1996) thus propose adoption of individual level factors such as self-perceptions and values seen as having a profound influence on the IC process (Martin and Nakayama, 2010, p. 209).

b.   Low and high context communication

Offering a different perspective, seminal anthropologist Edward Hall's (1959, 1976) low- and high-context schema focuses on differences in communication processes. Hall determines that three cultural factors affect relationships between people, namely context, time and space. Hall proposes that communication and culture are not just about words, but also about all that one can see and touch as well as the context in which these occur Hall (1976). Hall uses the concept of context to explain differences in communication styles and in the manner of communication across cultures. A context is the inextricable information surrounding an event that is bound within the meaning of that event (Francesca and Gold, 2005, pp. 33–34). A context is essentially the background, setting and/or circumstances in which communication takes place.

According to Hall, cultures may be regarded as high or low context, with low-context cultures being largely individualistic and high-context cultures being largely collectivistic (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 44). Accordingly, low- and high-context communications are the predominant forms of communication in individualistic and collectivistic cultures respectively (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Hall (1976) proposes that, because meaning lies within a context in high-context cultures, there exist many contextual elements that help people understand interaction rules and meaning. People seldom convey their feelings and thoughts explicitly and there is a heightened need to interpret subtle non-verbal messages (Fay and Spinthourakis-Katsillis, 2000, p. 69). In high-context cultures, communication is understated, indirect and ambiguous, with interlocutors expecting more of each other to the extent that they should know what is bothering them (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 516; Hall, 1976, p. 113). Knowledge of relationships and relationship expectations is therefore key in high-context cultures as it helps en-

sure appropriateness and maintenance of harmony in the in-group (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 51). In low-context cultures on the other hand, less is taken for granted in communicating; information is mostly explicit and in the verbal code (Cardon, 2008, p. 4; Hall, 1976, p. 91; Hofstede, 2011, p. 3; Solderholm, 2013, p. 28) so that there is likely to be less chance of misunderstanding in low-context cultures.

As with individualism vs collectivism, Hall's low- and high-context schema has not escaped criticism for lacking empirical validation (Cardon, 2008). Despite this view however, a number of scholars find that it remains one of the dominant theoretical frameworks for interpreting IC in qualitative studies (Solderholm, 2013; Kittler, Rygl and Mackinnon, 2011; Cardon, 2008, p. 399).

c.   High versus low face needs

Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) suggest that while face and face-work are universal phenomena depending on the value orientation, how the meaning of face is framed and how face-work is enacted may differ across cultures (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, p. 188). A society high in individualism will have face needs that differ from those in a society that values collectivism. There is a concern for self-face maintenance with an emphasis on the "I" identity in individualistic cultures. On the other hand, collectivist cultures are concerned with both self-face and other-face maintenance with a corresponding emphasis on the "we" identity (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 90).

3.1.5.2   Summary

An understanding of the dimensions of cultural variation in communication as discussed in this section, coupled with an understanding of IC and its underlying themes, makes it possible to suggest criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication. Furthermore, as was highlighted in Chapter 2, section 2.4, in the context of the present study, a reciprocal understanding of the cultural, behavioural and social norms in communication by interactants enables an understanding of communication orientation and the manner of communication. An understanding of communication orientation and the manner of communication in turn enhances IC awareness.

3.2   Intercultural Communication Awareness

In this section, the criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication, both of which enhance IC awareness, are proposed. This essentially addresses theoretical objective T6.

3.2.1 Criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication (IC awareness enablers)

Table 3.1 below presents the proposed criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication. These criteria (also referred to as IC awareness enablers) are: values and guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions),* the nature of communication, the objective of communication, the degree of interaction and thinking process in communication.

The columns in Table 3.1 read from top to bottom, left to right as follows:

- Column A states the proposed IC awareness enablers.
- Column B explains IC awareness enablers as consisting of opposing orientations on a continuum of possibilities in human existence. For example, at one end may lie an individualistic orientation and at the other a collectivist orientation as is reflected in (B-i) and (B-ii) respectively.
- The dotted line with reverse arrows suggests that existence of any value orientation in each culture is neither absolute nor to the exclusion of others. Individualistic and collectivistic value orientations are therefore likely to exist in all cultures although with a greater leaning to one value orientation over the other (Chen, 2015, p. 467). Differences in culture are in degree rather than type (Chen, 2015, p. 468).

Each IC awareness criterion will now be explained by referring to column names, beginning with values and guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions).*

Table 3.1: Criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication

Criterion (A)	Continuum of possibilities in human existence (B)		Continuum of possibilities in communication orientation and manner of communication (C)	
	B-i ◀--- Individualism	**B-ii** Collectivism/Communalism ---▶	**C-i** ◀--- Focus on the individual **Low context**	**C-ii** Other/group focus ---▶ **High context**
1. Values and guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions)*	○ Where self is individualistic, independent and autonomous	○ Where self is contextualised, interdependent and relational	○ Individualistic, assertive and controlling	○ Community-centred, agreeable, relational, reciprocal, associative
2. The nature of communication	○ Fragmented atomistic worldview e.g. separation of man against nature, self and other, spiritual and material	○ A focus on wholeness and unity – universe is a great whole where all is unified through human and spiritual networks	○ Individualistic orientation in communication	○ Communalistic orientation - supportiveness, solidarity, interconnectedness and collaboration in communication
3. Objective of communication	○ Problem-solving ○ Command, control and influence ○ Confrontation	○ Social maintenance – relationships, promoting the social order ○ Harmony ○ Cooperation	○ Enhancing individual goals ○ Confrontational, direct, expressive, dialectical, divisive and sermonic manner of communication	○ Harmony and maintaining human interrelationships ○ Indirect, rule-bound, subtle, adaptive manner of communication

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Ani (2013), Chen (2011; 2015), Ding (2006), Eaton and Louw (2000), Faniran (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Hall (1959; 1976), Hofstede (1980), Igboin (2011), Khoza (2011), Kim (2007), Kincaid (1987), Lee (2012), Littlejohn and Foss (2008; 2010), Maomeka (1989), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Yum (1988)

Table 3.I (continued): Criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication

Criterion (A)	Continuum of possibilities in human existence (B)		Continuum of possibilities in communication — Orientation and manner of communication (C)	
	B-i ← Individualism	B-ii Collectivism/Communalism →	C-i ← Focus on the individual Low context	C-ii Other/group focus High context →
4. Degree of interaction in communication *(linked to way of knowing)*	○ Reductionist (scientific) ○ Way of knowing is rational and logical ○ Analysers of nature ○ Distinction between objectivism and subjectivism, rationalism and empiricism ○ Truth orientation	○ Interconnected, holistic cooperative and associative way of knowing ○ Way of knowing intuitive and pragmatic ○ Acceptors of nature ○ No distinction between objectivism and subjectivism, rationalism and empiricism ○ Human orientation, virtue orientation	○ Individual-centred ○ Independent, "I" focus, equality, free will, "truth", achievement-orientated manner of communication	○ Contextual, relational, difficulty distinguishing individual and group actions ○ Interdependent, "we" focus, hierarchical, associative, ascribed, prescribed manner of communication
5. Thinking process in communication	○ Logical and rational processes from linear approach to reasoning	○ Intuitive, non-linear, cyclical, ambiguous thinking process	○ Individual-centred, independent ○ Free from ambiguity ○ Objective, direct, linear, and manipulative manner of communication	○ Context-centred, rule-bound, interdependent, emphasis on other ○ Ambiguous ○ Subjective, non-linear, ritualistic, adaptive, sensitive accommodative, unifying manner of communication

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Ani (2013), Chen (2011; 2015), Ding (2006), Eaton and Louw (2000), Faniran (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Hall (1959; 1976), Higgs (2010), Hofstede (1980), Igboin (2011), Khoza (2011), Kim (2007), Kincaid (1987), Lee (2012), Littlejohn and Foss (2008; 2010), Maomeka (1989), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Yum (1988)

3.2.1.1 Criterion 1: Values, guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions)*

Depending on whether a cultural group is individualistic (B-i) or collectivistic (B-ii), self-perceptions may be individualistic, independent and autonomous (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Higgs, 2010; Kim, 2007; Littlejohn and Foss, 2008; Miike, 2002) as shown in (B-i). Self-perceptions may also be contextualised, interdependent and relational, situated in communities and relationships rather than in individuals (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Faniran, 2014; Myers, 1987) – (B-ii) respectively.

Further right, column C presents a corresponding continuum of possibilities in communication. C-i suggests individualistic cultures may have an individualistic focus, characterised by an individualistic, assertive and controlling manner in communication (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Kim, 2007; Miike 2002). In addition, communication may be low context and characterised by fewer face needs.

In the opposite situation, as reflected in C-ii, collectivistic cultures may have a group focus characterised by a community-centred, agreeable, relational, reciprocal, associative manner in communication (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Faniran, 2014; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Miike, 2002; Miike and Yin, 2015; Myers, 1987; Yum, 1988). Furthermore, communication may be high context with an increased need for face-saving and face-giving behaviours.

3.2.1.2 Criterion 2: The nature of communication

Literature suggests that individualistic cultures may have fragmented and atomistic world-views that emphasise the importance of the individual (Chen, 2015, p. 467; Miike, 2002) as reflected in (B-i). On the other hand, collectivistic cultures may have worldviews focusing more on wholeness and unity (Chen, 2015, p. 467; Chen and Starosta, 2003, p. 5; Igboin, 2011; Miike, 2002; Myers, 1987; Narh, 2013, p. 7) as reflected in (B-ii). Further to the right, column C presents a corresponding continuum of possibilities in communication suggesting that fragmented cultures display an individualistic orientation in communication (Chen, 2015) as shown in (C-i), while cultures that focus on wholeness and unity are likely to display supportiveness, solidarity, interconnectedness and collaboration in communication (Faniran, 2014; Maomeka, 1989) as reflected in (C-ii).

3.2.1.3 Criterion 3: The objective of communication

As previously mentioned, the objective of communication relates to the goals of existence of a culture. At one extreme, individualistic cultures may have solving problems, confrontation, commanding and controlling as their primary aims (Berger, 2005; Chen, 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Miike, 2002; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2003) as shown in B-i. On the other hand, collectivist cultures may aim to maintain harmony, relationships and the social order (Chen, 2006; 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Khoza, 2011; Maomeka,

74

1989; Metz, 2014; 2015; Miike, 2002; Myers; 1987; Wei and Li, 2013; Yao, 2000) as shown in B-ii.

Cultures whose objective is to solve problems, confront, command and control, may reflect a confrontational, direct and exacting manner of communication (Chen, 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998). In cultures where harmony is the guidepost, communication is likely a matter of human interrelationships, reflecting in a manner of communication that may be indirect, adaptive and consensual (Faniran, 2014; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Maomeka, 1989) as indicated in C-ii.

In seeking to achieve harmony and maintain relationships, collectivistic cultures have unwritten rules that guide communication, for example the maintaining and giving of face as earlier discussed. Strategies for giving face and saving face may include use of intermediaries, praising in order to give face, avoiding confrontation, giving provisional responses and engaging in a compliant manner, particularly in situations of hierarchical relationships (Cardon and Scott, 2003; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998).

3.2.1.4 Criterion 4: Degree of interaction in communication

In the context of this study, the degree of interaction varies between individual and collective quests. As is illustrated in B-i, individualistic cultures are potentially orientated to scientific, objective, logical and reductionist approaches to gain knowledge where everything has to make sense (Chen, 2015; Littlejohn and Foss, 2008; 2010). There is a propensity to dichotomise, distinguishing between objectivism and subjectivism, rationalism and empiricism with human beings seen as superior objective analysers of nature (Ani, 2013, p. 306). In individualistic cultures no single extreme is upheld at the expense of the other as there is a constant negotiation of meanings (Miike, 2002, p. 7; Chen, 1993). Consequently, individualistic cultures are labelled as truth-orientated cultures (Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Metz, 2015).

Collectivistic cultures as reflected in B-ii, display a pragmatic, holistic, interconnected and associative approach to gaining knowledge (Ani, 2013; Chen, 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Ding, 2006; Metz, 2015; Miike, 2002; Myers, 1987; Narh, 2013). The universe, nature, humans, and spirits are seen as existing in unison and everyone and everything becomes meaningful in relation to others (Miike, 2002, p. 7). Gaining individual knowledge is also described as an intuitive process, dependent on a cooperation of all human experiences as well as symbolic knowledge and rhythms dictated by the community (Ani, 2013; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Ding, 2006). The concern for other and behaving in a morally upright manner is evidenced in a human orientation as embodied in the Ubuntu philosophy of African culture – and a virtue-orientation, for example in Chinese cultures (Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Metz, 2015).

Regarding the continuum of possibilities in communication orientation and manner of communication, C-i suggests that individualistic cultures may display less interaction and

cooperation than collectivistic cultures. They may also be characterised by communication that is independent, of free will and "I" focused (Chen, 2015). In the context of the present study, communication that is of the free will is that which is according to one's own discretion without any contextual or group considerations. Moreover, in individualistic cultures, the greatest importance is attributed to the message itself in creating desired communication effects (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008, p. 5; Miike, 2002, p. 9).

Reflected in C-ii is the possibility that cultures with a cooperative and intuitive approach towards gaining knowledge may reflect a contextual, relationship-based, "we" focused and prescribed communication orientation and manner of communication as per collective beliefs (Chen, 2011; 2015; Ani, 2013; Maomeka, 1989; Myers, 1987). The holistic approach of not distinguishing between the spiritual and material may also result in ambiguity in communication.

3.2.1.5   Criterion 5: Thinking process and communication

It is suggested in B-i that at one extreme, individualistic cultures likely follow linear independent, rational, logical approaches to thinking (Chen, 2015; Littlejohn and Foss, 2010; Miike, 2002). On the other extreme reflected in B-ii is the view that collectivistic cultures display intuitive, non-linear, cyclical, ambiguous thinking processes, where the same destination can be reached by following many different paths.

In terms of the continuum of possibilities in communication orientation and manner of communication, cultures following linear independent, rational, logical approaches to thinking may adopt communication that is individual-centred, free of ambiguity, justificatory and perhaps manipulative (Chen, 2015) as reflected in C-i. On the other hand, as shown in C-ii, communication in cultures following intuitive, non-linear, cyclical, ambiguous thinking processes may be interdependent, context-focused, intuition-based and ambiguous (Chen, 2015; Ping and Yan, 2013; Miike, 2002). The manner of communication may also be ritualistic, subtle, adaptive, accommodative and unifying (Chen and Starosta, 2003). This analysis further suggests an emphasis on ethical and humanistic communicative behaviour in collectivist cultures (Metz, 2015; Khoza, 2011; Igboin, 2011; Chen, 2011; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Miike 2002; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998).

There is an indication that value orientation of a culture group, as defined by the individualism vs collectivism dimension, has an overarching influence on the communication orientation and manner of communication. This is so because the degree of individuality or collectiveness may influence communication in being either individual- or group-focused. Depending on the nature of the focus in communication, the cultural context of communication (Hall, 1959; 1976) may also differ, thereby influencing face needs (Ting-Toomey 1985; 2005). In the next section, the relationship between IC awareness enablers, communication orientation, manner of communication and IC awareness is put into perspective.

3.2.2 Relationship between IC awareness enablers, communication orientation, manner of communication and intercultural communication awareness

Building on the relationship between communication orientation and manner of communication suggested in Chapter 2 section 2.4.1, Fig. 3.1 below posits a relationship of interdependency between the IC awareness enablers, communication orientation, manner of communication and IC awareness. Although each IC awareness enabler is discussed individually in section 3.2, it is proposed that the IC awareness enablers work together. Taken holistically and interdependently as reflected in Fig. 3.1, the IC awareness enablers facilitate the gaining of IC awareness when communication orientation and the manner of communication in each of the interacting cultures is understood.

Fig. 3.1: Relationship between IC awareness enablers, communication orientation, manner of communication and IC awareness
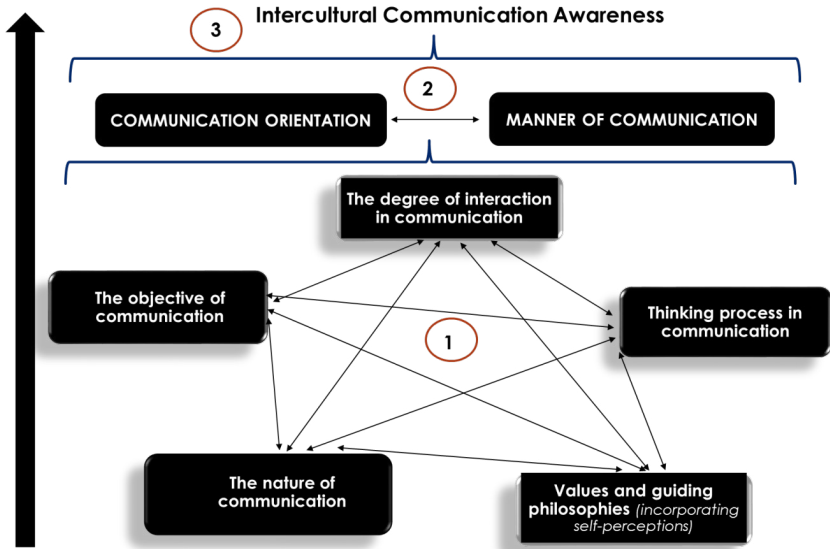
Source: Researcher's own contribution

In summary, the present study advances the proposition that simply knowing the communication orientation and manner of communication in different cultures may not be enough for managers and employees to achieve IC congruence. Apart from IC awareness, there may also be a practical need for a universal framework for comparing the manner of communication in different cultures that allows quick identification of similarities and differences to highlight areas of challenge or opportunity in achieving IC congruence. In the next section, a framework for comparing the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts is identified, which addresses theoretical objective T7.

3.2.3 Framework for comparing the manner of communication

Of the many existing frameworks that could be used for comparing the manner of communication across cultures, this study focuses on those of De Vries et al. (2009), Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988), Smith (2011) and Yum (1988).

De Vries et al. (2009) propose six main dimensions of communication styles, namely the degree of expressiveness, preciseness, niceness, supportiveness, threateningness, emotionality and reflectiveness. From another perspective, Smith (2011) posits the existence of high versus low agreement, and high versus low consensus communication styles. In this framework, high agreement/high consensus styles prevail in collectivist cultures, while low agreement/low consensus styles are prevalent in national cultures low on institutional collectivism. Alternatively, Yum (1988) differentiates between communication patterns on four levels: communication is either process- or outcome-orientated, it has differentiated or less differentiated linguistic codes, it reflects a direct or indirect emphasis and is receiver- or sender-centred (Yum, 2015, p. 115).

The dimensions for comparing communication advanced by De Vries et al. (2009), Smith (2011) and Yum (1988; 2015) have parallels to Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey's (1988) dimensions for comparing the manner of communication. In fact, the framework of Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) as presented in Table 3.2 embodies most dimensions for comparing the manner of communication proposed in the other named frameworks and proposed IC awareness enablers. For this reason, it is identified as the most useful in the current study for comparing the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures. The Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) framework is now explained.

Using Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of cultural variability and Hall's (1959; 1976) schema to provide explanations, Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) posit that communication styles – or the manner of communication as referred in the context of the present study – may differ in four stylistic ways. These stylistic modes are direct or indirect, elaborate or succinct, personal or contextual, and instrumental or affective, with people with different cultural orientation preferring and/or responding better to certain manners of communication over others (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988).

As reflected in Table 3.2, individualistic, low-context, low uncertainty-avoidance, low power-distance cultures show preference for a direct, exacting, personal and instrumental manner of communication. Communication is on an equal footing, informal, mostly explicit and words are articulated, with the right amount of words used to convey meaning. Goal-orientated, sender-focused messages with the goal of persuasion are especially prevalent in these cultures (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Table 3.2: Framework for comparing the manner of communication in different cultures

Manner of communication	Variation	Major characteristic	Cultures where found
Direct versus indirect	Direct	Message is more explicit	Individualistic, low context
	Indirect	Message is more implicit	Collectivistic, high context
Elaborate versus succinct	Elaborate	Quantity of talk is relatively high	Moderate uncertainty avoidance, high context
	Exacting	Quantity of talk is moderate	Low uncertainty avoidance, low context
	Succinct	Quantity of talk is relatively low	High uncertainty avoidance, high context
Personal versus contextual	Personal	Focus is on the speaker, "personhood"	Low power distance, individualistic, low context
	Contextual	Focus is on the role of speaker, role relationships	High power distance, collectivistic, high context
Instrumental versus affective	Instrumental	Language is goal-orientated, sender-focused	Individualistic, low context
	Affective	Language is process-orientated, receiver-focused	Collectivistic, high context

Source: Adaptation of Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988 cited in Francesca and Gold, 2005, p. 74)

In collectivistic, high-context, high uncertainty-avoidance, high power-distance cultures, preference is for an indirect manner of communication as reflected in Table 3.2. The speakers select words to hide their true feelings. Less talking is favoured and focus is on the speaker roles. In addition, words reflect the role and the hierarchical relationship of those in the conversation. The speaker is process-orientated and receiver-focused, with the aim of putting neither the speaker nor listener in a position of discomfort (Francesca and Gold, 2005, pp. 73–75) or saving face as it were.

In some high-context, moderate uncertainty-avoidance cultures, however, the manner of communication may be elaborate, and characterised by detail, repetition and at times exaggeration. This indicates that while different cultures may be labelled high-context, there may still exist differences in the manner of communication owing to the influence of other cultural variables at play.

3.3   Summary

In this chapter, various criteria (IC awareness enablers) for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication serving as foundations for IC were proposed and explained. Specifically, these were values and guiding philosophies (incorporating self-perceptions), the nature of communication, the objective of communication, the degree of interaction in communication and the thinking process in communication. This

was possible following a deliberation on themes and subthemes underlying IC, namely culture and values, communication, self-perceptions, worldviews and dimensions of cultural variation in communication. To enable a quick and universally understood comparison of communication in different cultures, the Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) framework was identified as being the most useful.

This chapter together with the preceding chapter has laid the groundwork for the construction of the theoretical IC congruence framework in Chapter 4. Aspects included in building the framework are considerations for IC congruence (section 2.4), criterion for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication (section 3.2.1) and the framework for comparing manner of communication across cultures (section 3.2.3). In the next chapter, a theoretical IC congruence framework is proposed.

Chapter 4
A Generic Theoretical Intercultural Communication Congruence Framework

Introduction

This chapter presents the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, a culmination of the review and meta-synthesis of literature in Chapters 2 and 3.

The chapter begins with a diagrammatic illustration and explanation of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework. Following that, a description of how portions of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework form the base for further meta-synthesis to develop a theoretical framework IC awareness (TFICA)in Western, African and Chinese cultures is given. The generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework follows.

4.1 Presenting the Generic Theoretical Intercultural Communication Congruence Framework

The generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework presents as three stages numbered 1 to 3 as per Fig. 4.1: Generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence (TICC) framework.

4.1.1 Reading the figure

- Point (1) is concerned with a process of developing IC awareness through understanding communication orientation and the manner of communication based on the IC awareness enablers proposed in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1. The concepts of communication orientation and the manner of communication are explained in Chapter 2, sections 2.4.1.1 and 2.4.1.2 respectively.

Fig. 4.1: Generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence (TICC) framework

Contextual considerations

(1) DEVELOPING IC AWARENESS THROUGH UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION & MANNER OF COMMUNICATION

Cross-Cultural Approach *C1 *C2 *C3

IC AWARENESS ENABLERS (*Criterion for conceptualising communication orientation and manner of communication*)

COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION & MANNER OF COMUNICATION

IC AWARENESS ENABLERS	COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION & MANNER OF COMUNICATION
VALUES, GUIDING PHILOSOPHIES AND COMMUNICATION (*incorporating self perceptions*)	*C1 vs *C2 vs *C3
THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION	*C1 vs *C2 vs *C3
OBJECTIVE OF COMMUNICATION	*C1 vs *C2 vs *C3
DEGREE OF INTERACTION IN COMMUNICATION	*C1 vs *C2 vs *C3
THINKING PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION	*C1 vs *C2 vs *C3

COMPARING MANNER OF COMMUNICATION *C1 *C2 *C3

- Direct or indirect
- Elaborate or Succinct
- Personal or Contextual
- Instrumental or Affective

(2) IC AWARENESS ENGENDERED CONSEQUENCES & POSSIBILITIES IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

o Reciprocal learning by Western, African an Chinese presents an opportunity to seek **common ground** and potentially accept differences

o IC awareness provides a premise upon which to build and implement intercultural communication enhancing **strategies and interventions**

o Adoption /**integrated communication goals**

o IC awareness **engenders mindfulness and the intercultural sensitivity** that enables **appropriateness** in intercultural communication

o Adapted /adjusted manner of communication hence resulting in greater **effectiveness and appropriateness**

o IC awareness **mitigates intercultural communication barriers** such as stereotyping, prejudice, anxiety, misunderstanding, miscommunication and misrepresentations hence reducing challenges such as ineffectiveness and inappropriateness

o A **'win, win'** in communication

(3) ENHANCED INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONGRUENCE (IC Congruence)

(*The pinnacle of intercultural communication where manner of communication is reciprocally effective and appropriate*)

Contextual considerations

Source: Researcher's own contribution

82

- Point (2) relates to the IC awareness-engendered consequences and possibilities in IC inferred from the literature review and synthesis in Chapter 2, also considering the barriers and challenges faced in IC (Chapter 2, Section 2.3, and how they can be mitigated.
- Point (3) reflects the proposed potential outcome when the consequences and possibilities resulting from IC awareness are acted upon.

Under each heading as represented by the number (1) to (3), is a depiction of the activities that take place or that are associated with the stage in the drive to achieve IC congruence. The generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework will now be explained from (1) through to (3).

4.1.1.1 Developing IC awareness through understanding communication orientation and the manner of communication

Column (1) depicts people from different cultures (labelled C1, C2 and C3) interacting. Individuals from each cultural group proactively seek to understand communication orientation and the manner of communication in their own and their counterpart's culture as shown by the interlinking reverse arrows connecting all cultural groups, thus representing a cross-cultural approach. A cross-cultural approach is discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.5.1. This understanding is based on the IC awareness enablers.

Falling directly below C1, C2 and C3 depicting a cross-cultural approach are three columns, labelled from left to right as:

- IC awareness enablers *(criteria for conceptualising communication orientation and manner or communication).*
- Communication orientation and manner of communication.
- Comparing manner of communication.

The relationship between IC awareness enablers, communication orientation, manner of communication and IC awareness is discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

The generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework suggests that knowledge of communication orientation and manner of communication makes it possible to draw broad and informed comparisons on the manner of communication using universal categorisations such as direct or indirect, elaborate or succinct, personal or contextual and instrumental or affective, hence presenting a quick guide for managers, employees and practitioners.

4.1.1.2 Intercultural communication awareness-engendered consequences and possibilities

Listed in Fig. 4.1 column 2 are a range of consequences and possibilities that potentially flow from having achieved IC awareness, mainly at the individual level. When IC awareness is achieved, people from different cultures may be able to acknowledge, accept, respect and accommodate differences in communication without being judgmental (Burgoon, Berger and Waldron, 2000; Chen, 2015, pp. 468–469; Neuliep, 2012). In addition, there may be an opportunity to find common ground and work towards integrated communication goals. In essence, interactants could potentially become more inter-culturally sensitive and mindful in their approach to IC. As such, they may be better able to make adjustments or adaptations to suit the manner of communication in their counterpart's cultures.

Furthermore, IC awareness could have far-reaching effects in mitigating intercultural communication barriers, thereby enhancing effectiveness and appropriateness, resulting in a "win-win" in communication (in which everybody is satisfied with the communication encounter). The proposed multi-view generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework has parallels to Grunig, Grunig and Ehling's (1992) two-way symmetrical communication model aimed at achieving public relations (PR) excellence, which suggests that PR practitioners adjust or adapt their behaviours in communication. In essence, the need for reciprocity and mutual understanding is emphasised.

4.1.1.3 Enhanced intercultural communication

As shown in Fig. 4.1, the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposes a hypothetical ultimate state of IC congruence, where the manner of communication is effective and appropriate (Chapter 2, section 2.5). IC congruence implies that no culture is greater or lesser than any other (Asante and Miike, 2013, p. 4). Values, communication orientation and manner of communication of all interactants are considered in communication.

Principally, the argument advanced is that approaching IC with equality and respect may inspire a state of congruence where agreement and harmony prevail. Agreement exists when interactants acknowledge similarities and differences and the need for mutual achievement of ultimate communicative goals. Harmony, on the other hand, is a consequence of tolerance, acceptance of or adjustments accordingly made, in the process of the IC encounter (Chen, 2015). In other words, the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework suggests IC congruence is premised on the multiple views of those in interaction, tempered by appropriate interventions.

Also suggested in the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework is that, apart from exposure to the cultural context, African and Chinese managers and employees in Sino-African organisational contexts are not immune to the unique influences emanating from the broader environment in which business operates. For example, an organisation

located in South Africa might be subject to the influences of workers' unions as well as the social, political and economic history of the country. Hence, as is indicated in Fig. 4.1, the generic theoretical IC congruence framework takes note of the broader context through reference to contextual considerations.

Finally, although the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework could be criticised for oversimplifying cultural characteristics within a group of people, it is nonetheless practical and provides a starting point in the search for IC congruence. This is because it represents a synthesis of insights derived from existing approaches and theories to IC to form a holistic framework based on the combined perspectives of those engaged in interaction, and not on predetermined standards set in other cultures. Essentially, the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposes a live and interactive "self and other" reporting by those in the intercultural encounter, suggesting that seeking IC congruence is ideally not from a mono-cultural perspective.

4.2   The Generic Theoretical Intercultural Communication Congruence Framework in the Context of the Present Study

In the context of the present study, the multiple views and considerations for IC congruence lend complexity to the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework. For example, to determine an in-depth understanding of communication orientation and manner of communication across three cultures based on the proposed criteria, ideally a large ethnographic study conducted by large teams over extended periods would be required. Similar challenges are equally likely in efforts to fully unpack the IC awareness-engendered consequences and possibilities in IC.

However, despite the complexities presented by the proposed generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework as depicted in Fig. 4.1 it presents a significant contribution to the discourse of IC congruence, useful for understanding IC congruence in different cultural contexts. In the context of the present study, owing to time and resource constraints, in the first instance, only portions of the proposed generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework form the basis of a meta-synthesis of literature to theoretically conceptualise communication orientation and manner of communication specifically in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts. In a secondary phase of this study, following an update of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework with the results of the meta-synthesis of literature as presented in Chapter 5, an empirical study is proposed as will be discussed in Chapter 6 (Part B).

By providing a framework for better understanding, the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework (Fig. 4.1) presented in this chapter contributes in part towards achievement of the main study aim: To develop a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework in order to enhance IC and achieve IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

4.3 Summary

In this chapter, a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, culminating from the review and synthesis of literature and theory in Chapters 2 and 3 was presented in diagrammatic form. Following that, a description was provided of how portions of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework would form the base for further meta-synthesis of culture-specific literature and theory, to develop a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in specific cultures. An important outcome of this chapter is therefore the possibility presented by the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework of assisting a better understanding of communication orientation and the manner of communication in different cultures, in order to enhance IC and achieve IC congruence. In the next chapter, the results of a meta-synthesis of culture and communication literature specific to Western, African and Chinese cultures literature on the basis of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework are presented.

Chapter 5
Intercultural Communication Awareness

Understanding communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts

"Despite the presence of the global economy and mass cultural products, people still interpret what they see or have by drawing upon their local beliefs, values and norms"
(Liu, 2012, p. 269)

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of a meta-synthesis of culture and communication literature and theory specific to Western, African and Chinese cultures based on the IC awareness enablers (theoretical objectives T8 and T9). Meta-synthesis involves analysing and synthesising key elements in various studies, with the aim of transforming individual findings into new conceptualisations and interpretations (Polit and Beck, 2006 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008, p. 39). This opposes a traditional literature review which largely serves to distinguish what has been done from what needs to be done in a field, places the research in a historical context and demonstrates familiarity with the latest developments (Hart, 1998, p. 27). Theoretical objectives T8 and T9 are restated as follows:

- Theoretical objective T8 is to describe communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts according to the criteria proposed in RQ-T6.
- Theoretical objective T9 is to compare the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts.

In order to give effect to theoretical objectives T8 and T9, it is necessary to establish a general understanding of Western, African and Chinese cultures. Therefore, in the first instance, portraits of Western, African and Chinese cultures are presented in section 5.1. Second, because the meta-synthesis of literature in this study resulted in a copious amount of information, a theoretical framework of IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures is presented in diagram form. Thereafter, communication orientation and manner of communication in Western African and Chinese cultures based on each IC

awareness enabler as depicted in the theoretical framework of IC awareness (TFICA) is described. Comparisons are also drawn across the different cultures while commenting on implications for IC and IC congruence.

The theoretical framework of IC awareness (TFICA) presented in this chapter serves as a heuristic to help African and Chinese managers, employees and practitioners make sense of IC in Sino-African organisational contexts. Furthermore, the theoretical framework of IC awareness (TFICA) building on the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposed in Chapter 4 results in a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*. Chapter 5 is largely descriptive and makes use of summary tables to highlight the main points.

5.1 Western, African and Chinese Cultures

In this presentation of a portrait of Western, African and Chinese cultures, it should be noted that categorisation does not imply that all African people are the same, nor that all Chinese people are the same. Instead, the categories represent a lens to understand the reality. Furthermore, the researcher is cognisant that African and Chinese cultures as portrayed here are further subject to influences of globalisation, as well as social and political histories of the countries (see Leung, 2008; Luo, 2008; Fang, 2011; Faure and Fang, 2008; Fang, Zhao and Worm, 2008; Matondo, 2012). Despite these influences, this study proposes that understanding a group's culture from an indigenous perspective provides a practical starting point to understanding communication within the group. Described first is Western culture.

5.1.1. Western culture

Because the inclusion of Western culture in this study is primarily as a contextual reference, an in-depth description of Western culture is not provided. In addition, the researcher also acknowledges that a simple reference to Western cultures is may be a problematic generalisation given the largely white, middle class (normally American male) reference point without any detailed description or analysis. In particular the problem of generalising on the basis of race is highlighted in Hofstede's IBM study (Hofstede, 1980) where differences in value orientation in predominantly white Belgian, Swedish and UK countries are reported. That said, a debate on the qualification of Western culture is however beyond the scope of this study and can be followed in Critical Whiteness Studies (for example, Applebaum, 2000; Asante, 2005; Hartmann, Gerteis, and Croll, 2009; Mayo, 2000). Notwithstanding, despite this drawback, Western cultures as contextualised in this study provide a useful starting point for developing a comparable understanding African and Chinese cultures.

Particular emphasis is drawn to the individualism (Hofstede, 1980), low-context nature (see Hall, 1976), egalitarianism, autonomy and mastery (see Schwartz, 1992; 1994) of West-

ern cultures. Autonomy reflects in the value placed on uniqueness and open expression of preferences, feelings and motives, while egalitarianism is evident where people view themselves as moral equals valuing social justice, honesty and responsibility (Schwartz, 1992). Finally, mastery in Western cultures manifests in the encouragement of change, ambition and competence (Francesca and Gold, 2005, p. 31).

5.1.2 African culture

Literature synthesis suggests a richness of African culture where interconnectedness, communal relationships, truth, equality, social justice, dignity, mutual respect and the supernatural are cardinal principles of life (Higgs, 2010; Maomeka, 1989, p. 4; Matondo, 2012; Traber, 1989, p. 8). Yet, in spite of this richness and the multiple ethnicities of Africa's population, "the root paradigm of these cultures remains communalism" (Faniran, 2014, p. 50). Emphasis is on interdependence between individuals and communities where people are "beings-in-relation" (Faniran, 2014, p. 156), implying that people derive the meaning of their existence in relation to others. Community, on the other hand, extends to humans and their non-human environments, including people alive today connected to past and future generations (Narh, 2013, p. 7). Parallels to communalism are in the humanist philosophy of *Ubuntu,* which, together with humanism, are core aspects of African culture.

5.1.2.1 Communalism

In describing communalism in relation to communication, Maomeka (1989) presents five communalistic principles of African culture that are "unseen scripts that govern, direct, and give form and stability to the way people communicate" (Faniran, 2014, p. 153). Communalistic principles, namely the supremacy of the community, the utility of the individual, the sanctity of authority and respect for old age and religion as a way of life, determine who says what, to whom and in what context. The African communalistic principles are now described.

a.   The supremacy of the community

In African society, supremacy of community takes precedence over the individual, and rules rather than rulers or individuals are essential mechanisms for maintaining the social order (Maomeka, 1989; Narh, 2013). The supremacy of the community therefore dictates a situation where communication is geared towards maintaining the social order.

b.   The utility of the individual

Despite the supremacy of the community in African culture, individual opinions are valued because synthesis of the views of individuals forms the basis of community decisions

(Maomeka, 1989). The dual importance of the individual and the community therefore reflects a kind of individualism-in-communalism in the African community that encourages each to be his brother's keeper (Maomeka, 1989, p. 6) as reflected in many African proverbs. For example, *chara chimwe hachitswanye inda* is a Zimbabwean Shona proverb, meaning a thumb working on its own is useless (N Chipandambira, personal communication, 15 August 2015). Similarly, in South Africa is the Setswana proverb, *Mabogo mabedi a tlhatswana* which translates as two hands wash each other (A Williams, personal communication, 19 August 2015). These proverbs highlight the communal nature of African cultures and the worth of every member of the society. Because all are valued in society, communication in Africa is respectful and geared towards relationship maintenance. Words that will disrupt the harmonious relationships are avoided and difficult subjects are approached in an appropriate manner that maintains the dignity of all (Maomeka, 1989).

c.   The sanctity of authority

In African culture, authority is inherent in one's position within the hierarchy (Mbigi and Maree, 1995). The leader as the first citizen is held in high esteem, as both the spiritual and earthly leader. Above the status bestowed on leaders however, is an expectation that they lead by example while honouring supremacy of the community (Maomeka, 1989, p. 7). Rules agreed to in the community guide the way of life and all must abide by them to maintain relationships and the social order.

d.   Respect for old age

Regardless of rank, title or education and in line with tradition, the elderly are regarded as reservoirs of knowledge and wisdom, treated with immense dignity and respect (Matondo, 2012, p. 42). They set examples for the inexperienced youth who, in the presence of elders, are expected to listen rather than talk (Maomeka, 1989).

e.   Religion as a way of life

Religion is the basis of social morality in a society that is simultaneously secular and religious (Igboin, 2011; Maomeka, 1989, p. 8; Matondo, 2012; Myers 1987, p. 75; Nwosu, Taylor and Blake, 1998; Westropp, 2012). Reportedly, people communicate through priests and medicine men, suggesting that a belief in the supernatural and external forces influence the lives of the living. The findings of the meta-synthesis suggest an African way of life guided by these traditions, is likely to continue along the same trajectory into the future.

5.1.2.2 Ubuntu

Embodying communalistic principles put forward by Maomeka (1989) is the southern African concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is underpinned by the Xhosa saying: *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye abantu* meaning, "I am because you are, and you are, because we are" (Khoza, 2005, p. xx). Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group (Briggs 1996, cited in Waneless, 2007, p. 117). Ubuntu emphasises values of caring, reciprocity, sharing, compassion, hospitality, cohabitation, cooperation and tolerance (see Bell and Metz, 2011; Khoza, 2005; Mazrui, 2005; Mbigi and Maree, 1995; Mbigi, 1997; McFarlin, Coster and Mogale-Pretorius, 1999; Metz, 2014; 2015; Pietersen, 2005; Praeg and Magadla, 2014; Van den Heuvel, 2008; Van der Colff, 2003; Waneless, 2007). Ubuntu is "opposed to rampant individualism, insensitive competitiveness, and unilateral decision making." (McFarlin, Coster and Mogale-Pretorius, 1999, p. 71) and entails a strong sense of togetherness and concern for others (Khoza, 2011). As with communalism, despite an emphasis on the community, a person still maintains their individuality.

For Mutombo Nkulu-N'Sengha (2009 cited in Metz, 2015, p. 85), Ubuntu is about the display of ethical behaviour or "being human", where failure to display ethical human behaviour leads to being labelled an animal (Metz, 2015, p. 85). For instance, the Shona people of Zimbabwe say *Haazi munhu, imhuka* if someone displays unethical behaviour, which translates as: he is not a person; he is an animal. An imperative therefore exists for individuals to behave appropriately and ethically as they are under the constant assessment of their communities.

5.1.2.3 Humanism

In addition to communalism and the Ubuntu philosophy, Kigongo (2002 cited in Faniran, 2014, p. 150) suggests the existence of an African communalism that equates to humanism. Humanism entails a deep consideration of a person's individuality, intrinsic worth, dignity and effort over and above their sociality (Faniran, 2014, p. 151; Igboin, 2011, p. 99; Jackson, 1999).

In summary, the deliberate maintenance of the relationship between the individual and the community, the youth and the elders, the community and its rules, as well as the value accorded to the individual, all impact on daily life and by extension, on the communication process and meaning-making (Faniran, 2014, p. 156).

5.1.3 Chinese culture

Literature synthesis points to duality, paradox, and diversity in Chinese culture encapsulated in the philosophy of Yin Yang (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Fang, 2011) Yin yang attests to a reality of interdependent opposites, coexisting and unified (Fang, 2011). Paradox is defined as "the existence of contradictory yet interrelated elements that seem logical in

isolation but absurd and irrational when appearing simultaneously" (Lewis, 2000 cited in Fang, 2011, p. 35).

An example of Yin Yang in Chinese culture can be seen in Chinese communication in business where, for example, contradictory dispositions are displayed in negotiation processes (see Fang and Faure, 2011; Fang, 2011; Tang, 2014). Apart from the paradoxical nature of Chinese culture in determining management and organisational practices and the manner of Chinese communication as a whole, are philosophical perspectives rooted in Confucianism (Wah, 2001;Tang, 2014, p. 77).

5.1.3.1 Confucianism

Confucianism is a philosophy of human nature and system of ethics relating to principles of benevolence and humanness (*jen*), the family system and insider *(zi-jiren)* versus outsider relationships, hierarchy and role relationships, filial piety, reciprocity *(bao),* relationships (*guanxi*), and face *(mianzi)* (Gan, 2014; Gao and Ting-Toomey 1998; Wah, 2001; Huang, 2010; Luo, 2008; Yum, 1988; 2015;). A description of the stated principles begins with *jen.*

a.   Jen (benevolence and humanness)

In Chinese culture, all virtuous qualities of human beings are born of *jen* (Chen and Chung, 1994; Gan, 2014*)* which is represented by the qualities *yi* and *li. Yi* is concerned with righteousness, faithfulness and justice in social interaction. *Li* is concerned with the proper way of interaction, including, propriety, rite and respect for social norms (Chen and Chung, 1994; Gan, 2014; Yum, 1988; 2015). *Jen* regulates relationships by ensuring adherence to a code of ethics and maintenance of the social order when hierarchy and role relationships are observed (Gan, 2014, p. 110).

b.   Influence of family and insiders (zi-jiren) versus outsiders

Chen and Chung (1994) as well as Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998) advance the view that Chinese communication practices can be understood in light of how individuals relate to family members and the insiders versus outsider relationship. (The concept of insiders versus outsiders has been discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.1.5.1a.). Primarily the family and insiders are placed ahead of the outsider group.

Because there are different interaction rules for insiders and outsiders (Yum, 1988, p. 379) it is difficult to develop interpersonal relationships with outsiders – also referred to as strangers. Reportedly, insider groups are likely to be more honest and verbally expressive within their group than when they interact with outsiders (Chen and Chung, 1994; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998), potentially resulting in challenges in IC.

c. Hierarchy and role relationships

Relationships in Chinese culture are subject to filial piety, which is a Chinese virtue of respect of elders and seniors. The most important relationships are those between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and between friends (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Chen and Chung, 1994).

Roles and relationships in Chinese culture are underpinned by associated rules that form an underlying structure of what constitutes appropriate behaviour in different cultural contexts and relationships (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Yum, 1988). It is important to follow rules as required for specific relationships to maintain social order and stability, thus ensuring peace and prosperity (Gan, 2014, p. 112).

One needs to understand the expectations surrounding various roles when interacting with people from the Chinese culture. The significance of hierarchy and role relationships in interaction in Chinese culture is seen in the appropriate behaviours expected of people occupying the lower social ranks. These behaviours include submission, obedience, respect, and a deferential manner when addressing those of a higher rank. For someone to be seen as worthy of speaking, they have to have high seniority and be highly experienced. (Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998). Furthermore, in the workplace setting, "good" employees are those who listen with full attention, do as they are told and are willing to meet the expectations of others (Gao and Ting-Toomey 1998, p. 43).

d. Bao (reciprocity)

Reciprocity refers to mutual expectations and obligations of social responsibility among people which result in warm, lasting human relationships (Chen and Chung, 1994, p. 97; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Yum, 1988, p. 374). Chinese culture has an expectation that a person who is indebted should pay back or reciprocate, and that returns should always be proportionate to the favour having been granted (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998). As a result, the getting-and-giving-back principle results in time devoted to building relationships *(guanxi)* through doing favours and giving face *(mianzi)* (Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998, p. 31).

e. Guanxi (relationships/connections)

Regarded as being the most influential principle in communication (Huang, 2010), guanxi best translates as relationships or connections (Faure and Fang, 2008, p. 196; Lockett, 1988, p. 489). Under guanxi, people exist through, and are defined by honouring requirements of their roles in their hierarchically structured relationships (Huang, 2010; Ma, 2011) suggesting the importance of appropriateness.

In the business context, building and maintaining relationships is placed ahead of actual business transactions and speed (Yum, 1988, p. 381). Because of this, concern talk *(guan-xing)* such as enquiry after the family and other personal matters is an expected norm (Yum, 1988). Key to the establishing and maintaining guanxi is the concept of face (mianzi).

f.   Mianzi (face)

Giving face and saving face are business skills in China, where face relates to notions of honour, respect, reputation and credibility and achievement of enduring relationships (Cardon and Scott, 2003; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1988). For more on the concept of face, see Chapter 3, section 3.1.5.1*c* where Ting-Toomey's FNT theory is discussed.

5.1.4 Summary

In section 5.1, brief theoretical sketches of principles of communication in African and Chinese cultures have been drawn. These descriptions serve as useful starting point for a theoretical deciphering and understanding of communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures as described in the next section. These descriptions may promote an understanding of the insights which arise from empirical studies focused on understanding communication between African and Chinese people.

5.2 Communication Orientation and Manner of Communication in Western, African and Chinese Cultures

First presented in this section is a concise theoretical framework of IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures in diagram format (Fig. 5.1). Perspectives on communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures are discussed in terms of the following IC awareness enablers: (1) values and guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions),* (2) nature of communication, (3) objective of communication, (4) degree of interaction, and (5) thinking process. Items (6) and (7) in the figure represent the resulting communication orientation and manner of communication. Following a discussion based on each IC awareness enabler is a summary table highlighting the main points of the discussion.

Fig. 5.1 reads from top to bottom in the numbered sequence from item (1) through to item (7).

Fig. 5.1: Theoretical framework for intercultural communication awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AWARENESS

	WESTERN CULTURE	AFRICAN CULTURE	CHINESE CULTURE
(1) VALUES and GUIDING PHILOSOPHIES *(incorporating self-perceptions)*			
	Individualism, Autonomy, Egalitarianism, Mastery **Low Context** Where self is individualistic, independent, autonomous self-sufficient and complete	Collectivism, Communalism, Ubuntu/Humanism **Medium Context** Where self is flexible and variable, changing between contexts and relationships	Confucianism, Guanxi, Face, Collectivism **High Context** Where self is relational and deep-rooted in the web of human relationships
(2) NATURE OF COMMUNICATION			
Atomistic		Holistic	Holistic
Discrete Individualistic		Open Collectivistic	Submerged Collectivistic
(3) OBJECTIVE OF COMMUNICATION			
Confrontation		Social maintenance *(refining and redefining relationships within the group)*	Harmony
(4) DEGREE OF INTERACTION *(associated with way of knowing)*			
Reductionist		Interconnected *(human and spiritual)*	Interconnected *(human, nature and universe)*
(5) THINKING PROCESS			
Logical		Prescriptive *(influenced by tradition rules and social norms)*	Intuitive
(6) COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION			
Truth orientated		*Human orientated*	*Virtue orientated*
(7) MANNER OF COMMUNICATION			
Direct Expressive Dialectical Divisive Sermonic	Independent I Equal Free will Achieved	Objective Linear Analytical Justifactory Manipulative	Blended Expressive Adaptive Consensual Agreeable	Interdependent We Hierarchical Associative Prescribed	Semi-Objective Non linear Ambiguous Ritualistic Unifying	Indirect Subtle Adaptive Consensual Agreeable	Reciprocity We Hierarchical Associative Ascribed	Subjective Nonlinear Ambiguous Ritualistic Accommodative

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AWARENESS

Source: Researcher's own contribution with adaptations from Chen (2015), Ajei (2007), Ani (2013), Berger (2005), Chen (2011; 2015), Chen and Starosta (2003), Ding (2006), Eaton and Louw (2000), Fang (2011), Faniran (2014), Gan (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, (1988), Hall (1959:1976), Higgs, (2010), Hofstede (1980), Igboin, (2011), Khoza (2011; 2005), Kim (2007), Kincaid (1987), Lee (2012), Littlejohn and Foss (2008; 2010), Maomeka (1989), Metz (2014; 2015), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Narh (2013), Ping and Yan (2013), Schiele (1990), Trompenaars and Hampden Turner (1993), Yao (2000), Yum (1988)

5.2.1   Values and guiding philosophies *(incorporating self-perceptions)*

As reflected in Fig. 5.1 point (1), values of individualism (Chen, 2015; Higgs, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Narh, 2013), autonomy, egalitarianism and mastery (Schwartz, 1992) prevail in low-context Western cultures. Western individualism is seen in pursuit of own goals and primary concern with the self, power, achievement, and self-direction (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Kim, 2007; Miike 2002; Schwartz, 1992).

Communalism, Ubuntu, and humanism are at the heart of medium-context African cultures. Medium context means that both verbal and non-verbal communication are prevalent. Chinese culture on the other hand is a high-context culture guided by Confucianist principles of guanxi, collectivism and maintenance of face. Furthermore, although not shown in Fig. 5.1, Ubuntu and Confucianism embody the values (detailed by Schwartz, 1992) of embeddedness, hierarchy and harmony. In an embedded society, individuals are part of a collective; social relationships provide meaning to life. There is also emphasis on maintaining the traditional and social order.

Because African and Chinese cultures are reportedly collectivistic, at face value an assumption can be of similarity of communication in the two cultures. Further inquiry, however, shows that expression of collectivism in the two cultures differs. African collectivism, within the auspices of Ubuntu, places emphasis on the interdependence of the individual and the community at large, including the living, the dead, and the spiritual (Higgs, 2010; Maomeka, 1989; McFarlin, Coster and Mogale-Pretorius, 1999; Narh, 2013; Van Der Colff, 2003). Confucianist principles in Chinese culture, on the other hand, place an emphasis on interconnectedness and relationships where roles and relationships are honoured (Lockett, 1988; Yum, 1988).

Another difference is that Ubuntu advocates hospitality, respect, and acceptance of all, including sojourners (Bell and Metz, 2011, p. 90), while Confucianism, in not extending to strangers, distinguishes between insiders and outsiders (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Salo-Lee, 2006). The sense of community is therefore universal in African culture and particularistic (see Trompenaars and Hampden Turner, 1993) in Chinese culture.

Notwithstanding the differences in direction, African and Chinese cultures both display a collectivistic and holistic orientation in interaction (Chen, 2015, p. 468; Maomeka, 1989). In summary, while communication in African and Chinese cultures may demand care in ensuring comfort of all interactants owing to communal and humanistic orientations, in Western cultures, communication is a matter of free will and possibly is dictated by the interlocutor's goals and discretion.

5.2.1.1   Self-perceptions

The self in Western culture is individualistic, independent, autonomous, ego-driven, complete and self-sufficient (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Kim, 2007;

Miike, 2002, p. 6). In African culture, the self is flexible, variable, changing between contexts and relationships (Eaton and Louw, 2000; Faniran, 2014; Myers, 1987). Confucian tradition in Chinese culture defines a relational self, viewed from a group perspective and deep-rooted in a web of human relationships (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Miike and Yin, 2015, p. 458; Miike 2002).

The association of self with community relationships and self-respect in African and Chinese culture suggests potential similarity in implications for communication. For instance, in African culture, communication is respectful and consensual with a strict following of rules and norms (Faniran, 2014; Maomeka, 1989). Comparatively in Chinese cultures, communication is adaptive to the role and hierarchy of relationships following rules to maintain harmony and face (Chen, 2015; Yum, 1988). Table 5.1 provides a summary of values and guiding philosophies in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Table 5.1: Values and guiding philosophies in Western, African and Chinese cultures

		Western cultures	African cultures	Chinese cultures
Values guiding philosophies		**Individualism** "Individualism is the idea that the individual's life belongs to him and that he has an inalienable right to live it as he sees fit, to act on his own judgment, to keep and use the product of his effort, and to pursue the values of his choosing. It's the idea that the individual is sovereign, an end in himself, and the fundamental unit of moral concern." (Biddle, 2012). ○ Low context ○ Low uncertainty avoidance ○ Low power distance ○ Egalitarian, autonomy and mastery value types (Schwartz, 1992,1994)	**Communalism/Ubuntu/humanism** ○ **Ubuntu:** "People are people through other people. It is relational and emphasises mutual respect, care, reciprocity, sharing, compassion, hospitality, cohabitation, cooperation and tolerance." (Khoza, 2005, p.xxii) ○ **Communalism:** Interdependence between individuals and community - Supremacy of the community - Respect for elders - Sanctity of authority - Utility of the individual - Religion as a way of life - Respect for truth, equality and social justice (Traber, 1989; Maomeka, 1989) ○ **Humanism:** Humanism entails a deep consideration of a person's individuality, intrinsic worth, dignity and effort over and above their sociality.	**Confucianist principles** - *Jen* - benevolence, self-discipline, filial piety, brotherly love and trust (Yum, 1988; 2015) - *Yi* - righteousness, faithfulness and justice in social interaction (Yum, 1988; 2015) - *Li* - propriety, rite, respect for social norms (proper way of interaction) (Yum, 1988; 2015) ○ **Humanism** which is a warm human feeling between people that emphasises reciprocity (Yum, 1988, p.374; 2015) ○ **Guanxi:** relationships/interconnectedness. People exist through, and are defined by their relationships with other people and social order is ensured through each party honouring the requirements in the role of relationships. ○ **Face** - Mianzi ○ **Yin Yang**
Western classification		AS ABOVE	○ Collectivistic ○ Medium to high context ○ Moderate to high uncertainty avoidance ○ High power distance ○ Embeddedness, hierarchy and harmony value types (Schwartz, 1992)	○ Collectivistic ○ High uncertainty avoidance ○ High context ○ Embeddedness, hierarchy and harmony value types (Schwartz, 1992)

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Bell and Metz (2011), Biddle (2012), Faniran (2014), Hofstede (1980), Huang (2010), Igboin (2011), Jackson (1999), Khoza (2011), Maomeka (1989), Schwartz (1992; 1994), Traber (1989), Yum (1988)

5.2.2 Nature of communication

For ease of reference below is an excerpt from TFICA, Fig. 5.1, showing synthesis results in respect of the IC awareness enabler nature of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Fig. 5.2: Excerpt from the TFICA – nature of communication

Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
(2) NATURE OF COMMUNICATION		
Atomistic	Holistic	Holistic
Discrete individualistic	Open collectivistic	Submerged collectivistic

Source: Researcher's own contribution

As indicated in Fig. 5.1 and Fig. 5.2, Western cultures have an atomistic orientation to existence, whereas African and Chinese cultures generally have a holistic orientation. The dotted reverse arrow indicates that the nature of communication in each culture is not absolute, but rather falls closer to one extreme on a continuum. Literature suggests a holistic universe seen as a "composite blend of divine, spiritual, human, animate and inanimate beings constantly interacting with one another" in African culture (Igboin, 2011, p. 98; Myers, 1987). Similarly in Chinese culture is a circularity, providing a sense of "relatedness of present to past and future, as well as life to nature" (Miike, 2002, p. 6) where all, including communication, is in a state of change and transformation (Chen and Starosta, 2003, p. 5).

In light of the holistic nature of existence in African and Chinese cultures, the nature of communication in these cultures is collectivistic, differing mainly in direction. Where communication in African culture is openly collectivistic, extending to the whole community and those who enter it, in Chinese culture it is "submerged collectivistic" (Chen, 2015), with people tending to submerge into the in-group. Comparatively, communication in Western cultures is discretely individualistic, emphasising individual components in communication (Chen, 2015). Table 5.2 provides a summary of the nature of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Table 5.2: Nature of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures

	Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
Nature of existence	• Fragmented atomistic worldview • Dominated by theme of individualism	• Di-unital worldview (human and spiritual) • Dominated by the theme of communalism	• Focus on wholeness and unity • Interconnectedness, duality and paradox (*Yin Yang*).
Communication implications	• Individual components of communication emphasised • Individualism displayed in social interaction in a group **Discrete individualistic**	• Holistic interconnected communication with a strict following of taboos, morals and norms • People openly collectively orientated in social interaction **Open collectivistic**	• Communication holistically interconnected network in a state of change and transformation • People collectively orientated and tending to submerge into the in-group in social interaction **Submerged collectivistic**

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Chen (2011; 2015), Chen and Starosta (2003), Fang (2011), Gan (2014), Igboin (2011), Khoza (2005), Kincaid (1987), Littlejohn and Foss (2008), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Narh (2013), Schiele (1990)

5.2.3 Objective of communication

Below is an excerpt from Fig. 5.1 illustrating synthesis results in respect of the IC awareness enabler objective of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Fig. 5.3: Excerpt from the TFICA – objective of communication

Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
(3) OBJECTIVE OF COMMUNICATION		
Confrontation	Social maintenance (*Refining and redefining relationships within the group*)	Harmony

Source: Researcher's own contribution

The objective of existence in Western culture is confrontation driven by the desire to solve problems, control, and influence (Chen, 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003; Miike, 2002, p. 8; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1993). People are not afraid to stand for what they believe in. Reflectively, as shown in Fig. 5.1 at item (7), the manner of communication is like-

ly to be direct, expressive, dialectical, divisive sermonic, and assertive, geared towards controlling and differentiating one's self from others (Chen, 2015).

In African culture, the purpose of existence and communication is social maintenance, through preserving the communal social order of human relationships and spiritual networks (Narh, 2013; Igboin, 2011; Maomeka, 1989; Myers, 1987). This leads to the current study labelling African cultures as human-orientated (Ubuntu), as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (6). Correspondingly, the manner of communication is likely to be blended in the sense that it may include both an indirect and direct approach. Reasons for this blended approach can be the subject of future investigative studies.

In Chinese culture, the objective of existence is harmony between the in-group and the universe at large (Chen, 2015, p. 467; Chen, 2002; Chen and Starosta, 2003, p. 6; Francesca and Gold, 2005, p. 31; Miike, 2002, p. 7). Harmony has an ethical appeal and regulatory role intended as an end rather than as a means of human communication (Chen and Starosta, 2003). Chinese people will therefore communicate with dignity in a mutual and interdependent network (Chen and Starosta, 2003) to ensure that the end result of communication is harmony. Consequently, as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (6), Chinese cultures are said to be virtue-orientated while the manner of communication is likely indirect, subtle, adaptive, consensual and agreeable as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (7).

In the endeavour to achieve the objective of communication between African and Chinese cultures, an important difference lies in the suggestion that Africans will use any means possible to share information, be it loud, subtle or elaborate (Matondo, 2012) while the Chinese prefer subtle and succinct communication. Such differences may indeed have implications for the achievement of IC congruence if not considered in IC between the Chinese and Africans.

In summary, Table 5.3 presents juxtaposed summaries of theoretical perspectives on the objective of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Table 5.3: Objective of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures

	Western cultures	African cultures	Chinese cultures
Objective of existence	• Problem-solving • Command, control and influence **Confrontation**	• Confirming, solidifying, and promoting the communal social order (Maomeka, 1989; Faniran, 2014) • Preservation of harmony **Social maintenance** **Human**-orientated **(Ubuntu)** culture	• Harmony with nature and the physical world • Co-operation based on sincerity, mutuality and dignity **Harmony** **Virtue**-orientated culture (Metz, 2015, p. 97; Hofstede and Bond, 1988)
Communication implications	Communication is **confrontational** (emphasis on individuality and competition) • Direct • Expressive • Dialectical • Divisive • Sermonic	Communication is **harmonious** and a matter of human interrelationships • Blended (combination of direct and indirect messages) • Adaptive • Consensual • Agreeable	Communication is **harmonious** situated in the interests of the whole rather than the individual • Indirect • Subtle • Adaptive • Consensual • Agreeable

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Berger (2005), Chen (2015, 2006), Chen and Starosta (2003), Fang (2011), Faniran (2014), Gan (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Maomeka (1989), Metz (2015), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Schiele (1990), Trompenaars and Hampden Turner (1993), Yao (2000)

5.2.4 Degree of interaction

Below is an excerpt from Fig. 5.1 illustrating literature synthesis results in respect of the IC awareness enabler degree of interaction in communication in Western African and Chinese cultures.

Fig. 5.4: Excerpt from the TFICA – degree of interaction

Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
(4) DEGREE OF INTERACTION *(Associated with the way of knowing)*		
Reductionist	Interconnected *(Human and spiritual)*	Interconnected *(Human, nature and universe)*

Source: Researcher's own contribution

By virtue of their individualistic and atomistic orientation, Western cultures are characterised by a scientific and reductionist way of knowing that is dependent on dichotomising and simplification of complex phenomena (Chen, 2002; 2015). Things are either black or white. This has led Western cultures being termed "truth-orientated cultures" (Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Metz, 2015, p. 97) as shown in Fig. 5.1 at item (6). Correspondingly, the manner of communication likely reflects as independent, "I" focused, equality based, and emphasising achievement (Chen, 2015, pp. 467–468) as shown in Fig. 5.1 at item (7). This inference suggests that communication although polite, may not necessarily show concern for the feelings of others. Individuals speak in a manner as they see fit based on their personality and socioeconomic position (Miike, 2002, p. 8). What people say and how they say it in Western culture is unpredictable because it is self-determined.

African culture, on the other hand, demonstrates a pragmatic and interconnected way of knowing that emphasises the collective, extending to the group, community, ancestors and the environment (Narh, 2013, p. 6). It is pragmatic in the sense that answers are sought from within the context of existence and therefore may be considered as subjective. Individual knowledge is not separate from the community as it is acquired through participation in the social context of the community (Ani, 2013). The highest value is placed on interpersonal relationships (Myer, 1987), and communication is conducted strictly according to norms and mores of the community (Maomeka, 1989, p. 5). The manner of communication is therefore likely interdependent; "we" focused, hierarchical, associative and prescribed as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (7).

Similar to African culture, Chinese culture displays a pragmatic, interconnected intuitive and holistic way of knowing (Chen, 2011; 2015; Miike, 2002, p. 6). Communication is therefore seen as a relational process in which interactants constantly adapt to and relocate each other in a network of interdependence (Chen and Starosta, 2003, pp. 5–6; Ding, 2006). Interconnectedness in Chinese culture is further reflected in communication characterised by reciprocity, "we" focused, hierarchy, association and ascription (Chen, 2015, p. 467), as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (7).

The similarity of emphasis on interconnectivity in African and Chinese cultures suggests a similarity in the degree of interaction in communication, where hierarchy, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, ensuring appropriate communicative behaviour. Furthermore, in both African and Chinese cultures, "what is said, and how it is said is largely predictable, likely owing to a certain prescriptiveness seen in the strict following of rules and norms in African culture (Faniran, 2014, p. 5; Maomeka, 1989) and consideration of rules and ethics in Chinese culture (Chen and Starosta, 2003, p. 7; Miike, 2002, p. 11). However, as articulated in discussions in earlier chapters, rules and norms are likely to differ across cultures, hence creating potential challenges in IC.

Table 5.4 presents juxtaposed summaries of theoretical perspectives on the degree of interaction in communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Table 5.4: Degree of interaction in communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures

	Western cultures (Scientific orientation to knowledge)	African cultures (Pragmatic orientation to knowledge)	Chinese cultures (Pragmatic orientation to knowledge)
Degree of interaction *(related to the way of knowing)*	• Rational, logical and reductionist • Propensity to dichotomise. Something is either black or white • Distinctions made between objectivism and subjectivism, rationalism and empiricism **Truth**-orientated culture (Metz, 2015, p. 97; Hofstede and Bond, 1988)	• Humanistic knowledge is a communal or collective understanding acquired via tradition, ancestors and heritage • Emphasis on dialectics, cooperation and togetherness in knowledge acquisition • No divisions such as rationalism and empiricism, subjectivism and objectivism	• Way of knowing characterised by an interconnectedness between mind and world with true or legitimate knowledge attributable to those higher up in the hierarchy of relationships • Emphasis on circularity and the relational connection of all things • No divisions such as rationalism and empiricism, subjectivism and objectivism
Communication implications	Communication-centred in the individual • "I" focus • People communicate on an equal footing • Free will at the individual's discretion • Communication is aimed at achieving individual goals	Communication largely community-centred and interdependent • "We" focus • Communication is hierarchical • Communication is relational and associative • Meanings are prescribed	Communication takes place in contexts of multiple relationships across space and time emphasising reciprocity • "We" focus • Communication is hierarchical • Interactants adapt to each other in a network of interdependence • Communication is associative and ascribed

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Ajei (2007), Ani (2013), Chen (2015), Chen and Starosta (2003), Ding (2006), Gan (2014), Littlejohn and Foss (2008), Metz (2015), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Narh (2013)

5.2.5 Thinking process

Below is an excerpt from Fig. 5.1 which illustrates findings on the meta-synthesis in respect of the IC awareness enabler of thinking process in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Fig. 5.5 Excerpt from the TFICA – thinking process

Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
(5) THINKING PROCESS		
Logical	Prescriptive *(Influenced by tradition, rules and social norms)*	Intuitive

Source: Researcher's own contribution

Western cultures follow structured and logical reasoning processes as indicated in Fig. 5.1 at item (5). The manner of communication is therefore objective, linear, analytical, justificatory, and manipulative, presenting a situation as either black or white, with no grey areas.

As suggested in this study, African cultures are inclined to a prescriptive thinking process, resulting in a manner of communication that is likely to be semi-objective, non-linear, ambiguous, accommodative and ritualistic although unifying, as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (7). In Chinese culture, intuitive thinking is the norm. Circularity prevails with complementary, equally appropriate paths leading to the same destination (Chen, 2011; 2015) as embodied in the Yin Yang philosophy. The thinking process reflects in a manner of communication that is likely to be subjective, non-linear, ambiguous, ritualistic and adaptive as reflected in Fig. 5.1 at item (7).

Table 5.5 below presents juxtaposed summaries of theoretical perspectives on the thinking process in communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

Table 5.5: Thinking process in communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures

	Western cultures	African cultures	Chinese cultures
Thinking Process	• Rational and logical • Processes are analytical • Individuals predisposed to influence own course of action	• Prescriptive • Process is prescribed (agreed upon by community) • Philosophical principles of African culture determine the basis, content and direction of thoughts	• Intuitive • Holitsic, non-linear embodying duality, paradox (Yin Yang) • Same destination can be reached from many paths
Communication implications	• Propensity to be more individually, outwardly and behaviourally active in communication interactions Manner of communication is: • Objective • Direct • Linear • Analytical • Manipulative	• Communication is community-centred and interdependent Manner of communication is: • Semi-objective • Non-linear • Ambiguous • Ritualistic • Unifying	• Emphasis on the context, mutuality, respect, and honesty Manner of communication is: • Subjective • Non-linear • Ambiguous • Ritualistic • Accommodative – messages adjusted to maintain interpersonal and situational harmony

Source: Researcher's own contribution from sources Chen (2011; 2015), Chen and Starosta (2003), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Littlejohn and Foss (2005), Ping and Yan (2013)

5.2.6 Summary

The description of communication orientation and manner of communication based on IC awareness enablers demonstrates an exploratory theoretical application of a theoretical IC congruence framework in the Sino-African context. It is suggested that the application of this framework could have implications for both management practice and theory development. In terms of the resulting theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures as presented in Fig. 5.1, it is plausible that, in instances where cultural distance is small, interactants could accommodate or adapt to each other's communication requirements. This could be true of African and Chinese cultures where adapting to the requirements of different contexts and relationships comes naturally to them. With greater IC awareness, perhaps a third culture could emerge for those engaged in IC, hence moving towards IC congruence.

As was advocated in the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposed in Chapter 4, managers and employees in IC would benefit from a universal understanding of the differences in their communication. For that reason, and towards addressing theoretical objective T9, the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures is compared in the next section.

5.3 The Manner of Communication in Western, African and Chinese Cultural Contexts

In this section, the results of a comparison of the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures using the Gudykunst framework proposed in Chapter 3 section 3.2.3 and represented as item 7 in Fig. 5.1 of the present chapter, are presented separately in Fig. 5.6.

Fig. 5.6 Comparing manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures

Manner of communication	Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
Direct versus Indirect	Direct	Blended	Indirect
Elaborate versus Succinct	Exacting	Elaborate	Succinct
Personal versus Contextual	Personal	**Contextual**	**Contextual**
Instrumental versus Affective	Instrumental	**Affective**	**Affective**

Source: Researcher's own contribution

The results presented in Fig. 5.6 suggest potential similarity and difference in the manner of communication in African and Chinese cultures. The likely synergies are in the preva-

lence of a contextual and affective manner of communication (highlighted in blue). The contextual and affective manner of communication is discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

Appropriateness, community, harmony in communication and concern for the other emerge as key concerns in both African and Chinese cultures. Differences appear to be in the preference for a more elaborate manner of communication with much talking in African culture, as opposed to a succinct manner with minimal talking in Chinese.

Chinese wisdom suggests that the mouth is a source of misfortune, so that the less one speaks the better, because what is said cannot be unsaid (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998). In the Chinese culture, meaning resides beyond words, which are considered insufficient for complete expression; there is a perpetual need to draw inferences between the lines (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988). These Chinese cultural characteristics point to polite, implicit, listening-centred communication with an insider focus (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998).

The notion of very little talk in Chinese culture is in stark contrast to African cultural predispositions where Africans are seen to talk at length, for the purpose of simple enjoyment and not necessarily to reach any particular conclusion (Matondo, 2012, p. 43). Despite these differences, the current study suggests aiming for a middle-of-the-road situation comprising direct and indirect messaging, in other words, a "blended" approach to communication.

In the next section, the results presented in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the present chapter (essentially representing the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western African and Chinese cultures), are built into the generic theoretical IC congruence framework proposed in Chapter 4 to form a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.*

5.4 Theoretical IC Congruence (TICC) Framework Specific to Sino-African Organisational Contexts

In this section, the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western African and Chinese cultures is built into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework presented in Chapter 4, to form a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* as shown in Fig. 5.7.

The figure is columnar to be read in number sequence from (1) to (3) (left to right), with each column reading from top to bottom as explained in Chapter 4.

Fig. 5.7: Theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework specific to Sino-African organisational contexts

Contextual considerations

(1) DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AWARENESS THROUGH UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION AND MANNER OF COMMUNICATION IN WESTERN, AFRICAN AND CHINESE CULTURES

Cross-Cultural Approach *C1
Cross-Cultural Approach *C2
Cross-Cultural Approach *C3

CULTURAL GROUP	COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION AND MANNER OF COMMUNICATION	COMPARING MANNER OF COMMUNICATION
WESTERN CULTURE	A. Discrete individualistic B. Confrontation C. Reductionism D. Logic based (TRUTH orientated)	Direct Exacting Personal Instrumental
AFRICAN CULTURE	A. Open Collectivistic B. Social Maintenance C. Interconnectivity *(man and spirit)* D. Intuition based (HUMAN orientated)	Blended Elaborate Contextual Affective
CHINESE CULTURE	A. Submerged collectivistic B. Harmony C. Interconnectivity *(man and universe)* D. Intuition based	Indirect Succinct Contextual Affective

(2) IC AWARENESS ENGENDERED CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBILITIES IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

- Reciprocal learning by Western, African an Chinese presents an opportunity to seek **common ground.**
- IC awareness provides a premise upon which to build and implement intercultural communication enhancing **strategies and interventions**
- Adoption /**integrated communication goals**
- IC awareness **engenders mindfulness and the intercultural sensitivity** that enables **appropriateness** in intercultural communication
- Adapted /adjusted manner of communication hence resulting in greater **effectiveness and appropriateness**
- IC awareness **mitigates intercultural communication barriers** such as lack of knowledge, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and anxiety, hence reducing challenges such as ineffectiveness and inappropriateness
- A **'win, win'** in communication

(3) ENHANCED INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONGRUENCE (IC Congruence)

(The pinnacle of intercultural communication where manner of communication is reciprocally effective and appropriate)

Contextual considerations

Source: Researcher's own contribution based on a synthesis of literature by Ajei (2007), Ani (2013), Berger (2005), Chen (2011; 2015), Chen and Starosta (2003), Ding (2006), Eaton and Louw (2000), Fang (2011), Faniran (2014), Gan (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, (1988), Hall (1959; 1976), Higgs, (2010), Hofstede (1980), Igboin, (2011), Khoza (2005; 2011), Kim (2007), Kincaid (1987), Lee (2012), Littlejohn and Foss (2008; 2011), Maomeka (1989), Metz (2014; 2015), Miike (2002), Myers (1987), Narh (2013), Ping and Yan (2013), Schiele (1990), Trompenaars and Hampden Turner (1993), Yao (2000), Yum (1988)

5.5   Summary

Through adopting a cross-cultural approach in the meta-synthesis of literature, the present chapter provides theoretical perspectives on communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures as reflected in the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) (Fig. 5.1) now incorporated into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework to result in the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* (Fig. 5.7).

Overall, the meta-synthesis results point to cultural proximity between African and Chinese cultures and communication styles, as opposed to proximity to Western culture. There are also differences existing in the similarity, cautioning that appearances of cultural similarity should not be taken at face value. This outcome emphasises the need for empirically validating the theoretical analysis as presented.

As a follow up to the study of theory (Chapters 2 to 5), the next phase of the research validates the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.* This is done through an empirical qualitative study in which African and Chinese experts are consulted. The results of this phase of the research are presented in Chapters 7 and 8. Owing to the complexity and intensity of the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts,* it is mainly the high-level perspectives on IC awareness – specifically communication orientation and manner of communication in African and Chinese cultures to the exclusion of Western cultures that are validated also highlighting similarities and differences.

The next chapter describes the methodological processes followed in conducting both the study of theory and empirical qualitative study.

Chapter 6
Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and methodology of this study.

Owing to limited research on IC in the Sino-African organisational context, a design is adopted that is tight in formulation and flexible in execution, allowing for objectivity, creativity and innovativeness (Brinkmann, 2014, p. 724). Specifically the research strategy as described in this chapter is divided into two main components: a study of theory and an empirical qualitative study consisting of interviews with African and Chinese experts. This dual approach is premised on the view that multiple approaches to IC result in comparatively more complete results that can be corroborated and/or validated (see Chen and Starosta, 1997; Hu and Fan, 2011; Korzenny and Korzenny, 1984).

First discussed in this chapter is the philosophy of research and the interpretive pragmatism paradigm adopted in the study followed by an explanation of the qualitative research design. The methodological processes followed in the study of theory as defined in the context of the present study (Chapter 1, section 1.7) and the empirical qualitative study are discussed in separate sections A and B respectively. In section A, the literature search, selection and synthesis procedures as well as quality considerations that were followed in the study of theory (A) presented in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 are discussed. In section B, the qualitative data collection and analysis procedures using content analysis are discussed then a summary of the discussions of the chapter is given.

6.1   The Philosophy of Research

Research philosophy is an overarching term relating to the nature and development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). It relates to assumptions about how individuals view society, themselves and their beliefs on what constitutes truth and knowledge encapsulated in what social scientists term a paradigm (Schwandt, 2001). Thus, in approaching a research inquiry, every researcher holds fundamental beliefs regarding what constitutes knowledge. These beliefs in turn influence the way they conduct research and

their choice of particular research methodologies (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 14; Watt, 2007, p. 82; Wahyuni, 2012).

In the next section, the research paradigm of this study is discussed.

6.1.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a worldview or set of assumptions and framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place (Ponterotto, 2005). It is "a way of examining social phenomena from which particular understandings of these phenomena can be gained and explanations attempted" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). While there exist many paradigms and sub-paradigms of research differentiated by the ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions that underpin them (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p. 49; Wahyuni, 2012, p. 69), of relevance to this study are interpretivism and pragmatism which have been creatively crafted into an interpretive pragmatism paradigm.

Ontology is a theory of existence concerned with the nature of reality and that of human beings; epistemology is concerned with the way of understanding and explaining how human beings may acquire knowledge about their reality (Lee, 2012, p. 5; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Narh, 2013). Axiology and methodology, on the other hand, influence the manner in which reality is investigated. Specifically, axiology is concerned with the role of values and ethics of the researcher in the research process (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 131) while methodology refers to a model for undertaking a research process in the context of a particular paradigm (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 70). Methodology is therefore concerned with why, what, from where, when and how data is collected and analysed (Scotland, 2012, p. 10).

Regarding the ontological and epistemological questions, the current study assumes the existence of multiple subjective realities constructed through the eyes of the participants. The multiple realities extend to those of the researcher, research participants as well as those reading the qualitative report (Creswell, 2007, pp. 16–18).

The researcher adopts an interpretive stance when interacting with literature in the study of theory, and when interviewing African and Chinese experts in the empirical qualitative study. Indigenous views from the literature synthesis and those of the interviewed experts are incorporated in the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework. This is because truth can be found in human experiences that are culture- and context-bound (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006), implying that what may be true of IC congruence in Western organisational contexts may differ from what is true in African or Chinese contexts, with deviations also likely in terms of organisational typologies and ethnicities. However, differences across organisational typologies and ethnicities are not the focus of the present study.

While the novelty of the Sino-African organisational context demands the adoption of an interpretive approach for greater understanding, there is also need for approaches that help in the creation of solutions to IC congruence challenges at hand. Singh (2015, p. 132) de-

termines that there is a need to develop more suitable approaches for creating action-orientated knowledge given the growing complexity and change experienced in organisations. It is therefore plausible for research which has begun using what may be referred to as conventional approaches based on popular methodological prescription, to evolve and result in the creation of unique methodologies better suited to solving the challenges at hand. For example, in a study of his own (Singh, 2015) reports the evolution from an initial conventional research approach to a synthesised approach following interaction with data, self and extant theory. Such developments are an example of pragmatism in action – adopting the best course of action to meet the demands of the inquiry. Singh's views echo those of Eisenhardt (1989, p. 547) who finds that, at times when little is known about a phenomenon and current perspectives seem inadequate owing to the scarcity of empirical investigations or findings, there is a need for new perspectives.

Considering the novelty of the Sino-African context, limitations of contemporary approaches, dearth of research as well as the need for outcomes with value for those engaged in the IC encounter, innovative approaches are demanded by management practitioners and the academic community alike. In the current study, true to the recursive nature of research, the researcher has regularly revisited ideas and sought new information, when necessary, reconsidering and refining the approach (University of Louisville, 2016). In the end, despite the appropriateness of interpretive approaches for investigating the complexity and uniqueness of business and management contexts (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 9), a level of pragmatism was required to ensure solution outcomes to the demands of the situation. Thus, in the present study, rather than aligning with any of the major paradigms, the researcher adopts a stance that enables an addressing of the research problem herein termed interpretive pragmatism paradigm, a combining of the interpretivism and pragmatism paradigms.

Interpretivism advocates a transactional and subjectivist stance. It is transactional in the sense that reality is constructed by interacting social actors with unique backgrounds and experiences (Guba, 1990; Ponterotto, 2005; Sarantakos, 1993; Wahyuni, 2012) and subjective in that there is no single universal truth. The interaction between researcher and participant is central to capturing and describing the "lived experience" and researcher values are intertwined with the research process (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 131; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009; Wahyuni, 2012). The preference is to work with qualitative data with an underlying belief that the best knowledge uncovers inside perspectives; hence this is an emic approach focusing on ungeneralisable behaviours unique to an individual sociocultural context.

Pragmatism on the other hand is a research paradigm that refuses to join the paradigm war between the positivist and interpretivist philosophies (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Instead of questioning ontology and epistemology as the first step, pragmatists begin with the research question to determine their research framework (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 71). Because objectivist and subjectivist approaches are seen as not mutually exclusive a mixture of ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology is acceptable in the approach to and understanding of social phenomena (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 71; Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka,

2008). Characteristically, pragmatic approaches are context-driven, concept-driven or both (Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka, 2008).

In context-driven approaches, responsiveness to the demands of the inquiry context is of primary importance, suggesting an openness to all paradigms and choosing one that is of best fit to the research aims (Wahyuni, 2012; Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka, 2008). On the other hand, a concept-driven approach sees conceptual or theoretical congruence as the most relevant guide for empirical research. When applied together, the concept- and context-driven approaches ensure that decisions on the research process are based on their ability to enhance understanding of a particular set of concepts in a particular context rather than for their congruence with particular sets of philosophical assumptions (Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka, 2008, pp. 278–279).

The interpretive pragmatism paradigm is related to the research design in the next section.

6.2 Research Design

Within the ambit of an interpretive pragmatism paradigm, a study of theory and an empirical qualitative study are conducted towards meeting the objectives of the research as stated in Chapter 1.

Given the lack of a reference point for African and Chinese managers towards achieving IC congruence, it was important in the first instance to establish IC awareness in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts at a theoretical level. IC awareness has been defined in Chapter 1, section 1.7 as the reciprocal understanding of communication orientation and manner of communication by people from interacting cultures. In the context of the present study an understanding of the concept of IC awareness is achieved through a review, and synthesis of IC literature and theory resulting in the development of a generic theoretical IC congruence framework (TICC) as presented in Chapter 4.

Next, a quasi-systematic review (flexible in execution though systematic in nature) and meta-synthesis (a non-statistical technique that conforms to methodological standards used in primary research) of extant communication literature on Western, African and Chinese cultures based on IC awareness enablers (conditions that enable people to understand communication in different cultures and contexts for the purposes of attaining IC awareness) as proposed in the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, resulted in a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese culture depicting communication orientation and manner of communication as presented in Chapter 5 section 5.2.

The theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese culture was then built into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework to form a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* (Chapter 5, section 5.4). IC awareness as depicted in the theoretical IC congruence

(TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* was then empirically validated through a qualitative study as introduced in Chapter 1, section 1.5.2 and further described in part B of the present chapter. Finally, insights from the study of theory and findings of the empirical qualitative study are consolidated to result in a hybrid IC congruence framework (HICC) for Sino-African organisational contexts.

In the next section, part A describes the methodological process followed in the study of theory.

6.3   A: Study of Theory

The processes of conducting the initial traditional literature review and synthesis, quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis as introduced in Chapter 1 section 1.5.1 is discussed in the following sections, beginning with the traditional literature review.

6.3.1   Traditional literature review and synthesis

When used as a method of research, the literature review is referred to as a "non-contact method" (Lin, 2009, p. 179) differing from other methodologies in the sense that it does not directly deal with the object under study. In addition, when conducted systematically, literature reviews are often viewed as original empirical research, particularly in the health sciences where they are mostly used to produce case evidence (Ham-Baloyi and Jordan, 2016, p. 122; Higgins and Green, 2011).

In the context of the present study, the traditional literature review and meta-synthesis in the first stage of the study of theory enabled identifying and understanding of themes and subthemes underlying IC. It also enabled a conceptualising of IC congruence, IC awareness, communication orientation and manner of communication as reflected in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Essentially, the traditional literature review and synthesis addresses theoretical research objectives T1 to T7 that are restated as follows;

RQ-T1: What is IC congruence?

RQ-T2: What are the approaches to understanding IC and the theories for enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts?

RQ-T3: What are the barriers and challenges of IC?

RQ-T4: What are the considerations for enhancing IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts?

RQ-T5: How are culture and communication related, and what are the dimensions of cultural variation in communication?

RQ-T6: What are the criteria for conceptualising cultural variation in communication orientation and the manner of communication in different cultural contexts?

RQ-T7: What framework can compare the manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures?

The key sources from the fields of intercultural communication, critical intercultural communication, culture and communication synthesised in respect of theoretical objectives T1 to T7 in Chapter 2 through to Chapter 4 are: Abe and Wiseman (1983), Asante (1987), Barnett and Kincaid, (1983), Blommaert, (1998), Bucker et al. (2014), Chen, (2015), Collier et al., (2001), Collier (2015), Collier, Ribeau, and Hetch (1986), Croucher, Sommier and Rahmani (2015), Dainton and Zelley (2015), Francesca and Gold (2005), Gallois et al. (1995), Gudykunst (1995; 1998; 2005), Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006), Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988), Hall (1959; 1976; 1990), Halualani and Nakayama, (2013), Halualani, Mendoza and Drzewiecka (2009), Hill and Faulk (2005), Hofstede (1980; 1991; 2010), Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), Koester and Olebe (1988), Kubota (2012), Leeds-Hurwitz (2013), Littlejohn and Foss (2008; 2010), Liu, Volcic and Gallois (2011), Lustig and Koester (1993), Martin and Nakayama (2010), Miike (2006; 2007), Miller et al. (2013), Moon (2013), Nair-Venugopal (2015), Neuliep (2012), Oetzel (1995), Okech et al. (2015), Ono (2013), Schwartz (1992; 1994), Spitzberg (2000), Ting-Toomey, (1985; 2005), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993), Washington (2013), Wiseman (2003).

In the next section the quasi-systematic review as introduced Chapter 1, section 1.5.1 is described.

6.3.2   Quasi-systematic review

This section describes the quasi-systematic review process (derived from the systematic review process) followed in stage 2 of the study of theory where the following research questions are addressed:

RQ-T8: How is communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts described according to the criteria proposed in RQ-T6?

RQ-T9: How does the manner of communication differ in Western, African and Chinese cultural contexts?

In its purest form, the systematic review process entails planning for the review, defining the research question, searching the literature, critical appraisal of the literature, data extraction, data synthesis and presentation (Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008; Ham-Baloyi and Jordan, 2016; Jesson, Matheson and Lacey, 2011, p. 15; Levy and Ellis, 2006; Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003). However, in this study, strict adherence to this process was not entirely practical owing to limited available research specific to IC, IC effectiveness and IC

congruence in the Sino-African organisational context. A flexible sampling, selection and inclusion approach was adopted, resulting in the meta-synthesis of diverse literature to create a theoretical body of knowledge, hence the name quasi-systematic.

The self-styled nature of the review is further justified by the fact that management-related reviews are often seen as a process of exploration, discovery and development, requiring flexibility to feed creativity in the review process (Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003). Brinkmann (2014) concurs, proposing that the most objective forms of qualitative research are usually those with the loosest designs as these allow for creativity and innovativeness (Brinkmann, 2014, P.724).

A diagrammatic representation of the process followed in conducting a quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis of identified literature in the second stage of the study of theory is presented in Annexure 6.1. In addition, the quasi-systematic review process is described in sections 6.3.2.1 and 6.3.2.2 while the meta-synthesis process is described in section 6.3.3 of the present Chapter.

6.3.2.1 Planning the quasi-systematic review

A scoping of the field of study of IC in general and in Sino-African organisational contexts in particular was the point of departure, culminating in a research proposal that articulated the gaps in research and in the posing of research questions. A guide was prepared with which to conduct the quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis process to limit researcher bias (Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003, p. 215) while still maintaining creativity. The literature search and selection procedure is discussed in the next subsection.

6.3.2.2 Literature search and selection

This section covers several considerations in the search and selection of literature, namely the timeframes from which the literature was sourced, the search strategy for the articles, the question of empirical versus non-empirical literature, as well as the inclusion and exclusion of articles in the meta-synthesis.

a.   Timeframe for literature sourcing

The timeframe for literature selected for review is usually determined by the amount of available information, usually with a maximum timeframe of five to ten years placed on the age of the works to be included (Paniagua, 2002 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008, p. 40). However, Merton (1968 cited in Bourgeois III, 1979, p. 446) argues that setting a cut-off date in literature in order to make a review more manageable runs the risk of losing the vital functions served by studying classical theory. Furthermore, in restricting periods, one may find that supposed independent ideas are merely a rediscovery of

something from the past (Merton, 1968, pp. 35–37 cited in Bourgeois III, 1979, pp. 446–447). For these reasons, it was important to have an extended timeframe in this study.

The constancy of culture and values – which do not change suddenly, but rather progressively over time (Hofstede, 1980, 1997) – means that most insights, despite coming from different periods, are likely remain relevant to a large extent. Suffice it to say that, despite the quasi-systematic approach allowing for exploration, discovery and development (Brinkmann, 2014; Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003), a mirroring of the best practices of the systematic literature review to the best possible extent ensured rigour and validity. In addition, inclusion of seminal literature in the synthesis provided a credible base for the study (Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan 2008, p. 42; Lin, 2009).

b.　　Inclusion and exclusion of articles

As a result of unrestricted timeframes in the literature search, a copious number of articles were identified. Although systematic reviews advise setting inclusion and exclusion criteria for articles (Yin, 2009), in the context of the present study, articles were included on the basis of creative analysis involving the use of logic, judgment, reasoning, synthesis, dialectical thinking (Lin, 2009, p. 181). A decision to include articles in the synthesis was reached after, for example, a consideration of the titles, reading through abstracts, and at times complete papers (Cohen, 1990 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008; Ham-Baloyi and Jordan, 2016; Lin, 2009). Notably, the literature synthesised is heterogeneous, consisting of empirical and non-empirical, theoretical, anecdotal, peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed papers, primarily guided by availability (Boyne, 2009, p. 7).

Among the sources analysed in the meta-synthesis in respect of culture communication and general interaction in African culture, are Ajei (2007), Ani (2013), Asante (1987; 1991; 1999), Bell and Metz (2011), De Vries et al. (2009), Dhliwayo (2007), Eaton and Louw (2000), Faniran, (2014), Higgs (2010), Igboin (2011), Jackson (1999; 2012), Kane (2014), Karsten and Illa (2005), Khoza (2005), Boafo (1989), Madzingira (2001), Mangaliso (2001), Maomeka (1989; 1997), Mazama (2001), Mbigi and Maree (1995), Mbigi (1997), McFarlin, Coster and Mogale-Pretorius (1999), Metz (2015), Myers (1987), Narh (2013), Nkomo (2013) Ntuli (2012), Nussbaum (2003), Nwosu, Taylor and Blake (1998), Obonyo (2011), Park and Alden (2013), Shonhiwa (2008), Traber (1989), Uwah (2012), Van den Heuvel (2008), Waneless (2007), Wilson, (1987), with others listed in the references section.

In respect of culture, communication and general interaction in Chinese culture, sources analysed include Chang (2008); Chen and Chung (1994), Chen and Starosta (1997; 2003), Chen (2011; 2015), Dai (2010), Ding (2006), Fang, (2007; 2008; 2011), Faure and Fang (2008), Gan (2014), Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998), Hu and Fan (2011), Huang (2010), Korzenny and Korzenny (1984), Miike (2002; 2007), Leung (2008), Lim (2003), Lockett (1988), Luo (2008), Ma (2011), Ping and Yan (2013), Tang (2014), Wah (2001), Wei and Li (2013), Tung, Worm and Fang (2008), Yao (2000), Yum (1988), Zhu and Bao (2010).

6.3.3 Meta-synthesis

Meta-synthesis is a non-statistical technique that conforms to methodological standards used in primary research, essentially meeting the criteria of transparency, rigour, comprehensiveness and replicability (Daigneault, Jacob and Ouimet, 2014; Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). It serves to integrate, evaluate and interpret the findings of multiple (not necessarily comparable) qualitative research studies (Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008; Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003) and entails activities such as combining, modifying, rearranging, designing, composing and generalising (Levy and Ellis, 2006, p. 200).

In the present study characterised by diverse conceptualisations, abductive, inductive and deductive techniques viewed as forms of qualitative data analysis rooted in the Peircean logical system of Charles Sanders Peirce (Brinkmann, 2014; Chong, 1994) contribute to conceptual understanding of IC congruence (Brinkmann, 2014; Asvoll, 2014; Mingers, 2012; Minnameir, 2010; Chong, 1994, p. 1).

Abduction is an innovative and logical form of reasoning and inferencing applied in situations of uncertainty, when understanding or explanation of a phenomenon is sought (Brinkmann, 2014; Reichertz, 2009). Also referred to as critical thinking, it is concerned with sense-making and generation of new hypotheses by searching for patterns in phenomena (Asvoll, 2014; Brinkmann, 2014; Mingers, 2012; Reichertz, 2009; Chong, 1994). The results of this sense-making are then concepts or theories that can be tested to determine whether the situation is resolved (Brinkmann, 2014; Minnameir, 2010). In the current study, an abductive process results in the proposing of a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework (Chapter 4).

Deduction follows from the hypothesis generation of the abductive process and is aimed at refining hypothesis and drawing logical consequences from them (Asvoll, 2014; Chong, 1994, p. 18). In the present study, the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposed in Chapter 4 provides the basis of a combined abductive and deductive meta-synthesis that leads to the development of a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* in Chapter 5.

Finally, induction is aimed at justifying or substantiating a hypothesis with empirical data (Brinkmann, 2014; Chong, 1994, p. 16), resulting in the generation of empirical laws as opposed to theoretical laws (Chong, 1994, p. 23). In the present research, following the proposing of a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts,* an empirical qualitative study validates the IC awareness in Sino-African organisational contexts as explained in section B of this chapter.

6.3.3.1 Meta-synthesis in the context of the present study

To make sense of and manage the vast diverse literature identified in the literature search and selection, a simplified meta-synthesis technique termed framework synthesis is used.

This was developed and popularised by social policy researchers in the 1980s (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009; Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton, 2012). Framework synthesis allows for the systematic organisation of textual data derived from literature according to predetermined criteria (IC awareness enablers) for deciphering communication orientation and manner of communication in an abductive and deductive manner (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009; Srivastava and Thomas, 2009).

The search for and synthesis of literature occurred continuously during the course of the study, aggregating relevant findings to form the body of evidence regarding the research questions (Ham-Baloyi and Jordan, 2016, p. 124). The synthesis was thus an iterative process that resulted in tabulations of reflections on communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures through the identification of common core elements and themes (Polit and Beck, 2006 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008, p. 39). (Please see examples in Annexures 6.2a and 6.2b.) Closure was reached on theoretical saturation where new literature was no longer yielding new evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989; Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006, p. 65; Levy and Ellis 2006, p. 192; Remenyi 2013, p. 4). The framework synthesis of this research enables new conceptualisations and interpretations (Polit and Beck, 2006 cited in Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008, p. 39) of IC awareness in Western, African and Chinese cultures as highlighted in the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) and theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*, in Chapter 5 sections 5.2 and section 5.4 respectively.

To elaborate on the meta-synthesis and framework synthesis of the present research, reference is made to middle range theorising as advanced by Robert Merton in 1949 (Bourgeois III, 1979). The product of theorising in the middle range is reportedly "usually a set of relational statements that range from discursive essays to highly formalised propositional or conceptual inventories that guide empirical inquiry" (Bourgeois III, 1979, p. 445). In addition, middle range theorising can be approached either from an angle of building on assembled empirical evidence, or from the use of conceptual wisdom or logic (Bourgeois III, 1979) with greater emphasis on inspiration, imagination, creation and intuition than on observable facts. According to Bourgeois III (1979, p. 445), intuition and data-based theorising should ideally go hand in hand. Thus, in the process of synthesising extant literature, the study of theory engages intuition, logic and creativity to ultimately develop the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) depicting communication in Western African and Chinese cultures and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.*

For the sake of completion, quality and ethical considerations in the study of theory are discussed in the next section.

6.3.4 Quality assessment and ethical issues: study of theory

As opposed to quantitative studies, one cannot rely on statistical tests to prove the reliability and validity of qualitative research (Singh, 2015). However, scholars maintain that a quality review should have appropriate breadth and depth, rigour and consistency, clarity and brevity as well as effective analysis and synthesis that makes a novel contribution (Singh, 2015; Hart, 1998). A quality review should highlight sample, data collection and analysis procedures (Singh, 2015; Eisenhardt, 1989) and it should follow a concept-centric rather than chronological or author-centric approach (Weber and Watson, 1992, cited in Levy and Ellis, 2006, p. 184). The present research strives to meet the quality criteria by using the principles of best practice of the systematic review process as far as possible, and by following a concept-centric approach. In addition, the review and synthesis results in increased knowledge that is succinctly presented particularly in the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese culture that can be validated through an empirical study.

Regarding the ethicality of the study of theory, best practice demands that researchers ensure that academic writing standards are maintained and the academic code of conduct is not broken (Hart, 1998, p. 181). The researcher took care to avoid academic violations such as falsification, fabrication, sloppiness, nepotism and plagiarism (Levy and Ellis, 2006, p. 204) through reading, reflecting on and understanding the intended meaning in the literature to the best of her ability. Appropriate referencing has been applied, and thoughts not originating from the researcher have been attributed to the relevant authors as appropriate.

6.4 B: Empirical Qualitative Study

6.4.1 Overview

This section describes the methodological process that was followed in forming an empirical second phase to this research.

The empirical qualitative study is based on the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* proposed in Chapter 5. As mentioned in section 5.4 of that chapter, owing to the complexity and intensity of the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*, mainly the high-level perspectives on IC awareness – specifically communication orientation and manner of communication in African and Chinese cultures to the exclusion of Western cultures are validated. That said, in line with the interpretivist assumption of a socially constructed reality and understanding human behaviour from the participants' own frame of reference (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p. 52) a qualitative study comprising interviews with experts was conducted, details of which are now discussed.

6.4.1.1 Qualitative study interviewing experts

A debate surrounds the interviewing of experts (for example, Bogner and Menz, 2009; Littig, 2009; Meuser and Nagel, 2009; Pfadenhauer, 2009). This debate concerns defining what constitutes an expert, differences between forms of expert interviews and their role in research design, as well as specifics of interviewing and interaction in comparison to other qualitative interview forms (Bogner and Menz, 2009, p. 1). Despite this ongoing debate however, Bogner and Menz (2009) suggest that talking to experts in the exploratory phase of a project is an efficient and concentrated method of gathering data, compared to participatory observation or systematic quantitative surveys, because experts are surrogates for a wider circle of players. (Bogner and Menz, 2009, p. 3). Furthermore, in the context of the current study, choosing experts as participants was appropriate given the view that cultural data requires experts who are able to offer expert explanations about a cultural norm and variations on that norm (Bernard, 2006, p. 146).

a.   Definition of an "expert"

The World Book (2009, p. 749) defines an expert as "a person who has much skill or knows a great deal about something". Miemis (2010) in an online discussion forum suggests that experts have "extensive knowledge or ability based on research, experience, occupation and in a particular area of study" with the knowledge being "by virtue of credential, training, education, profession, publication or experience"

An expert in the context of this study is defined as one of the following:

i.   any practising African or Chinese manager or staff member working in a Sino-African organisational context in South Africa and who is a "psychological member" of the African (sub-Saharan) or Chinese society. Said differently, the practising manager or staff member needs to have been born and socialised in any of the African countries south of the Sahara or in the Chinese society.

In the South African context in which this study is based, African experts comprise all ethnic groups including Black, White, Coloured and Asian people. Experts are conversant with the native languages of their countries. Where the term "African" is used, reference is to South African managers and staff members as well as other African managers and staff members from other countries in sub-Saharan Africa but now permanently resident and working in South Africa. In addition, an expert is:

ii.   any practising African or Chinese manager or staff member who has had past or current experience working within a Sino-African organisational context in Africa with their role involving interaction with both Chinese and African personnel for a period of one or more years.

In the context of the present research, the definition of an expert is extended to include:

iii.   any African or Chinese person who has interacted with South African or Chinese people in an academic or other institutionalised setting where they have interacted with people from the other culture for a period of one or more years, as well as:

iv.   any African or Chinese person who has been closely involved in business dealings with a Chinese organisation for a period of one or more years.

The definition of expert is informed in part by the following understanding provided by Shuter (2012, p. 1):

> *Although indigenous cultural values are endemic to each society, identifying them requires "mining" the cultural fabric, often with informants who are psychological members of the society and native speakers of the language. With their help, important indigenous values can be identified, and then verified, over time, by asking multiple cultural informants what the indigenous values mean to them. Listening closely to informant responses, researchers can learn a good deal about the nature of an indigenous value and how it's revealed in a society.*

In the next section and subsections, the data collection process including the sample, sampling procedure and data collection methods is described.

6.4.2   Data collection

The cultural characteristic of low levels of trust reported of Chinese society (Liu, 2009) and other nuances of Chinese culture (as presented in Chapter 5) affected the way in which interviewees were accessed for this research. Thus, as mentioned in Chapter 1, section 1.5.2, a guanxi-orientated approach to sampling and data collection (Kriz, Gummesson and Quazi, 2014) was employed in sampling and data collection.

Kriz, Gummesson and Quazi (2014) speak of guanxi and *guanxi-shu* (guanxi tree) where the metaphor of the tree signifies connections and relations. Guanxi-shu was experienced in the course of conducting the qualitative study as is evidenced in the sampling and data collection processes in respect of both African and Chinese participants. Before elaborating on the sample and sampling procedure, in order to give an example of guanxi-shu, the chain of events that resulted in the interview with respondent C3 a Chinese expert is explained.

Through a Chinese associate of the researcher, the researcher was able to secure an interview with a high-ranking Chinese official in a Chinese organisation. Upon arrival at the appointed place, the high-ranking official stated that a member of their association, a certain business owner, would be a better fit to partake in the interview, because the business owner interacted with African employees at all levels of their organisation. The high-ranking official phoned C3, who immediately drove from their office ten minutes away, to par-

ticipate in the interview. Despite the sudden manner in which C3 was obliged to be interviewed, the purpose of the research and conditions of the research were explained fully, including the fact that he could withdraw from the interview at any time. The dynamics of Chinese culture regarding roles and relationships, however, deemed it inappropriate to ask C3 to sign a consent form. On his part however, C3 appeared happy to take part in the interview process. Of course, this willingness could also have been influenced by the seniority and status of the original intended interviewee who was held in very high esteem.

The next subsection describes the sample and sampling procedure, also explaining the population from which the sample was drawn.

6.4.2.1 Sample and sampling procedure

The initial step was for the researcher to capitalise on relationships with African and Chinese managers and employees to identify and select, through judgmental sampling, initial participants meeting the criteria of expert as explained in section 6.4.1.1 of the present chapter. Specifically, the researcher capitalised on existing relationships with Chinese associates who were able to make introductions to potential research participants. Thereafter, despite potential bias and threat to anonymity, snowball sampling was engaged to include people with experience of the phenomena being studied (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p. 147) in a situation of difficulty in accessing appropriate populations. Initial interviewees were thus requested to refer other suitable participants (Welman and Kruger, 2001).

In the context of the present research, it was possible to approach the experts in their personal capacities, thus circumventing the red tape associated with securing organisational permission to conduct research. As a result, the sample of this study was recruited from experts working in a cross-section of organisations including privately owned companies, state-owned companies and entrepreneurial organisations operating in the manufacturing, information technology, legal and financial industries. All participants were either professional employees, middle managers, senior managers or executives. A more detailed overview of the biographical data of the sample indicating ratios of sex, age, marital status, ethnicity, home language and position is presented in Chapter 7. The diversity of organisational typologies represented brings a richness to the study while also providing questions for future research.

In terms of sample size, there was no set number of interviews planned as the guiding principle of saturation was followed. Consensus theory that holds that in situations of cultural homogeneity, interviewing as few as four experts can produce a high level of accuracy (Romney, Batchelder and Weller, 1986, p. 313). Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) concur, suggesting that experts likely share common experiences which comprise truths, and the more widely distributed a particular experience, the fewer the number of participants required to provide an understanding of the phenomenon of interest (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006, p. 75). In the present study, the broad cultural groupings of African and Chinese culture imply a degree of homogeneity. Fifteen participants comprising seven African

and eight Chinese experts were therefore interviewed over a period of two months (September to October 2016). All participants were interviewed singly, independent of one another.

In the next subsection, the data collection methods are discussed.

6.4.2.2 Data collection methods

In this section the in-depth interview process, the questions in the interview guide and their intention are discussed in relation to the empirical research objectives and questions.

a.   In-depth interviews

An interview guide consisting of open-ended and semi-structured questions guided the interview process. The open-ended questions allow the experts to talk openly about their communication experiences and to give their viewpoints on IC in the Sino-African organisational context. In so doing, the researcher is able to draw inferences on the perceived the communication orientation and manner of communication in own and others' cultures. Answers to the open-ended questions also result in new previously unexplored themes emerging. The emerging themes, when incorporated into the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* developed in Chapter 5, provided a more holistic and representative framework.

Semi-structured questions, on the other hand, allowed the researcher to hone in on specific aspects proposed in the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*. This is a particularly important strategy when there is a likelihood of not having an opportunity to interview a person more than once (Bernard, 2006, p. 212). Furthermore, semi-structured questions helped ensure a level of consistency in the responses received.

Despite their attractiveness as data collection instruments, interviews have limitations such as high costs of travelling, potential data overload, excessive amounts of time required to complete the interviews, language difficulties in intercultural interviews as well as limitations related to the quality of interview data. To ensure the quality of information arising from the interview process, the researcher equipped herself with knowledge of best practices in interviewing. These included maintenance of respect, active listening and use of effective probing techniques including silent probes, "uh-huh" probes and "tell-me-more" probes where necessary (Bernard, 2006, p. 218).

In the present study, the language differences did not pose a significant challenge, as all but two of the participants were proficient in English. For the interviews conducted in Chinese, the researcher engaged the services of a translator to translate the interview questions from English to Chinese. To ensure the authenticity of the translation, the trans-

late-retranslate procedure using a second independent translator (Remenyi, 2013, p. 25) was then followed in translating the interview questions back to English.

The service of a research assistant (native Chinese person, fluent in both Chinese and English) was enlisted to conduct interviews in the Chinese language. The assistant was briefed on the objectives of the study and research questions that needed to be answered, and was also trained on how the interview would be conducted including the ethics protocol and ways in which probing could be done. The researcher maintained a presence in the two interviews that were conducted by the research assistant.

Interviews with participants proficient in the English language were conducted by the researcher and the data emanating from the interviews was audio-recorded. These recordings were each assigned a code and the details of the interview were recorded on an interview register giving details of date and time. The interviews were then transcribed and stored in a safe place.

Prior to a full-scale execution of the interviews, and in view of the status of the potential interviewees in order to ensure productiveness, it was important to have prior knowledge of the subject matter as the experts' impression of the interviewer influences the type of knowledge they will communicate in the interview (Pfadenhauer, 2009). The researcher therefore ensured that she became a "quasi-expert" (Pfadenhauer, 2009) on communication in African and Chinese cultures from the study of theory as detailed in Chapter 2 through to Chapter 5.

Also, prior to a full-scale execution of the interviews, pilot studies were done with two Chinese and one African expert to ascertain how well the potential participants understood the questions. In the pilot study, it was found that the initial interview questions specifically regarding communication orientation were difficult to understand, resulting in responses that were not comprehensive. One of the targeted experts commented that the questions were too complex. The pilot study therefore resulted in adjustments to the initial interview guide, to avoid complex terms associated with the study.

The structure and intentions of the interview questions contained in the interview guide are discussed in the next section.

b.   Interview structure and intention

At the beginning of the interview, the purpose of the research study as well as the rights of the participants were explained prior to asking participants to sign an informed consent form. In the first part of the interview participants were asked for their personal data comprising their gender, ethnicity, age, marital status, home language, position, occupation, position in their organisation as well as the length of time they had interacted with those from either African or Chinese cultures. The interview then proceeded with questions as

reflected in the interview guides for African and Chinese experts (see Annexures 6.3 and 6.4).

The interview guide consisted of five main questions with sub-questions intended to provide information that would address the empirical objectives. The intention for asking each question on the interview guide follows.

Question 1: Communication experiences

- Given your experience with the African/Chinese people, I would like you to describe a communication experience or communication experiences that you have had with an African/Chinese person. *(Please describe exactly what happened in the communication encounter and where this happened? Was this a good or a bad communication experience? Please can you explain why? What did your learn about the way African/Chinese people communicate from this experience?)*

Question 1 serves the purpose of introducing the interview topic and encouraging the participants to relate their communication experiences. The open-ended nature of the question allows the participants to narrate their communication experience freely. Essentially, asking the participants to narrate their experiences enables them to communicate the point of their ideas or symbols indirectly (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). As such, through relating their stories and commenting on their satisfaction, the experts reveal their viewpoints on IC awareness in their own and other's cultures (RQ-E1 and RQ-E2).

In the interview process, apart from specific communication experiences, the participants also spoke of general interactions. This suggests that in the Sino-African organisational contexts, IC is not just about the verbal or non-verbal exchange but rather is viewed holistically in relation to the environment. These are insights that could be explored in future studies.

Question 2: Understanding differences and similarities in communication

- Would you say there is a difference in the manner that the African people communicate and the way that the Chinese people communicate? *(Please can you tell me more about this?)*
- Would you say there is a similarity in the manner that the African people communicate and the way that the Chinese people communicate? *(Please can you tell me more about this?)*

Question 2 serves to determine areas of similarities and/or differences in the communication orientation and manner of communication in African culture and Chinese culture, hence addressing the research question RQ-E3. The questions allow the participants to give their perspectives on the manner of communication in each culture (Chinese versus African). In so doing, their communication orientation can be inferred. Insights gained from this question highlight areas of similarity or difference compared to the findings of the the-

oretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures as established in Chapter 5 of this study.

Question 3: Towards enhancing intercultural communication

- What do you think are the most important considerations and strategies when communicating with others from a different culture? *(Can you name them?)*
- Can these considerations and strategies *(above)* be taught or shared by people from both African and Chinese and cultures in order to have good communication experience? *(How could this be done?)*

Although not directly addressing the empirical research questions of the present study, Question 3 was included in the interview guide because asking experts how IC can be enhanced is a natural progression from asking them whether their communication experiences were good or bad and whether they saw any or similarities and differences in communication with their counterparts.

Question 4: Understanding communication in African/Chinese culture

- Please tell me about the correct (most appropriate) manner of communication in the African/Chinese cultural context. In other words, what do you consider as "good communication" in the African/Chinese cultural context? *(How important are the values and philosophies such as Ubuntu, Humanism, Communalism, etc. in communication in South African culture? Confucianism, guanxi, face in Chinese culture?)*

Question 4 helps to establish a deeper understanding of the manner of communication in the participant's own culture (RQ-E1) from their own cultural point of view (African or Chinese). The communication orientation (for instance direct or indirect, elaborate or succinct) can be inferred from the responses given.

Question 5: Conclusion

- Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about how people communicate in the Sino-African organisational context?

This question closes the interview session and gives the participant the opportunity to share other views on their IC experience not covered in the interview.

In the next section, issues of validity and reliability are discussed in relation to the empirical qualitative study.

6.4.3 Validity and reliability

One of the main purposes of research is for researchers to be able to persuade their audiences that the findings of an inquiry are trustworthy and worth paying attention to (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 290), particularly in qualitative studies where the interview process is open to the challenge of informant and researcher bias (Golafshani, 2003; Patton, 2002; Remenyi, 2013). Reliability and validity are therefore of concern to any researcher in the design, analysis and assessment of the quality of their study Patton (2002).

Reliability refers to a level of consistency such that when a method is reliable, it produces the same result wherever repeated (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 79). Validity on the other hand is an assessment of the genuineness and honesty of the research, largely influenced by the researcher's perception and definition of validity (Creswell and Miller, 2000; Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p. 56). Validity is therefore situational and changeable, dependent on the interactions of human beings and their environment (Golafshani, 2003, p. 602, Winter, 2000; Crotty, 1998). In the context of the empirical qualitative study, care was taken not to lead the interviewee by avoiding probes that used any of the key descriptors derived from the study of theory. It would have gone against best practices to explicitly ask experts whether they viewed the manner of communication as direct or indirect, elaborate or succinct and so on, as established in the study of theory, as this would have been tantamount to leading the interviewee, hence affecting the validity of the findings.

Instead of referring to reliability and validity in qualitative research however, reference is made to trustworthiness confirmability, credibility, transferability, and dependability (Remenyi, 2013; Golafshani, 2003; Stenbacka, 2001; Seale, 1999; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

6.4.3.1 Confirmability

Houghton et al. (2013) describe confirmability as the neutrality and accuracy of the data. Because the qualitative researcher is deeply immersed and involved in the research (Patton, 2002; Golafshani, 2003) it is argued that the close relationship between researcher and interviewee is a core issue (Remenyi, 2013) that affects opinions on validity because of potential bias and subjectivity in interpretation (Salazar, Crosby and DiClemente, 2015; Cole et al., 2011). Given the extent of the researcher's involvement in the research process, a reflexive approach was adopted.

Reflexivity is the process of examining both oneself as researcher, and the research relationship (Salazar, Crosby and DiClemente, 2015). It involves self-examination of one's assumptions and preconceptions to see how they shape the research decisions made, and an examination of the researcher's relationship with the participant and how the relationship dynamics affect the responses to the questions (Salazar, Crosby and DiClemente, 2015, p. 458).

Towards fostering reflexivity, the interviews commenced with open-ended questions to minimise the preconceptions of the theoretical framework. This ensured that the interviewees could relate their experiences at will. The documented data transcription and content analysis processes detailing coding and categorisation procedures, aid in establishing confirmability for the research, demonstrating that the findings emerge from the data and are not the researchers own predispositions (Sanjari et al., 2014; Shenton, 2004). Moreover, rich and thick verbatim descriptions of participants' accounts are given to support findings (see Chapters 7 and 8). To add to that, no relationship was established with the interviewees prior to the commencement of the study. The existing relationship was that between researcher and research associate who made the initial referrals. Further interviews were gained by the snowball effect of guanxi-shu.

6.4.3.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the possibility of transferring particular findings to another similar context or situation, while still preserving the meanings and inferences from the completed study (Houghton et al., 2013). This is made possible by practising methodological excellence through for example the maintenance of "inquiry audits" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 317) that allow examination of the process and the end product of the research. This chapter serves as an inquiry audit for this study. In addition, thick descriptions of the research context are essential to ensure that future researchers are sure that that their intended context is similar to that for which results have been reported (Koch, 1994). To this end, Chapter 1 of this thesis has served to explain the background and context of the study.

6.4.3.3 Dependability

Dependability – often compared to the concept of reliability in quantitative research – is related to the consistency of the inquiry process over time (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It is an assessment of whether the study would produce the same results if it were repeated in the same setup with the same interviews. In order to demonstrate dependability, each process in the study should be reported in detail to enable an external researcher to achieve similar results if they repeat the inquiry. The research process of the present study is detailed in the present chapter.

6.4.3.4 Credibility

Credibility refers to the value and believability of the findings (Lincoln and Guba 1985). It involves conducting the research in a believable manner and being able to demonstrate credibility (Houghton et al., 2013) in view of the rigour of methods and techniques, the credibility of the researcher as well as the philosophical belief in the value of the inquiry (Patton, 1999, p. 1190). In the context of the present research, the researcher is adequately experienced and well trained in conducting research and interviews in both academic and

professional settings. In addition, where the interview guide was drafted in Chinese and the interviews conducted in same, the translate-retranslate procedure using a secondary independent translator (Remenyi, 2013, p. 25) was then followed in translating to English to ensure the authenticity of the translation.

The interpretive pragmatism adopted in the research is appropriate in view of the need to understand and propose ways of enhancing IC in Sino-African organisational contexts. In asking the participants to relate their experiences, the researcher is able to gain deeper understanding into a scarcely explored field from an insider perspective.

Furthermore, while some critics may argue that the judgmental and snowball sampling methods of this study may have introduced bias, this was the most practical approach in the circumstances. Participants identified through judgment sampling were not known to the researcher but were introduced by the snowball effect. The same was true of African participants, thus following a guanxi-shu orientation or snowball sampling as earlier discussed. The researcher also maintained professionalism at all times. Triangulation increases the credibility of a study and is discussed in the next subsection.

6.4.3.5 Triangulation

Triangulation is "a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple different sources of information" (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 126) to evaluate findings and control bias in research (Golafshani, 2003; Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Houghton et al., 2013, p. 13). In addition to using different data sources, triangulation can be achieved by combining methods of collecting data (Patton, 2002) and mixing paradigms (Barbour, 1998 cited in Golafshani, 2003). Triangulation can also include multiple methods of data analysis (Golafshani, 2003, p. 604). In the present study, the interpretive and pragmatism paradigm are integrated to develop the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework that has practical implications for IC congruence in the Sino-African organisational context.

Furthermore, various methods of data collection are engaged including a traditional literature review, a quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis as well as in-depth interviews. The qualitative study conducted serves as a form of data triangulation aimed at validating findings of the study. In true constructivist fashion, the present study embraces multiple realities (Golafshani, 2003) taking together the findings of the theoretical and empirical studies towards developing a hybrid IC congruence framework for achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

The role of the researcher and ethical considerations of this research is discussed the next section.

6.4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations should always be acknowledged; conclusions arrived at by the researcher should always be ethical and sound (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006), free from violation of the rights of interviewees (Creswell, 2007, p. 141). In the first instance, approval to conduct the research was granted by the Rhodes University Ethics Standards Committee (see Annexure 6.5). The interviewees were asked to participate in their individual capacities, negating the need for institutional permissions to conduct the research. A formal letter was sent to all participants asking them to participate in the research (see Annexure 6.6). The names of the institutions with which the interviewees are associated with are not mentioned in this study.

Prior to commencing the interviews, the purpose of the study was explained to the interviewees, who were also asked to give their informed consent (see Annexure 6.7). Some participants agreed to sign an informed consent form, while others sent emails agreeing to participate in the survey following a verbal telephonic agreement. In other cases, for example with the Chinese participants, the nature of sampling engaged (guanxi-shu) and nuances of Chinese culture made it culturally inappropriate to request that a form be signed. In these instances, verbal consent to participate in the interviews was considered adequate. The researcher explained to the participants their rights as interviewees, and that they could withdraw at any point if they felt that they did not wish to continue. Permission to audio-record the interviews was also sought before the recordings were made. Strict confidentiality was maintained at all times and the names of participants are not published in any form. In addition, all file recordings and transcripts are saved using pseudonyms.

6.4.5 Qualitative data analysis

Having discussed in-depth interviews as a data collection method, sampling procedures, the interview guide, quality and ethical considerations of the qualitative study, the focus now turns to data analysis and reporting. Data obtained was aimed at interrogating the portion of the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* related to IC awareness.

In the following sections, the levels of data analysis are introduced, followed by a description of the transcription procedures and the content analysis process, focusing on the coding and categorisation of key words and chunks of text.

6.4.5.1 Level of analysis

According to Ricoeur (1979 cited in Mayer, 2008, p. 113) there are different interpretation levels important for data analysis that begin at the level of experience prior to the interviewee meeting the researcher. For instance, before the researcher met with any of the interviewees, data analysis had begun as African and Chinese experts formed impressions

of their IC experiences. Another stage of analysis could pertain to the researcher's impressions of the interviewees' choice of meeting place, the reception by the interviewee, the rapport, and the whole interview process itself as the interviewees narrate their communication experience.

The researcher kept a diary in which the researcher wrote reflective notes and impressions of the interview following the completion of each interview. These field notes and diary captions proved useful in the final data analysis by adding meaning to the transcribed texts.

Transcription of the audio files, focusing on the verbal aspects of communication, constitutes a level of analysis. The full length of each interview was recorded and transcribed to written text. Pauses and other non-verbal behaviours are excluded. (Refer to Annexure 6.8 for an example of one of the shorter transcribed interviews). Furthermore, in adherence to the principle of confidentiality, care was taken to clean the transcribed data files, removing any references to people's names or organisational affiliations. Following the transcription of texts, the data was analysed through content analysis.

Widely used in qualitative research and emphasising the role of the researcher in the construction of meaning in texts (Bryman, 2004), content analysis can follow an inductive, deductive or summative approach (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1286) to provide knowledge and understanding of phenomena under study (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 314). The choice of approach is dependent on the theoretical and substantive interests of the researcher and the problem being studied, paying attention to the context or contextual meaning (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). In the present research, a simultaneously inductive and deductive approach is adopted. A deductive approach enabled the testing of the general theoretical insights on IC awareness in African and Chinese culture against that in Sino-African organisational contexts. An inductive approach on the other hand allowed for new insights to emerge (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Kondracki and Wellman, 2002; Mayring, 2000).

The content analysis of this study is generally guided by the five-step process of Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) consisting of familiarisation and immersion, inducing themes, coding, elaboration and finally interpretation and checking as discussed in section 6.4.5.2. Findings of the content analysis are presented in Chapter 7 where they are supported by "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) and linked to the findings in the study of theory (Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5). Conclusions are drawn in Chapter 8, where a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework is presented and recommendations for future studies are given.

6.4.5.2 Procedures of analysis

In this section, the analytical procedure in the content analysis process is discussed. The aim of the analysis is:

- to identify perspectives on IC awareness of "own" and "other" with regard to communication orientation and manner of communication in African and Chinese culture and to code the material for correspondence with or exemplification of categories identified in the study of theory (Polit and Beck, 2004) while allowing new ones to emerge;
- to determine similarities and differences in communication orientation and manner of communication (hence IC awareness) between African and Chinese people based on perspectives of African and Chinese experts.

Below is an explanation and illustration of the Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) process used in the analysis.

i)   Familiarisation and immersion

The researcher read and re-read the transcribed texts, making notes and developing portraits of each person interviewed and constantly referring to the audio recordings and reflective notes. This process helped the researcher to gain a general feeling of what the data was saying (O'Connor and Gibson, 2003, p. 64; Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003; Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). Because an initial open-ended question was posed to the interviewees, there was a lot of open talk that produced a multitude of data not directly related to the specific empirical research questions of this research. As such, when the researcher had gained a good understanding of the data, the researcher highlighted text that on first impression appeared to represent the communication orientation and manner of communication for further analysis.

ii)   Inducing themes

Induction means inferring general rules or classes from specific instances (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006, p. 323). Having gained a good understanding of the data, the next stage was to identify key words, chunks of text and recurring ideas pertaining to the communication orientation and manner of communication. The researcher looked for and noted words and ideas that kept coming up in the narrations while also considering themes from the study of theory (Chapter 5). The empirical research questions were kept in mind at all times to ensure that the study remained focused. The easiest themes regarding communication orientation and manner of communication identified were those recurring in a text.

iii)   Coding

Coding involves marking different sections of the data as being relevant to one or more of the themes (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006, p. 324). In the present research, coding occurred simultaneously with developing categories. In view of the study of theory while allowing codes to emerge, key words and chunks of text (representing perspectives) were coded and later organised into categories.

In order to address the empirical research questions correctly, the coding process occurs at two levels for each of the African experts and Chinese experts. Two copies of each interview transcript were made to facilitate coding along the following levels for each of the interviewees:

- Perspective on own IC awareness
- Perspective on other IC awareness.

The researcher coded the material using the reviewer feature in Microsoft Word. Fig. 6.1 is an excerpt of the coded material of interview A3, one of the shorter interviews selected through a random process.

Fig. 6.1 Excerpt of coded material using a Microsoft Word macro

Comments extracted from: C:\Users\Fungai\Desktop\METHODOLOGY 5 OCTOBER\Transcripts\African CO and MC September\African perspectives on own CO and MC\Africa03 Transcript_Own CO and MC.doc
Created by: Fungai
Creation date: October 13, 2017

Page	Comment scope	Comment text	Author	Date
3	The biggest culture shock going into meetings was that in a meeting with Africans, there is usually one conversation, generally one person speaks but in the Chinese culture you have five conversations occurring at once even though you should be listening to one person.	MC Taking turns to speak Conversation etiquette	Fungai	20-Sep-2017
3	They are very respectful in terms of the way they address their elders. They know their place and I find it very common amongst Black people as well.	MC Influenced by role and relationships	Fungai	20-Sep-2017
3	They are very respectful in terms of the way they address their| elders. They know their place and I find it very common amongst Black people as well.	MC Rules for addressing elders	Fungai	24-Sep-2017
3	It's completely surprising. And they love cellular phones in meetings. Generally, its rude for us to be on our phones.	MC Undivided attention in communication A3 comments that it is rude for Chinese people to play on their cell phones whilst a meeting is in progress	Fungai	20-Sep-2017

Source: Researcher's own contribution

Using the reviewer feature in Microsoft Word, each identified piece of relevant text was highlighted and a code assigned to it. Following the coding process, the coded material was then extracted into a table in Microsoft Word using a macro or series of commands and instructions grouped together as a single command to accomplish a task automatically (Microsoft Word Office Support, 2017). In this instance, the macro drew the coded material as indicated in Fig. 6.1. This example is further refined to show own and other perspectives on IC awareness in African and Chinese cultures as shown in Chapter 7, sections 7.3 to 7.7.

Next, the perspectives were clustered into categories of best fit following an unconstrained process. Categorisation allows grouping and comparison of texts that seem to belong together, thereby giving a fresh view on the data. While some IC awareness categories were defined in the study of theory (communication orientation and manner of communication), these were not imposed on the empirical data to avoid blinding the researcher to contextual aspects of the phenomenon (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003; O'Connor and Gibson, 2003). Rather, as mentioned, an unconstrained process of analysis was used. It is likely that a purely structured process of analysis solely focused on findings of the study of theory would have impacted on the neutrality and confirmability of trustworthiness, as at times researchers are prone to bias, influencing the propensity to find evidence supporting rather than refuting a theory, despite best efforts at adopting a reflexive approach (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

iv)   Elaboration

Following the coding and categorisation stage, elaboration entailed exploring the categories more closely. This process provided an opportunity to revise the coding system and return to the third stage with revised codes. The coding of data was an iterative process aimed at coming up with the best way of structuring material to enable the best account of what was happening in the data to be given (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006, p. 326).

The IC awareness categories developed in the content analysis process are presented in Chapter 7 section 7.8.

v)   Interpretation and checking

The interpretation stage represents the written account of the phenomenon that has been studied (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). Following a determination on the IC awareness in Sino-African organisational contexts, the findings were substantiated through offering supporting and non-supporting evidence (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1282; Mayring, 2000) from the data material and insights from the study of theory. This stage also provided an opportunity for the researcher to reflect on her own role in the collection and interpretation of data. Finally, through a discussion the empirical findings are compared with findings from the study of theory and integrated with the theoretical IC

congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisations* to form a hybrid IC congruence framework for Sino-African organisational contexts.

6.5   Summary

This chapter was divided into two parts. The research process as explained, provides an audit trail and information to enable the reader to assess the quality of the process. Part A discussed the methodological process of the study of theory (Chapters, 2, 3, 4 and 5). Part B described the methodological process followed in the empirical qualitative study comprising in-depth interviews with 15 experts, seven of whom are of African origin and eight of Chinese origin.

The chapter commenced with a discussion of the notion of paradigms, highlighting the focus areas of positivism, postpositivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. An interpretivist pragmatism paradigm was selected as appropriate for the study for two reasons. First, its interpretive nature was necessary for developing an IC congruence framework in the sparsely researched Sino-African organisational context. Second, pragmatism, in the sense of flexibility, was required in developing and creating action-orientated knowledge (Singh, 2015, p. 132). The assumptions of the interpretivist pragmatism paradigm were highlighted. The qualitative research design was then introduced, highlighting its relevance in bringing the academic and business worlds together to inform professional practice.

Following a discussion on the qualitative research design in part A, the data collection procedures and analysis of the study of theory were discussed. These encompassed the traditional literature review, quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis procedure including framework synthesis. Examples of framework synthesis tables are provided as appendices. The quality and ethical considerations in conducting a literature-based study were also highlighted.

In part B, the process of the empirical qualitative study was explained, covering the data collection process, quality criteria and ethical considerations for the in-depth interview empirical qualitative study. Finally, the qualitative data analysis process was explored, highlighting levels and procedures of analysis while providing examples of transcriptions and content analysis to ensure transparency is maintained.

In Chapter 7, the methodological approaches discussed in part B of this chapter are used to analyse and interpret the experts' perspectives on IC awareness in Sino-African organisational contexts and to finally present conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 8.

The findings of the study of theory based on the methodological process discussed in part A of this chapter are integrated in Chapter 2 through to Chapter 5 where the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* is presented.

Chapter 7
Empirical Research Findings

Intercultural communication awareness in Sino-African organisational contexts

Introduction

The primary purpose of this chapter is to report on perspectives of African and Chinese experts with regard to IC awareness in their own and the other's culture. This is in response to IC challenges and the need for a context-focused approach to enhance IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts,

The findings are not limited to individual interview questions; instead, they are integrated statements arising from the interviews in totality. By exploring and reporting on African and Chinese expert's views on IC awareness, this chapter in part contributes towards the main research aim of developing a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts.

Specifically, the empirical objectives addressed in this chapter are as follows:

E-1 Describe perspectives on "own" IC awareness in the Sino-African organisational context:

    a. *African experts*
    b. *Chinese experts*

E-2 Describe perspectives on "other" IC awareness in the Sino-African organisational context:

    a. *African expert*
    b. *Chinese experts*

E-3 Identify and describe the similarities and differences in IC awareness in African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context.

E-4   Identify and describe new categories of IC awareness that emerged from the data (RQ-E1 to RQ-E3).

The chapter begins by detailing the biographical information of the 15 participating experts, followed by a presentation of the findings. The findings from both African experts and Chinese experts perspectives are juxtaposed to highlight their similarities and/or differences. Verbatim extracts from the interviews are provided in support of the inferred conclusions. After identifying and describing IC awareness perspectives, categories are developed from the data.

7.1   Biographical Information of the Sample

The biographical information provided below, in Table 7.1, gives details of the nationality, gender, age, ethnic group, marital status, occupation or position, industry sector, number of years of experience and the highest level of educational qualification of the respondents.

Table 7.1: Biographical information of respondents

Respondent	Nationality	Gender	Age	Ethnic group	Marital Status	Home language	Position	Industry Sector	Months in job	Highest educational qualification
A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Married	English	Management accountant	Manufacturing	36	Bachelor's degree
A2	South African	Male	44	White	Married	English	Managing director	Professional	240+	PhD
A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Married	English	Senior executive	Manufacturing	36	Master's degree
A4	Cameroonian	Male	37	Black	Single	French	Lawyer	Legal	240+	Master's degree
A5	South African	Female	26	White	Married	Afrikaans	Client relations officer	Legal	120	Bachelor's degree
A6	South African	Male	55	White	Married	English	Senior executive	Professional	24	Master's degree
A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	Married	Shona	Engineer	ICT*	48	Master's degree
C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Married	Chinese	Geologist	Mining	264	PhD
C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	Married	Mandarin	Managing director	ICT*	144	Master's degree
C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Married	Chinese	Business owner	Manufacturing	180	Not given
C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Married	Chinese	Business owner	Manufacturing	168	Not given
C5	Chinese	Female	50	Chinese/SA	Single	Chinese	Senior analyst	Finance	252	Master's degree
C6	Chinese	Male	31	Chinese/SA	Single	Mandarin	Business owner	Legal	252	Master's degree
C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Single	Mandarin	Investment manager	Finance	30	Master's degree
C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	Married	Mandarin	Human resources manager	State-owned enterprise (SOE)	24	Master's degree

ICT*Information and Communications Technology

Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.1 Distribution of cultural grouping

There were eight experts representing the Chinese cultural group and seven experts representing the African cultural group. Of the African sample, five were South African citizens of South African origin. Two were permanent residents of South Africa, one being of Cameroonian and the other of Zimbabwean origin. The cultural groupings are illustrated in Fig. 7.1.

Fig. 7.1: Distribution of cultural grouping
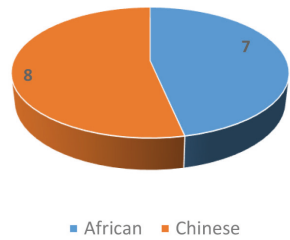
Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.2 Distribution of gender

Of the total number of interviewees, three are female – two of South African origin and one of Chinese origin. The remaining 12 respondents are male, as illustrated in Fig. 7.2 below.

Fig. 7.2: Distribution of gender
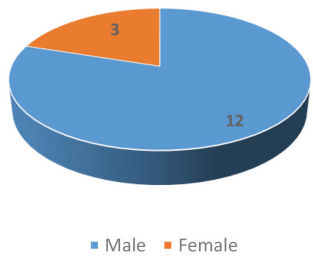
Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.3 Distribution of age

The distribution of age is provided in groups as shown in Fig. 7.3. Six of the experts were aged between 30 and 39 years, four 50 years and older, three between 40 and 49 years of age, while the fewest (2) were between 20 and 29 years.

Fig. 7.3: Distribution of age
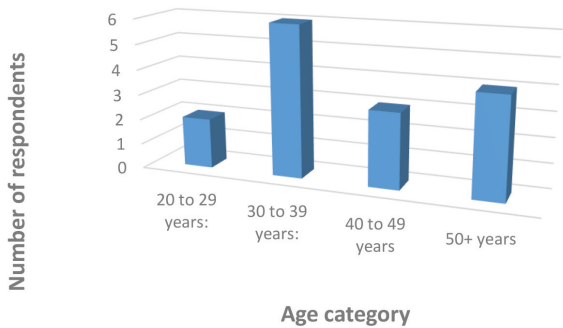
Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.4 Distribution of ethnic group

The Chinese sample is represented as all Chinese (8) with no ethnic distinctions made. The South African sample was comprised of three Black, three White and one Coloured expert(s) as illustrated in Fig. 7.4.

Fig. 7.4: Distribution of ethnic group
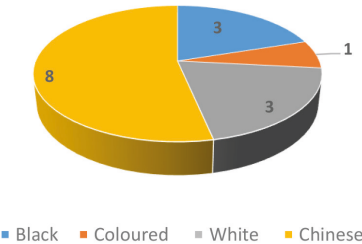
Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.5 Distribution of position and education

The position index shows a range of senior level positions, namely management accountant, managing director, senior executive, lawyer, client relations officer, engineer, geologist, business owner, senior analyst, investment manager, and human resources manager.

The highest qualification is a doctorate degree held by two experts. Nine experts hold a master's degree while one holds a bachelor's degree qualification. Three of the experts did not disclose their level of education.

7.1.6 Distribution of industry sector

Four experts were from the manufacturing sector, two from the professional services sector, three from the legal sector, two from the ICT sector, one from the mining sector, two from the finance sector and one from an SOE. The distribution per industry sector is illustrated in Fig. 7.5.

Fig. 7.5: Distribution of industry sector
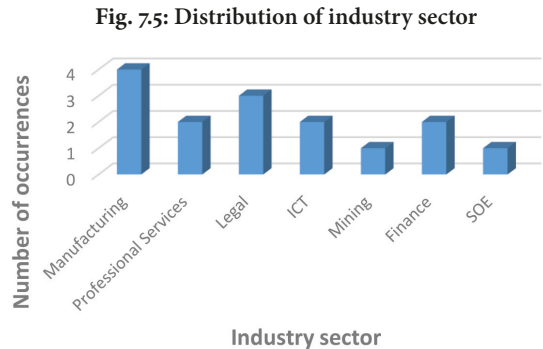
Source: Author's own contribution

7.1.7 Distribution of experience in months

Of the experts interviewed, nine had more than 60 months (five years) of experience interacting with those from the other culture, followed by three who had up to three years of experience, as illustrated in Fig. 7.6.

Fig. 7.6: Distribution of experience in months

	12	13 - 24	25 - 36	37 - 48	49 - 60	60+
Number of experts	0	2	3	1	0	9

Source: Author's own contribution

144
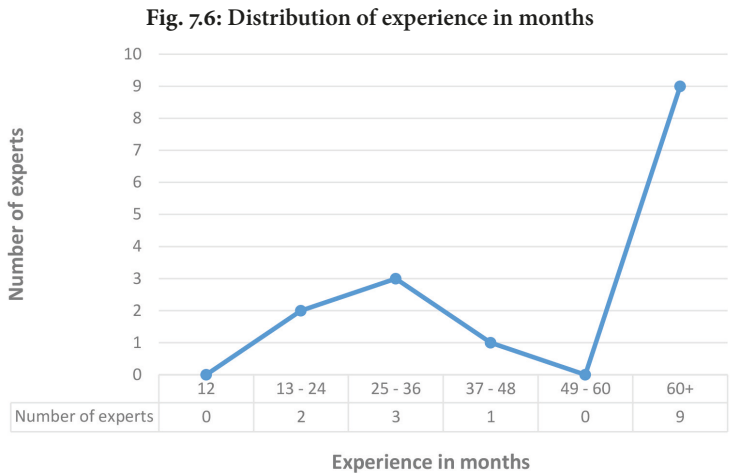
7.2   Presentation of Findings

The findings from interviews with A1 to A7 and C1 to C8 are now presented. The chapter sections are aligned with the empirical research questions as introduced in Chapter 1 section 1.3.3.2 (Table 1.2), which refer to both deductive and inductive findings. The full extent of all transcribed interviews is attached in Annexure 6.8.

African and Chinese experts as representatives of their respective cultures report a range of communication experiences in Sino-African organisational contexts. Through content analysis, as described in the previous chapter (section 6.4.5), the various IC awareness perspectives of respondents are presented in an integrated manner from section 7.3 to section 7.7. In so doing, the research questions RQ-E1 to RQ-E3 are addressed.

Sections 7.3 and 7.4 each initially offer a tabular summary and a graph representing perspectives of *own* IC awareness of African and Chinese culture as inferred from interviews with African and Chinese experts respectively. Second is a presentation of IC awareness perspectives of *other* for both African and Chinese cultures. Third is a comparison of *own* and *other* IC awareness perspectives for African and Chinese cultures respectively. This process brings forward potential similarities and differences between how African and Chinese people view themselves and how they are viewed by others.

In the first three stages, all identified IC awareness perspectives are listed regardless of the number of occurrences. This is done in order to show the breadth of such issues in Sino-African organisational contexts. Importantly, a distinction is made between IC awareness perspectives identified through a deductive process (sections 7.3 to 7.6) largely informed by findings from the study of theory (Chapter 5), versus inductively emerging perspectives. The emerging IC awareness perspectives of both African and Chinese experts are then presented together in section 7.7.

In section 7.5, own IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts are juxtaposed to highlight the similarities and/or differences between how these people potentially view themselves. Then in section 7.6, other IC awareness perspectives for both African and Chinese experts are juxtaposed to show the similarities and differences between how these people potentially view each other. The emerging inductively identified IC awareness perspectives are presented in section 7.7. Finally in section 7.8, IC awareness categories – based on the data presented in 7.3 through to 7.7 – are developed.

It can be observed that the experts make many cultural and contextual references as opposed to pure communication references, in the sense of information exchange. This observation validates the assertion that culture and communication cannot be separated, as expressed by anthropologist Edward Hall, that "communication is culture" and "culture is communication" (Hall, 1959, p. 169).

7.3 Perspectives of Intercultural Communication Awareness – African Culture

In this section, IC awareness perspectives of African culture are first presented in tabular form. The first column in the tables lists the interviewees from whom the IC awareness perspective is inferred. The second column identifies the perspective and the last column indicates the frequency (the number of times the characteristic was inferred in the indicated interviews). Following each data table and graphical illustration, quoted extracts of interviews are provided in support of the most frequently cited perspectives. At times, a quote may be presented in more than one instant in as far as it reflects a different IC awareness perspective. In addition, to avoid restricting the discussion, no cut-off point on the number of frequently cited perspectives to be discussed in each instant was set. A brief summary recaps the findings of the section.

7.3.1 Own perspectives: African experts

RQ-E1: *What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their own culture?* **a)** *African experts*

Perspectives of African experts on own IC awareness as inferred and coded from the interview transcriptions are presented in Table 7.2 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.7.

Table 7.2: IC awareness of African culture – African experts' perspectives

Interviewee	IC awareness perspective	(fi)
A1; A5; A6; A7	Human centredness	12
A1; A4; A6; A7	Consensus-seeking	10
A1; A3; A4; A5; A6	Respect	10
A1; A3; A4; A7	Direct manner	7
A1; A3; A6; A7	Humble	7
A1; A5	Showing emotions	7
A1; A4; A5	Accommodating others	6
A1; A4; A3; A7	Communalistic	6
A1; A3; A6	Following rules and protocol	6
A1; A4; A6; A7	Family orientation	5
A1; A3; A7	Social etiquette	5
A3; A7	Hierarchical	3
A3; A7	Individualistic	3
A2;	Logical thinking	3
A1; A2	Rebellious	3
A4; A5	Interconnectivity (humans and spirit)	2
A7	Keep their own culture	2
A3;A7	Loud	2
A4; A5	Open-minded	2
A1	Pursuit of harmony	2
A3	Abrupt	1
A2	Achievement-focused	1
A3	Arrogant	1
A1	Confrontational manner	1
A1	Curiosity	1
A1	Honour	1
A7	In-group focus	1
A3	Lots of talk	1
A3	Status-driven	1

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.7: IC awareness of African culture – African experts' perspectives
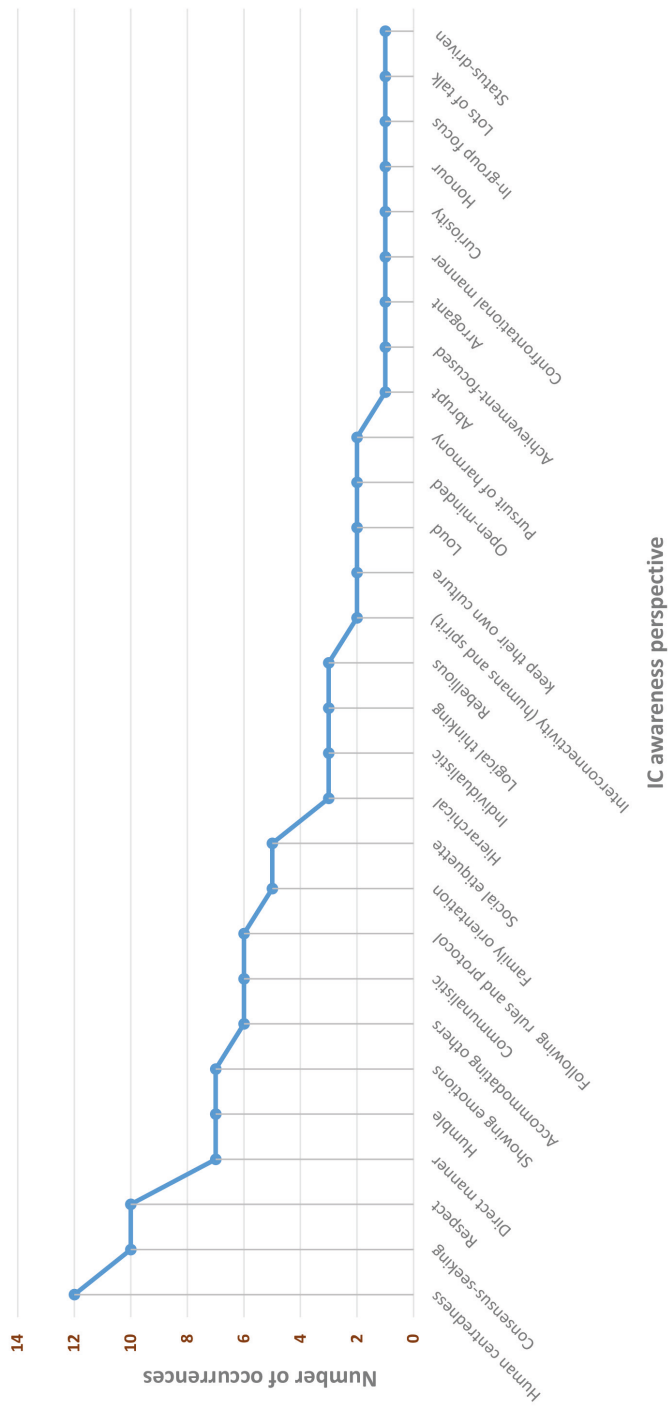
Source: Author's own contribution

As reflected in Table 7.2 and Fig. 7.7, the perspectives of *own* IC awareness of African people inferred from interviews with African experts, is that African people are largely human-centred, consensus-seeking, respectful, humble, speak in a direct manner, show emotions, are accommodating, communalistic, follow rules and protocol, and have prescribed ways of demonstrating good social etiquette. Quoted extracts supporting the most frequently cited perspectives are now provided and briefly discussed.

7.3.1.1 Human centredness

In African culture, the human being and good human relations are central to life and communication, as reflected in the comments of A1, A5, A6 and A7.

A7 speaks of the primary definition of people as human beings remaining in whatever context they find themselves, as reflected below.

> *Because what defines us as human beings, never changes. So your primary definition as a human being remains, even though you have changed the context or the environment in which you work.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

The human centredness of African culture appears not to be well understood by Chinese colleagues, as shown in A1's reflection on the Chinese lack of understanding of protocol for events such as death, in African culture.

> *The Chinese don't understand when someone dies, that you need to go to the funeral. No, they want you to take leave and deduct it from your pay. That makes me angry because where I come from, if a mom dies or a dad dies or sibling, it's very serious. We would organise a taxi and we would go as a team for those two hours and come back.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

This finding is indicative of the Chinese position where business is potentially put ahead of human relations, or of the in-group versus out-group nature of Chinese culture, where concern is for the immediate family (Chen, 2002; 2015; Chen and Starosta, 2003).

It is further suggested that the human centredness of African culture extends to empathic behaviours, such as being accommodative of others and showing warmth to others in communication and everyday life. For example, in trying to communicate better with her Chinese counterparts, A1 says,

> *I have realised that I need to smile more, be a little calmer around them and put them at ease.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

Offering another perspective, A6 suggests that being human-centred also reflects in a concern for others and their well-being.

> *I think, and this is something I have learned having worked in Africa for many years – and when I say worked in Africa, I am talking about not in South Africa but in the subcontinent – is, a conversation starts off with a kind of "tell me how your family is, talk to me about how your children are" and showing positive interest in the person you are speaking to. And that is very important in the African culture.*

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

The values expressed by A6 are embodied in the Ubuntu philosophy discussed in Chapter 5, section 5.1.2.2.

7.3.1.2 Consensus-seeking

The consensus-seeking nature of African culture is reflected in the views of African experts who comment that Chinese people are not consultative (A1, A4, A6, A7). For example, A1 shows exasperation at the Chinese colleagues' reluctance to discuss business issues or to negotiate.

> *They don't understand this negotiating, I don't understand. Their views are so clear, in terms of the workforce actually doesn't have a leg to stand on, and "now you guys have rights, what is this rights thing? You are here to work, I'm not making money, why would I give you a bonus?"*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

The frustration felt by A1 suggests that negotiation and discussion in order to arrive at a consensus likely form an important attribute of African culture.

The valuing of consensus is further seen in A4's conviction regarding the need for compromise in bringing together different viewpoints to arrive at a solution acceptable to all.

> *Being adaptable and accepting others doesn't mean you have to give up your views but it's a matter of not insisting that one of you is right. It's about finding ways to work together using each other's differing viewpoints to arrive at a better solution, if possible.*

A4	Cameroonian	Male	37	Black	Legal

7.3.1.3 Respectful

The importance of showing respect in communication in African culture, is evident at different levels, as reflected in interviews A1, A3, A4, A5 and A6. Disrespect for elders is *frowned upon* (A3); *we respect our parents* (A5); *women* (A6); and those *heading … delegations* (A6).

Highlighting the importance of being respectful in African culture, A3 draws parallels between the respect shown in Chinese culture with that shown in African culture.

> *They are very respectful in terms of the way they address their elders. They know their place and I find it very common amongst Black people as well … You don't talk back and you can't be opinionated just because it's offensive to the elders.*

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

7.3.1.4 Humble

As is reflected by A1, A3, A6 and A7, African experts see African people as being humble. This is expressed in their views on general approaches to communication where, for example, A7 compares the Chinese practice of acknowledging title and rank to the humility of African people, where rank or title are not emphasised in communication.

> *When they interact with you as well, they expect you to defer in a specific way, acknowledging those ranks that they defer to amongst themselves. But then you find that we don't operate like that. For example we don't call each other "Mr" in SA, if it is C7 it is C7, if it is Fungai it is Fungai, if it is Janet … that is not how we interact, regardless of rank, right?*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

While A7's views may hold true in the organisational context, it may also be Western practice, given that in traditional African culture, honorific prefixes are used when addressing the elderly and those of higher ranking. For example in Zimbabwean Shona culture, a manager Mr Edward Jones would not normally be addressed as "Edward" but rather as "Va-Jones".

Also highlighting humility in interaction, A6 suggests that it is part of African culture when he says,

> *This is not about "I am big and powerful and you need to do what I tell you to do". You can't do that, you have got to show that you understand and that you are patient.*

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

Finally, in referring to how IC could be improved A1 shares an African perspective where humility is a key factor, as expressed below.

I am willing to learn from you. I think humility must not be missed in any of this.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

7.3.1.5   Speaking in a direct manner

African experts on IC awareness suggest that communication in African culture is direct, with people preferring to state facts as they are, rather than "beating about the bush". Examples are A3's description of how she presents a financial issue to her Chinese manager, A1's description of how her Chinese manager responds to direct communication, and A7's approach to matters concerning etiquette. Supporting quotations are given below.

For example, there is a situation or problem that needs to be assessed, we (South Africans and business White South Africa) tend to be very direct about a situation: "You messed up, these are the consequences," etc. But this is completely different with the Chinese culture.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

We present a budget where we are saying we will have a break-even point in March. In order for us to have a break-even point in March we would have to change a few products. The result in changing these products is that they are going to lose money in China. They didn't have to say much, or they did say it in Chinese, but you could see in the body language – no eye contact – that it's a "no".

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

These extracts suggest a direct manner of communication where all facts and issues are put on the table, a perspective confirmed by A7 below.

So it is simple. You just tell them "Ah chaps, here in Africa or in SA, we don't actually do this. It is considered impolite". You tell them. Or "It is considered disgusting".

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.3.1.6   Showing emotions

A5 paints a picture of Africans who easily show emotions when she expresses how Africans are,

> *overall friendlier than the Chinese, warmer* [and comfortable with high contact as they] *easily hug each other … As Africans, we are warmer people.*

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

7.3.1.7   Communalistic

The communalistic nature of African culture is inferred from A1's description of how Africa people band together and support each other when events such as funerals occur. All else stops for the moment, as this is this considered an important communal occasion.

> *The Chinese don't understand when someone dies, that you need to go to the funeral. No, they want you to take leave and deduct it from your pay. That makes me angry because where I come from, if a mom dies or a dad dies or sibling, it's very serious. We would organise a taxi and we would go as a team for those two hours and come back.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

7.3.1.8   Following rules and protocol

The following of rules and protocol in African culture is supported by statements made by A1 and A3, mostly relating to interaction with elders and seniors as reflected below.

> *So there are a lot of do's and don'ts in terms of when very senior people come in. And that is very key for them. Which is the exact same in Black cultur*e.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

> *You shouldn't be rude, sarcastic and loud. These are all Western ideas that are taught to us and it is foreign to the elders.*

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

7.3.1.9 Family orientation

The value ascribed to the family is seen in A7's view that local African people find it difficult to reconcile the Chinese practice of working very long hours at the expense of spending time with their families.

> *You will find that locals do not understand why you should work eighteen hour days and neglect your family, you know?*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

Further supporting the African experts view of strong family orientation in African culture, A4 says

> *We have very strong filial piety whereby we respect our parents.*

A4	Cameroonian	Male	37	Black	Legal

7.3.1.10 Etiquette

In the context of the present findings, etiquette is related to behaving appropriately and is expected in both business and social contexts. Good etiquette is expected of all. A3's negative view of the Chinese practice of playing with their cellular phones and engaging in separate conversations during meetings, emphasises the importance of good etiquette in African culture.

> *The biggest culture shock going into meetings was that in a meeting with Africans, there is usually one conversation, generally one person speaks but in the Chinese culture you have five conversations occurring at once even though you should be listening to one person. It's completely surprising. And they love cellular phones in meetings. Generally, it's rude for us to be on our phones.*

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

7.3.1.11 Summary

In summary, the *own* IC awareness perspectives of African experts are that African people are human-centred, consensus-seeking, humble, respectful, speak in a direct manner, show their emotions, are communalistic, follow rules and protocol, and value good social etiquette. During interviews, to a lesser extent, some African experts also suggested that African people view themselves as status-driven, confrontational, arrogant, abrupt, ingroup focused and talk a lot.

It seems that a straightforward approach of seeking to understand African people in the Sino-African organisational context purely on the basis of what is known of traditional African culture, may be flawed. This is because of the occurrence of perspectives normally associated with Western cultures emerging in African experts' views of themselves.

In the next section, IC awareness perspectives of African culture from the perspective of Chinese experts are presented.

7.3.2 Intercultural communication awareness of African culture: Chinese experts' perspectives

RQ-E2: *What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their counterparts' culture?* ***b)*** *Chinese experts*

Chinese experts' IC awareness perspectives of African culture as inferred from the transcribed interviews with C1 to C8 are presented in Table 7.3 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.8.

Table 7.3: IC awareness of African culture – Chinese experts' perspectives

Interviewees	IC awareness perspective	(fi)
C1; C2; C4; C7; C8	Human centredness	20
C1; C3	Arrogant	6
C1; C3; C8	Direct manner	5
C5; C7; C8	Humble	5
C1; C2; C5	Family orientation	5
C1; C3	Curiosity	4
C7; C8	Show emotions	4
C2; C3	Lots of talk	4
C8	Communalistic	3
C1; C2	Confrontational	2
C3; C7	Following rules and protocol	2
C2; C7	Individualistic	2
C5	Gender roles	2
C1	Relationship focus	2
C3	Optimistic	1

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.8: IC awareness of African culture – Chinese experts' perspectives

IC awareness perspectives

Source: Author's own contribution
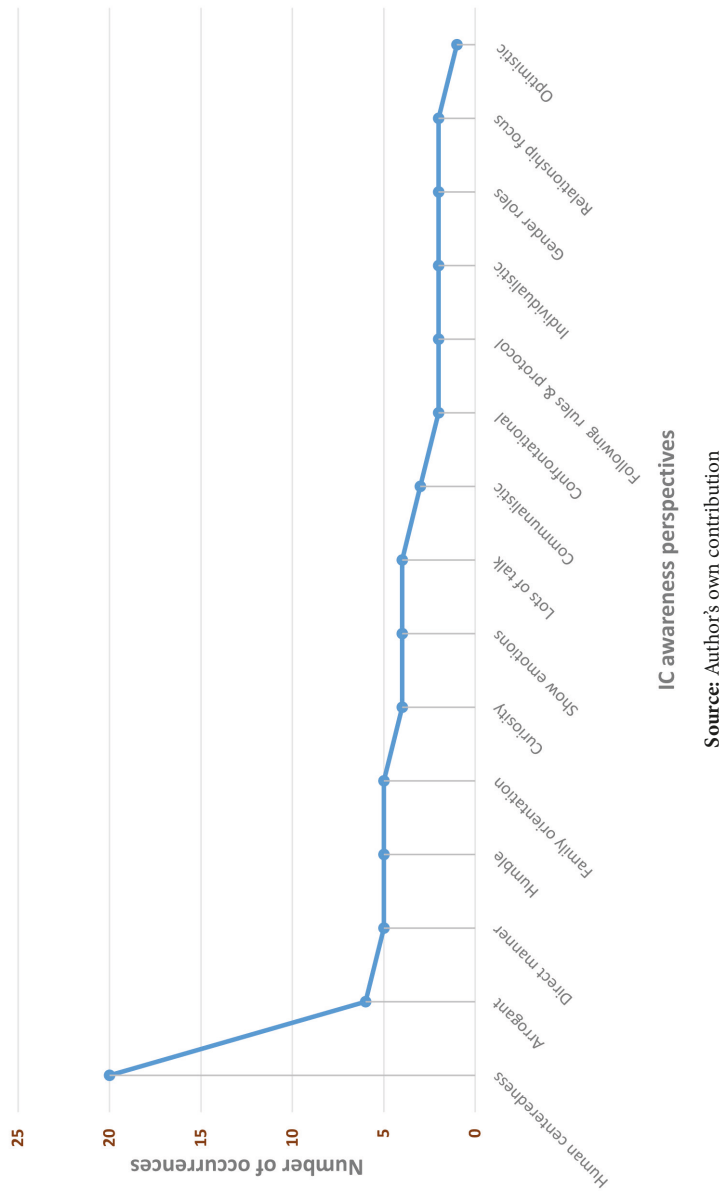
As is reflected in Table 7.3 and Fig. 7.8, Chinese experts' IC awareness perspectives of African culture include the views that African people are largely human-centred, arrogant, direct, humble, family-orientated, curious, showing of emotions, talkative and communalistic. Quotes supporting the most frequently cited perspectives are now provided. To avoid restricting the discussion, no cut-off point on the number of frequently cited perspectives to be discussed was set.

7.3.2.1 African people are human-centred

Chinese experts report that African people are patient, kind and easy to get along with. They are also described as demonstrating patience, tolerance and an accommodating spirit. Support for this view is in C4's statement about the reception he received on his first arrival to South Africa.

> *But South Africans were very kind and had a lot of patience with me.*

| **C4** | Chinese | Male | 50 | Chinese | Manufacturing |

C2 alludes to Ubuntu and the collectivistic nature of African people.

> *Black and African culture also have collectivism-orientated behaviour, hence Ubuntu.*

| **C2** | Chinese | Male | 35 | Chinese | ICT |

C7 paints a picture of the spontaneous African who easily opens up to strangers, is non-judgmental and accommodating.

> *African people are very easy-going and outgoing, you can basically bump into each other and sort of have a conversation on the road and joke around with strangers … I think from a cultural perspective, I think African people are generally very friendly and very easy to talk to and they are very easy to make friends with and they don't have a condescending sort of attitude towards other societies or other races.*

| **C7** | Chinese | Male | 29 | Chinese | Finance |

7.3.2.2 African people are arrogant

Some Chinese experts view White and Black African people as being arrogant; for example, C1 says,

> *The White people say they are happy with what they have now, so they don't need to understand more.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

The comments of C3 further illuminate the perceived arrogance of African people. He describes his working relationship with a Black employee and his general attitude towards South Africans.

> *Unfortunately, he had an arrogant nature and the quality of his work was poor. This young man thought highly of himself and believed himself to be smarter than other people. In my experience, many South Africans believe themselves to be exceptionally smart … South African locals are boastful and lack credibility, so I couldn't take their words too seriously and couldn't keep their company, let alone have deep fellowship with them.*

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.3.2.3 African people are direct

Chinese experts see African people as communicating in a direct manner, with no ambiguity. CI and C8 speak of the "straightforward" Africans, while C3 sees South African people as being *too* direct.

> *To the White South Africans, the so-called Afrikaners, my first impression was that they are very straightforward, very frank … The Black people and people in the Western environment tend to speak more openly, straightforward and put everything on the table.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

> *They are more straightforward than the Chinese people. They don't like to beat about the bush.*

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

> *South African locals are too direct in their communication in contrast to Chinese people who are always "veiled" in their communication.*

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.3.2.4 African people are humble

Inferences made from the interviews with Chinese experts are that African people are humble, to the extent that they see themselves as inferior to other races (C5). The humility ex-

tends even to those in high office (C8), citing the example of a South African minister who received a Chinese delegation with great humility.

> *I think for a short distance in their mind, the Black African mind, they still see them-selves not number one, they are always thinking negatively, they are behind someone.*

C5	Chinese	Female	50	Chinese/SA	Finance

> *Even if they are in high position they are still friendly and humble. In this regard they are better than the Chinese people. Even the South African minister when he receives us he is very humble. Yes that is a good point.*

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

7.3.2.5 African people are family-orientated

In their view of African culture, Chinese experts report the existence of strong affiliation to families (C1, C2), that are largely patriarchal (C5). It would appear however that Chinese experts believe that value assigned to the family interferes with work in the organisa-tion, as African people seem to place family before the organisation. C2 comments,

> *They will take holiday or look after their family at weekends, even they talk that they will do so, they will work harder together; but in reality they don't fulfil that task com-pletely. In my experience.*

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

7.3.2.6 African people talk a lot

Chinese experts point out that the talkative nature of African people is problematic, as in most instances it is seen as a case of "all talk no action". C2 and C3 articulate this view.

> *So they don't like that the South African Black people who talk more than actions, you know?*

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

> *South Africans have a sweet mouth with a "multitude of fine words", but they seldom do what they say … South African locals don't talk much about themselves. Instead, they always tell stories about other people or talk about news in the media.*

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.3.2.7   African people are curious

An interesting aspect associated with African people by the Chinese experts (C1, C3) is curiosity, suggesting that African people are likely to be open and inquisitive in communication. This assumption is understandable, in view of the perception that African people talk a lot and are human-centred and accepting of all, including strangers.

> *For the Black Africans, I work with them in the mining environment, underground, on the surface, etc. My impression of them is that they are very curious about Chinese, especially. They want to know more about Chinese and what's beyond Africa.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

7.3.2.8   African people show emotions

The "very friendly" nature of Africans (C7), ability to joke around with strangers and show gratitude and affection (C8) as enunciated by Chinese experts reflects African people who show emotion.

> *The South African people are very friendly. Even if they are in high position they are still friendly and humble … African people also thank you for the things that you do* [gratitude]. *They are not like Chinese people.*

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

> *You find the South Africans saying "How are you?" "I am good" too much, hypocritical. And then they laugh and hug and each other* [affection] – *oh my goodness, wasting time. If you are too friendly Chinese people have doubt.*

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

7.3.2.9   Summary

Chinese experts' IC awareness perspectives of African culture are that African people are human-centred, arrogant, direct, humble, family-orientated, talkative with little action, curious and display emotions. Arrogance and humility are contradictory, suggesting an area for further investigation. In addition, though not to a large extent, inferences from interviews were that Chinese experts view African people as optimistic, confrontational, following rules and protocol, individualistic, emphasising gender roles and having a relationship focus.

In the next section, African own and Chinese IC awareness perspectives of African culture are compared.

7.3.3 Intercultural communication awareness in African culture – own and other perspectives

RQ-E3: *What are the similarities and/or differences in IC awareness perspectives in African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context?* ***a)*** *African culture*

The IC awareness perspectives of African experts and Chinese experts regarding African culture are juxtaposed in Table 7.4 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.9. Only those characteristics with a count greater than 3 in each cultural group are included in Table 7.4. However, to show the contrast between own and other perspectives in some instances where one cultural group scores greater or equal to three, the other cultural group may score zero as is depicted in the graphical illustration Fig. 7.9). Supporting quotations for the IC awareness perspectives have been given in sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2.

As reflected in Table 7.4 and Fig. 7.9 below, the areas of agreement regarding IC awareness of African culture by both African and Chinese experts are:

- human-centredness
- a direct manner
- being humble
- showing emotions
- family orientation
- communalistic

There is however a divergence, in that Chinese people potentially view African people as:

- arrogant
- talkative
- curious

Table 7.4: IC awareness in African culture – own and other perspectives

AFRICAN OWN PERSPECTIVES			CHINESE PERSPECTIVES OF AFRICANS		
Interviewee	IC awareness perspective	(fi)	Interviewee	IC Awareness perspective	(fi)
A1; A5; A6; A7	Human centredness	12	C1; C2; C4; C7; C8	Human centredness	20
A1; A4; A6; A7	Consensus-seeking	10	C1; C3	Arrogant	6
A1; A3; A4; A5; A6	Respect	10	C1; C3; C8	Direct manner	5
A1; A3; A4; A7	Direct manner	7	C5; C7; C8	Humble	5
A1; A3; A6; A7	Humble	7	C1; C2; C5	Family orientation	5
A1; A5	Showing emotions	7	C1; C3	Curiosity	4
A1; A4; A5	Accommodating others	6	C7; C8	Showing emotions	4
A1; A4; A3; A7	Communalistic	6	C2; C3	Lots of talk	4
A1; A3; A6	Following rules and protocol	6	C8	Communalistic	3
A1; A4; A6; A7	Family orientation	5			
A1; A3; A7	Social etiquette	5			
A3; A7	Hierarchical	3			
A3; A7	Individualistic	3			
A2;	Logical thinking	3			
A1; A2	Rebellious	3			

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.9: IC awareness in African culture – own and other perspectives (African and Chinese experts' perspectives compared)
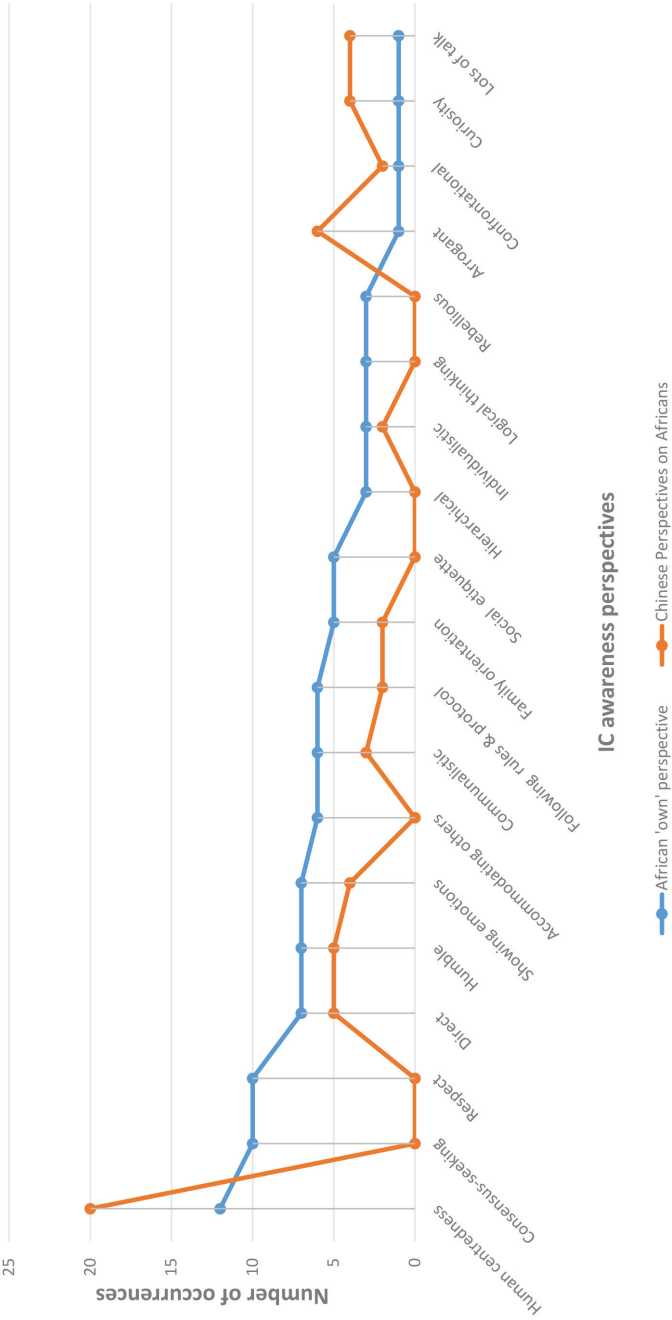
Source: Author's own contribution

7.3.3.1 Discussion

There is agreement between African and Chinese experts that African people are largely human-centred. This involves observing the values of Ubuntu including caring, reciprocity, sharing, compassion, hospitality, cohabitation, cooperation and tolerance (Mbigi and Maree, 1995; Bell and Metz, 2011; Praeg and Magadla, 2014; Metz, 2014; 2015). It is therefore fitting that African and Chinese experts share the view that African people show their emotions and are generally not condescending towards other races (A7).

However, while Chinese experts view African people as human-centred, they do not always view this characteristic in a positive light. C8 believes that African people, at times, use human centredness as an excuse for poor performance, as illustrated in the extract below, from an interview with C8.

> For example when Mandela died, the interpreter he made a mistake. In China it would have been a very big thing. You would be fired and you would have to apologise in the newspaper to the whole country. But here, they are too relaxed. They just say we are human beings, we make mistakes. That is why when a Chinese boss say, "Can you do this better?" they say, "I am a human being, of course I make a mistake." (C8)

It is still a point of agreement between African experts and Chinese experts that African people are family-orientated and humble. However, while one would expect the humility of African people to translate into humility in communication, it is surprising that Chinese people in fact see Africans as being arrogant (C1, C3). Being arrogant and direct can be associated with Western values and behaviour, where theory suggests that Western people are individualistic, independent, autonomous, ego-driven, complete and self-sufficient (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Eaton and Louw, 2000; Miike, 2002, p. 6; Kim, 2007). Furthermore, although arrogance may not be an accepted trait in Black African culture, the view that the self is flexible and variable, changing between contexts and relationships (Myer, 1987; Eaton and Louw, 2000; Faniran, 2014) could provide an explanation for the differences in business and social contexts, as will be discussed in section 7.7. Furthermore, the influence of the West comes into consideration as articulated by C1 when he says,

> Just remember that the so-called Western way is from America and Europe, then there is Africa with the culture of the Black people. So the modern development is now combined. So in terms of the big organisations in South Africa, there is the so-called Western way and the influence from America and Europe. But things are changing in Africa. (C1)

What these findings imply is that any attempt at developing some sort of intervention that will result in greater IC awareness and enhanced IC congruence should take into consideration the potential for multiple influences on African culture and communication.

The Chinese experts' views of the talkative African perpetuate the stereotypical view of the African who "talks at length, for the purpose of simple enjoyment and not necessarily to

reach any particular conclusion" (Matondo, 2012, p. 43). It is likely, however, that this results from not understanding what constitutes the human centredness of African culture, where interaction with others whose intrinsic worth, dignity and effort are valued (Jackson, 1999; Kigongo, 2002; Igboin, 2011, p. 99; Faniran, 2014, p. 151). Vigorous talking and interaction are therefore likely part and parcel of African life, whether in business or in a social context. The challenge, in IC Sino-African organisational terms, is that talking a lot is associated with non-delivery as expressed by C2 in his statement:

> *South Africans have a sweet mouth with a "multitude of fine words", but they seldom do what they say. (C2)*

The findings suggest that it is important for Chinese people to understand and acknowledge the foundation of what it means to be African, if IC congruence is to be achieved. Likewise, this expectation holds for African people regarding their Chinese counterparts.

Finally, the findings suggest that Chinese people do not necessarily view Africans as consensus-seeking, respectful rule-followers with good social etiquette – as the African people view themselves. A possible explanation for the differences in understanding could be that consensus is not a consideration in Chinese culture because strict rule-following is the norm (Gan, 2014); notions of consensus might not come to mind at all for the interviewees. Furthermore, Chinese people may not be aware of the rules and protocol in African culture, therefore they are not in a position to comment as such. For IC congruence therefore, it may be helpful if Chinese people were more aware of the rules and protocols of African culture.

In conclusion, it is possible that a lack of knowledge and understanding of African cultural, behavioural and social norms affects Chinese people's perspectives on African people.

7.4   Perspectives of Intercultural Communication Awareness – Chinese Culture

In this section, IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture are presented, beginning with Chinese experts' views of themselves. The first column in the tables indicates the interviewees from whom the IC awareness perspective is inferred. The second column identifies the perspectives and the last column indicates the number of times the perspective was raised in these interviews. Following each data table and graphical illustration, a brief summary and supporting quotations from the interviews are provided in respect of the most often cited perspectives.

7.4.1   Own perspectives: Chinese experts

RQ-E1: *What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their own culture? **b)** Chinese experts*

Own IC awareness perspectives of Chinese experts as inferred and coded from the interview transcriptions are presented in Table 7.5 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.10.

Table 7.5: IC awareness of Chinese culture – Chinese experts' perspectives

Interviewee	IC awareness perspective	(fi)
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Following rules and protocol	23
C1; C3; C5; C7; C8	Face giving/saving	13
C1; C3; C4; C6; C7; C8	In-group focus	13
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Indirect manner	13
C1; C2; C7	Pursuit of harmony	9
C1; C2; C7; C8	Hierarchical	6
C2; C7; C8	Little talk	5
C1; C4; C5; C6	Nonverbal communication	5
C1; C3; C7	Relationship focus	4
C5; C6; C7	Respect	4
C1; C8	Arrogant	3
C3; C4	Calm manner	3
C2; C6; C7	Collectivistic	3
C5; C7; C8	Human centredness	3
C2; C8	Sceptical	3
C1	Keep their own culture	2
C4; C6	Low-contact culture	2
C4	Accommodating others	1
C1	Adaptable	1
C2	Authoritative	1
C3	Curiosity	1
C2; C4; C6	Direct manner	1
C8	Show emotions	-1*
C7	Honour	1
C3	Humble	1
C1	Reciprocity	1
C7	Sense of urgency	1
C2	Sincere	1
C4	Status-driven	1

*Scores indicate frequencies

*Minus sign denotes a negative of the perspective
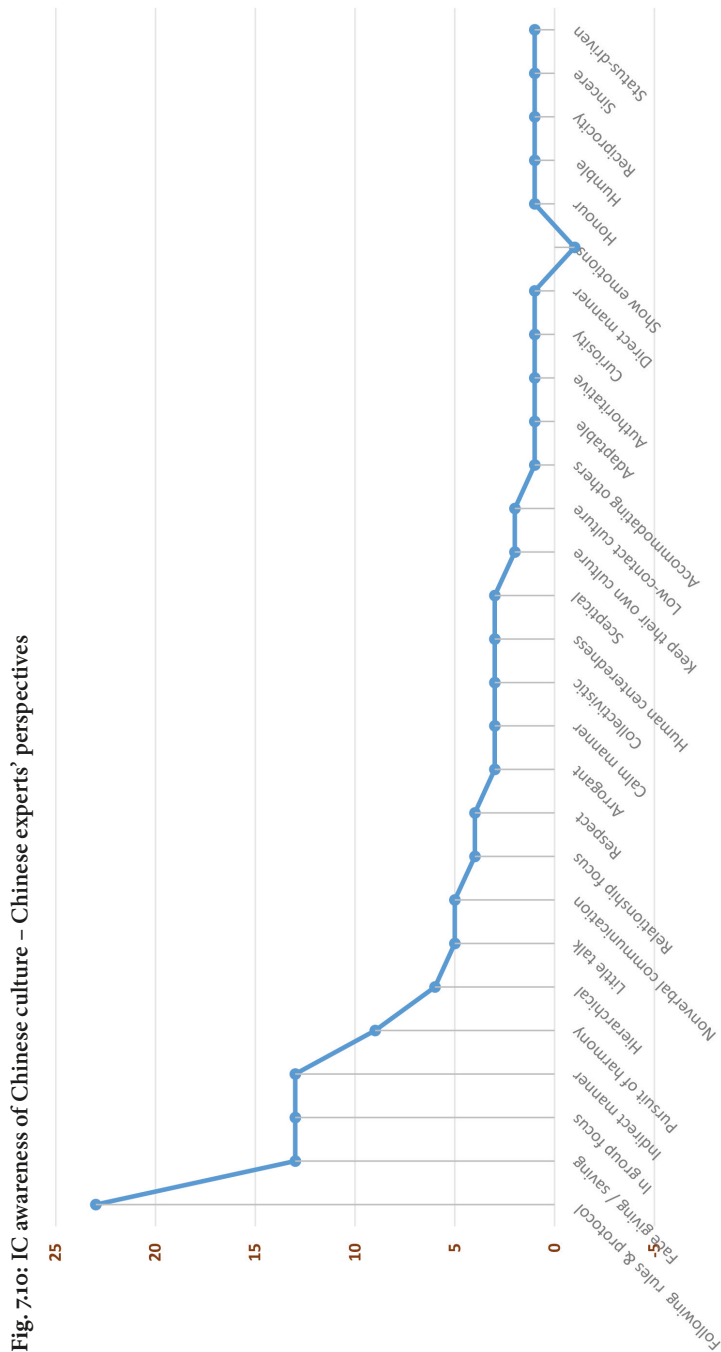
Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.10: IC awareness of Chinese culture – Chinese experts' perspectives

** Minus sign denotes a negative of the perspective

Source: Author's own contribution

As is reflected in Table 7.5 and Fig. 7.10, the perspective of IC awareness of Chinese culture inferred from interviews with Chinese experts is that Chinese people are largely rule-and-protocol followers, concerned with maintaining face, in-group focused, indirect, guided by the pursuit of harmony and are hierarchical. Quoted extracts supporting the most frequently cited views are provided. To avoid restricting the discussion, no cut-off point on the number of frequently cited perspectives to be discussed was set.

7.4.1.1 Follow rules and protocol

Chinese experts attest to strict rule-following adherence to protocol, where employees follow the orders of their superiors and communicate according to the demands of the context. In addition, words are chosen carefully to ensure that communication is appropriate. Quotes from interviews C1, C4 and C7 illustrate this.

Yes, yes. The Chinese colleagues, employees, they are just following their superiors' orders and firmly.

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

For good communication to take place, "words should flow from the mouth as from the pen of a master" and dirty words shouldn't be used. Good communication should be "neither humble nor pushy". [Appropriateness]

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

When you are talking to people there is a rule for like talking to your peers and you is talking to someone older than you that is more senior than you.

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

7.4.1.2 Face-giving and face-saving – mianzi

Chinese experts suggest that face-giving and face-saving is an inherent part of Chinese culture where one should avoid putting others in situations where they can be embarrassed. An illustration given by C1 highlights how face works in Chinese culture.

If you are working together as a team, if your boss is Chinese and he says, "We need to buy this property for x amount dollars as it can produce x amount next year" and you are the team leader who has more technical background who says, "No, if you believe this project will bring in fifty million next year then it's no way, it's impossible." You can't say that. You will probably be fired if you say that. You basically saying he is weaker and that's an insult to the Chinese boss. You could have said "yes, you are right, that's wonderful. Maybe we need to do more work and investigate further, let me help you

gain more information". So in this way you did not say you agree with him but also you did not say he is wrong.

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

The desire to save and give face also extends to situations where untruths are told to ensure face maintenance. C6 expresses how in the endeavour to maintain face, untruths may be told and that this is perfectly acceptable when he says,

Telling the truth doesn't mean it is appropriate. Being appropriate doesn't mean it is a lie or truth.

C6	Chinese	Male	31	Chinese/SA	Legal

7.4.1.3　In-group focus

Chinese experts also raise the in-group focus of Chinese people where concern is mainly for the in-group, interpersonal relationships, and the family (C1).

By the natural way, the Chinese culture and African culture, you do find that association in family values, traditions and interpersonal relationships.

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

Chinese are very open with their friends.

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

The fact that C3 emphasises that Chinese people are open with their friends implies that they may not be as open with outsiders, or those from outside their culture. There is also a suggestion in the findings that an in-group focus extends to the business context as evidenced by the reaction of C4 to unexpected assistance rendered by out-group members when he was looking for car parts.

Sometimes when I went to buy motor parts, the owner of the motor spares shop didn't stock a particular item, but they were always kind enough to refer me to another spares shop that did have the part that I needed. This way of doing things is different to Chinese culture because Chinese business people won't refer you to another shop if they don't have stock of something.

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.4.1.4 Indirect manner

An indirect manner of communicating in Chinese culture, as raised by Chinese experts, is associated with implicitness in communication. One almost always needs to find hidden meanings in communication, as articulated below.

> *The Chinese take an indirect approach, even for day-to-day conversation, you won't put things very straightforward. If there is a point that you want to make comes up where it may create some conflict to these values, you try to avoid it or try to use different expressions … In Chinese we have a saying: Something that you can comprehend but you cannot see. You can only guess or try to comprehend but people won't say straightforward to you.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

> *The Chinese are not direct. When they speak they imply something. Also they will watch your mood. If you are not very happy they can change what they say.*

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

> *Chinese people who are always "veiled" in their communication.*

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.4.1.5 Pursuit of harmony

C1 and C2 suggest that pursuit of harmony is a guiding principle in Chinese culture. To provide an example, C1 narrates a story about an argument with White African managers about dead wood for a braai. C1 and his colleagues had wandered off at night to search for dead wood, much to the displeasure of their White African hosts. The argument was very discomforting for C1 who only found peace the next day when the issue was resolved.

> *So we went out to search for other dead wood and when we came back, they were not happy with that. They shouted at us and we had a big argument. The next day when we explained everything, it was okay, we all became very relaxed … For the Chinese community and organisation, it is important to maintain that kind of harmony, comfort and happiness.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

Further emphasising the importance of harmony in Chinese interactions, C2 states,

> *Yes, so generally speaking in the Chinese organisations, business organisations or public organisations, so they also normally put a focus on harmony. They don't like people*

making trouble with each other. So superficially everyone is in a smooth relationship within the organisation. But in reality … [laughs].

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

7.4.1.6 Hierarchical

Chinese experts describe the Chinese way of life as hierarchical; this is associated with respect for authority and leaders as well as following protocol. People lower in the hierarchy are expected to show respect to those above them in the hierarchy as shown in the extracts from interviews with C2, C6 and C7.

So Chinese society, Chinese organisations are more hierarchical than in the African communities and organisations.

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

So the leadership goes first. Ladies or not ladies, leadership goes first. So you shake the leadership's hand first.

C6	Chinese	Male	31	Chinese/SA	Legal

But in East Asian countries culturally that is a little bit different, people still sort of, there is still a sort of a top-down hierarchy that people who are more senior you have to sort of show a certain kind of respect for them in the Chinese and the East Asia societies.

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

7.4.1.7 Little talk

Contrasting with African people who are seen to talk a lot, IC awareness perspectives of Chinese experts suggest that the Chinese are people of few words, who prefer to act than to talk. This characteristic also extends to emails where few words are used.

The Chinese don't talk a lot, they prefer action more.

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

Also in the email. Chinese will not say many words. People think that email is rude and like a command. But for us it is normal, nothing wrong.

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

The use of few words in communication is not just a cultural phenomenon for the Chinese people, but is also an effect of their limited vocabulary. C3 says he would like to be indirect in an appropriate way, but does not have enough vocabulary. It is therefore unsurprising that Chinese people are at times labelled as abrupt or rude.

7.4.1.8 Nonverbal communication

Apart from verbal communication, the use of body language, symbols, colour and silence in communication is mentioned by C1, C4, C5 and C6. Mere appearance is also a form of communication as seen in C4's statement.

> *For good communication, neatness and cleanliness of appearance and clothes needs to be appropriate to one's position or suited to the occasion.*

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.4.1.9 Respect

Associated with hierarchy, following rules and protocol, showing respect and being respectful are behaviours highly rated by the Chinese experts.

> *I think so, I think in the East Asian countries there is some sort of a norm where the younger people were told when growing up to respect the elderly and respect the authority.*

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

> *This young generation, because of their inexperience they have to listen to the old generation and the old generation carries a very strong mind and they don't want change, they* [young generation] *misbehave themselves, but you still have to say yes boss. That mistake I hope will be getting less and less.*

C5	Chinese	Female	50	Chinese/SA	Finance

C5's comment suggests that things may be changing with the emergence of the new younger generation of Chinese people who may more easily question the way things are done. Despite this change, however, C5 sees the old ways prevailing.

7.4.1.10 Relationships – guanxi

Chinese experts view relationships as facilitating easier communication in Chinese culture. This perspective is supported by the comments below.

For Chinese people, guanxi is the most important value when communicating.

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

If you have good guanxi and if you are comfortable in your clothes, then it is easier to communicate. If you don't have a good guanxi, its will be very awkward to talk to each other, even though you are talking about pure business.

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

I think in the Chinese business context, the Chinese people are relying on relationship-building.

C7	Chinese	Male	29	Chinese	Finance

7.4.1.11 Showing emotions

Although only inferred from the comments of one Chinese expert there is a suggestion that Chinese people are not showing of emotions. In reference to his African colleagues C8 comments that,

African people are more friendly. They are more easy to handle…

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

The above suggests a greater display of emotions by African people in comparison to their Chinese counterparts. For this reason the showing of emotions is reported in the negative in Table 7.5 and Fig. 7.10.

7.4.1.12 Summary

The *own* IC awareness perspectives of Chinese experts are that Chinese people are protocol- and rule-followers, practise face-giving and face-saving behaviours, are in-group focused, indirect, guided by the pursuit of harmony, hierarchical, prefer less talk and more action, communicate nonverbally, are respectful of elders and seniors, and are guided by the nature of relationships in communication. In addition, although not to a large extent, Chinese experts suggest that in some instances Chinese people see themselves as accom-

modating of others, adaptable, authoritative, curious, direct, not showing of emotions, honourable and humble in communication.

In the next section, IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture from the African experts' point of view are presented.

7.4.2   Intercultural communication awareness of Chinese culture: African experts' perspectives

RQ-E2: *What are the perspectives of African and Chinese experts on IC awareness in their counterparts' culture? **a)** African experts*

African expert perspectives of IC awareness of Chinese culture as inferred from the transcribed interviews are presented in Table 7.6 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.11.

Table 7.6: IC awareness of Chinese culture – African experts' perspectives

Interviewee	IC awareness perspective	(fi)
A1; A3; A4; A5; A6; A7	Following rules and protocol	20
A1; A2; A4; A5; A6; A7	In-group focus	12
A1; A3; A5; A6	Keep their own culture	12
A1; A4; A6; A7	Nonverbal communication	11
A1; A6	Abrupt	8
A1; A6; A7	Insincere	8
A1; A6	Authoritative	7
A1; A3; A7	Do not show emotions	7
A3; A5; A7	Status-driven	7
A3; A4; A7	Calm manner	6
A1; A7	Do not say "no"	6
A1; A4; A5; A6; A7	Face-giving/saving	6
A3; A4; A6;A7	Hierarchical	5
A1; A7	Honour	5
A4; A6	Indirect manner	5
A1; A5; A7	Little talk	5
A1; A6	Family orientation	4
A3; A7	Relationship-focused	4
A3; A5	Respect	4
A1; A3; A6	Rude	4
A1	Pursuit of harmony	3
A1; A6	Gender roles	2
A1	Humorous	1
A5; A7	Low-contact culture	1

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.11: IC awareness of Chinese culture – African experts' perspectives
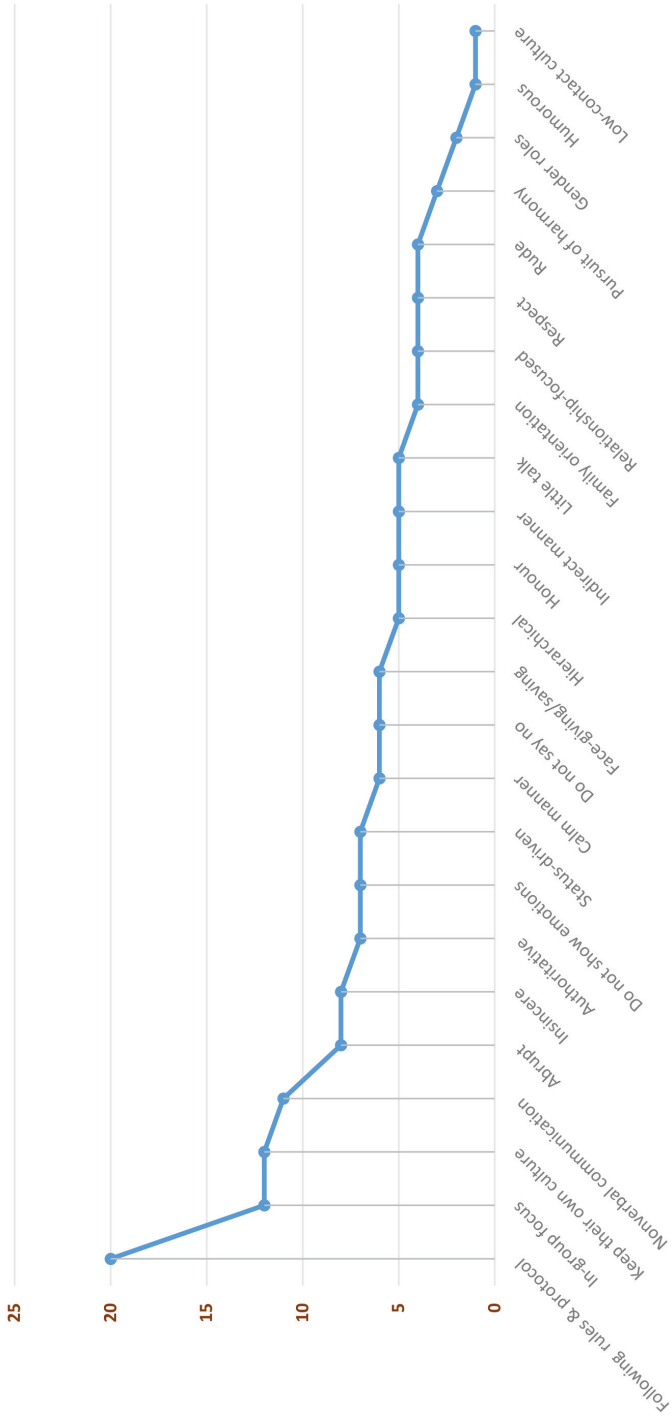
Source: Author's own contribution

As is reflected in Table 7.6 and Fig. 7.11, IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture, as inferred from interviews with African experts, suggest that Chinese people largely follow rules and protocol, are in-group focused, keep their own culture, communicate nonverbally, do not show their emotions and are abrupt, insincere and authoritative. Quotations supporting the most frequently cited perspectives are now provided. To avoid restricting the discussion, no cut-off point on the number of frequently cited perspectives to be discussed was set.

7.4.2.1 Chinese people follow rules and protocol

A1 speaks of a Chinese manager's lack of tolerance for ill-discipline, such as having dirt around the plant and not switching off the lights at the end of the day. There are set rules and these must be followed through, otherwise the consequences are:

> *Very firm. Discipline, discipline, discipline.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

It is conceivable that such a structured approach within the organisation as reported by A1 translates into communication behaviour which is bound by many rules, as seen in the comments made by A3.

> *So there are a lot of do's and don'ts in terms of when very senior people come in. And that is very key for them.*

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

Furthermore, as reported by A7, it would appear that even in general day-to-day interactions, once Chinese people have been given guidelines, they will conform. A7 speaks of his experiences with his Chinese colleagues' use of public spaces such as bathrooms in his organisation, which differs from that of local African people. As a solution and way of modifying the behaviour, A7 found that simply guiding Chinese people in what was expected of them in these spaces, led to immediate compliance.

> *But otherwise they adhere to rules and regulations very well; they tend to instruction very well. So as soon as they get guided, they conform.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

With reference to protocol, African experts A5 and A7 report observing the strict conventions followed in seating arrangements and other organisational procedures, as reflected in the extracts given below.

I've seen it, many a time, where protocol is very strict on how people sit, in front of you and in negotiations they are quite formalistic in terms of their working patterns … Therefore, what normally happens when you have negotiations, the big person who speaks the most will sit in the middle and that should be adopted because it makes sense that the most influential must sit in the middle.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

Not following protocol has its consequences, as reported by A7. Failure to adhere to protocol when communicating with Chinese people may result in failure to achieve desired goals. A7 illustrates this point in an example of an employee seeking a pay increase.

So if I want a raise from the manager, or the boss for example, the big boss – I am talking about maybe the project director – I am a line manager level or whatever employee, and I need to go to the big, big boss: I need someone to take me to the big, big boss. He is going to say "Okay, this is A7, he is the one who is doing this and this and this" – he will explain. And then the boss is like "Oh yeah, yes, yes, that one". And he will say A7 is a very good chap, he does his job very well, blah, blah and he deserves a raise. Then I will get a raise. If I just go directly to the boss, you will not get anything.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.2 Chinese people have an in-group focus

African experts hold the view that Chinese people have a collective sense of self (A4) mostly keep to themselves, eating their own food and not being overly concerned about what happens outside their inner communities (A6). A1 comments on how Chinese colleagues do not seem to understand why one would need to take time off to attend a funeral of a colleague's relative. The following quotations highlight the in-group focus of Chinese cultures.

The Chinese do have the same sort of sense of collective, a sense of self, responsibility and togetherness.

A4	Cameroonian	Male	37	Black	Legal

They don't eat the local food, they bring in Chinese chefs, and they live these isolated lives you know? Not going in and understanding the culture of Africa.

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

And they keep to themselves, they don't integrate in the local community

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

The Chinese don't understand when someone dies, that you need to go to the funeral. No, they want you to take leave and deduct it from your pay.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

7.4.2.3 Chinese people keep their own culture

Related to having an in-group focus is the African experts' view that Chinese people keep to their own culture. Reportedly, the Chinese are patriotic, preferring to speak their own language and honour their cultural occasions such as the Chinese New Year. The African experts see the Chinese ways as not having been Westernised.

They have kept a lot of their own culture. Very much so. They encourage that by mainly interacting with one another only to some extremes. They organise their own social gatherings. My understanding is that they go to each other's houses. So they have their own social interaction and there's just this huge migration that happens, obviously during the Chinese New Year. So they are very in touch with their culture. And they are very patriotic like that.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

From my interaction with the Chinese, there is no Westernisation of their communication.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

But no matter how good the Chinese are at English, they always conduct their meetings in Mandarin. So Mandarin is very strong, their roots are of utmost importance.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

Yes, look I mean I will give an example: the CEO or chairman of the company could not speak … I mean he said he couldn't speak in English, I think he actually spoke more English than he liked people to believe, but it was interesting.

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

7.4.2.4 Chinese people communicate nonverbally

African experts report a prevalence of the use of nonverbal communication by their Chinese colleagues. The use of eyes, body language and silence are particularly evident, and this gives support to the old adage "action speaks louder than words" or, in the words of Hall (1959), "silence speaks". Even the colours worn convey some sort of meaning in Chinese culture.

Regarding the use body language in communication, A1 tells of a nonverbal response to a financial proposal she had put forward to her Chinese boss.

> *They didn't have to say much or they did say it in Chinese, but you could see in the body language* [no eye contact] *that it's a no.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

The Chinese people's use of body language is also see in A3's narration of the response to the bossy approach of White South Africans.

> *White South African males, generally, get their point across by being loud, demanding and bossy. You can see the body language from the Chinese, they are not as open. You just see them closed off to the idea.*

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

Body language is also believed to be reflective of a person's character as pointed out by A7.

> *And when you are speaking to them, if you stand with your hands behind your back looking very firm and strong, it shows you are very stable. Also with the Chinese you don't necessarily have to look a boss in their eyes, it shows that maybe you undermine his authority or something. So you learn those things so that you also don't offend the other people.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

The final nonverbal aspect of communication mentioned is the use of colour. This aspect is highlighted in A1's advice that people interacting with Chinese people should put some thought into the colours they wear.

> *Please look at the colours you wear to work. They don't like bright colours. Greys, blues, black – they wear very dark colours because they see that as professional.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

7.4.2.5 Chinese people are abrupt

An interesting characteristic of Chinese people inferred from the interviews with African experts is that they are abrupt in manner. This inference contrasts with the notion of face-giving and face-saving, where politeness, respect and avoiding offence and embarrassment are advocated. A1 reports on the Chinese feedback in a performance appraisal:

> *We do reviews and we come up with KPAs* [key performance areas] *and if you have not met them – what's the problem? Are you competent, are you stupid? … They will speak with brashness.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

A6 clearly articulates the abrupt manner in which Chinese managers spoke to staff and some of his colleagues.

> *I used to sometimes feel very uncomfortable about the way that my staff were treated by other members of staff, in a very, very abrupt, sometimes rude way. And that is just the way that Chinese work … I witnessed the COO (Chief Operating Officer); okay he was on the same level as I was, he was a VP, but he assumed the role of COO, and he was absolutely shredded in front of all of his colleagues, and people who were his subordinates – which you just don't do in Western culture!*

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

7.4.2.6 Chinese people are insincere

The IC awareness perspective that the Chinese are insincere covers a broad range of issues. The issues include lying, "playing to the gallery", being ambiguous and generally not being straightforward and honest, as perceived by the African experts. The extracts below provide a number of examples of Chinese insincerity as defined in the context of the present study.

> *They can be very brash or they would be unbelievably thankful. Ok, so I give them financials, as an example, and they say "thank you so much", "thank you, thank you thank you," "we thank you for your good work." They seem to be over-grateful when you give them something* [researcher inferred insincerity]… *The problem I have is that a big part of Chinese way of doing business is that lying is a normal part of business and I think it really frustrates things.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

> *You know they see themselves as being in a very similar situation, you know, which is great! I think it is good for Africa to have a friend in China, I think it is good, but on*

the other hand it is actually watching how the Chinese actually treat Africans, and that I had a problem with. I felt very uncomfortable with it in many circumstances. I made it clear that I wasn't happy with the way that Africans were being treated. So it was a case of talking out the side of your mouth, on the one hand "oh you know we are all brothers" and then on the other hand treating Africans with complete disdain – which made me very uncomfortable … The whole issue of saving face and the whole issue around being polite, I find that kind of only skin deep. I get a feeling that there is quite a lot of two-faced kind of activity that goes on – you know saying one thing but actually believing another.

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

I don't know if it's just our holding company or a generalised Chinese culture, but they change easily.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

7.4.2.7 Chinese people are authoritative

In contrast to the reported consensus-seeking nature of African cultures, African experts view the Chinese as authoritative.

The way they spoke, it was very authoritative, authoritarian and it would take a great deal to shift their opinion, very stubborn – so you know lots of challenges, a hell of a lot of challenges!

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

A7 likens communication in Chinese culture to a military setup.

That is one thing that is very clear. It is like a military type of setup you know – where you have a major and a colonel and a sergeant and that sort of thing – that is how they relate.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.8 Chinese people do not show emotions

African experts find Chinese people are always calm and that it is difficult to read their emotions. Quotations from interviews with A7, A1, and A3 support this perspective.

They are very impersonal in their relations with other people – even amongst themselves.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

His management style is very calm and when he gets upset, it's also still very calm. And you do get CEO's like that. They so calm, but those words are so sharp … When he speaks, it doesn't sound like it's very harsh but when she [Chinese translator] *tells us, it sounds harsh.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

They don't raise their voices, they don't become animated, they are not rude at all but they can make a point by being calm and serene but they aren't afraid to embarrass you in front of a group of people. That's the Chinese culture. Whereas we want to be all brash, loud, insulting and vocal. They don't do that, they will embarrass you if you do something wrong but in a very calm, serene manner.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

7.4.2.9 Status-driven communication

According to IC awareness perspectives of Africans, one has to earn the right to speak, titles are used and there is deference to rank in the manner in which communication takes place. The aforementioned viewpoint is supported by the narrations of A3 and A7 where,

If you haven't achieved a certain status in your life, you can't address an elder, you can't be part of a conversation … So as much as you might be having conversations, when they address the CEO, they always use full names and a Mr or Mrs. They will never address you by the first name.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

They defer mostly to rank. So if someone is high-ranked they interact with them in a different way and then if they are on the same level they also interact with them differently.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.10 Chinese people are calm in manner

The manner of communication demonstrated by Chinese people is reportedly calm. A3 believes that approaching communication with Chinese people in a clam manner makes for better communication, as this is a disposition that Chinese people are used to.

So it's important to understand not to be loud, forceful, brash or offensive, to always remain respectful no matter how angry or upset you are. That will facilitate better communication especially with the Chinese.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

A7's views on the need for adaptation when communicating with Chinese people also point to their perceived calm and quiet manner.

And we do also adapt to them, because they can be barely or hardly audible when you speak to them.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.11 Chinese people do not say "no"

A perhaps bewildering aspect of Chinese people's communication, pointed out by African experts, is that Chinese people do not say "no". Not saying "no" may be viewed as a lack of straightforwardness, suggesting that appearances may not always represent reality. It is also plausible that not saying "no" could be for face-maintenance reasons, not wanting to show weakness or incapacity. Extracts from interviews with A1 and A7 provide examples.

In a business sense, I think it has less to do with the communication and more to do with the way business is done and the culture is … there's no such word as "no" … There's no such word as "no" and there's no such word as "not possible." So we have to come in line and find the hidden meaning.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

Okay, what I am going to tell you, straight through, is that the Chinese do not say "no". They will not say "no" to anything. They don't believe that anything is impossible. They have a favourite word that I call a Chinese invention, called "no need". You know "no needa!" – and when they say that … [laughs] those guys will not say "no" and they will deliver! Trust me!

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.12 Strong concern for face-giving and face-saving – mianzi

African experts report a concern for giving and saving face in Chinese culture as reflected in the following quotations.

The image they portray is very important.

| **A5** | South African | Female | 26 | White | Legal |

The face is meant to be high or represent a person's dignity and it's about not offending … I mentioned indirectness and one of the reasons why that exists, especially in face-to-face interactions or group interactions, is because of the concept of face, or in Chinese, mianzi.

| **A4** | Cameroonian | Male | 37 | Black | Legal |

7.4.2.13 Communication is hierarchical

As is expressed by A3, A4, A6 and A7, when people communicate in Chinese culture, hierarchy is taken into cognisance. The greatest respect is accorded to those higher up the hierarchy.

So it's very hierarchical and about respect.

| **A3** | South African | Male | 34 | Black | Manufacturing |

While A4 expresses his observation on the hierarchical interactions in the business context.

I have realised in a business context that certain things do pop out, such as, their interactions are very hierarchical.

| **A4** | Cameroonian | Male | 37 | Black | Legal |

7.4.2.14 Chinese people are honourable

A7 refers to Chinese people as honourable people who keep their promises and do not steal.

They are very honourable, the Chinese. If they say this, they will do this. Because they have got a strong sense of … their moral fibre … not moral fibre but more the high moral ground, they try to uphold it mostly. So they are very honourable … The second thing, the Chinese do not steal. Like I told you, that moral high ground that they use.

| **A7** | Zimbabwean | Male | 35 | Black | ICT |

To explain why Chinese employees had been excluded as suspects in a recurring theft problem, A1 exclaims,

What do you mean "stealing?" The concept is foreign! [to the Chinese].

| A1 | South African | Female | 40 | Coloured | Manufacturing |

7.4.2.15 Chinese people do not talk much

African experts also believe that Chinese people are people of few words, preferring to talk only when necessary.

> *They put forth what they want you to see and that is about it. Or they only tell you what they feel you need to know and nothing more.*

| A5 | South African | Female | 26 | White | Legal |

A7 adds that, unlike African people who prefer to chit-chat when they have their meals in the work canteen, Chinese people do not talk much.

> *When they are eating they don't talk much, they just leaning into their plate of food and eating and eating.*

| A7 | Zimbabwean | Male | 35 | Black | ICT |

7.4.2.16 Chinese people are rude

A perspective raised by some African experts is that Chinese people are rude. Reportedly, Chinese people neither greet nor say "thank you".

> *The Chinese don't seem to believe in greeting.*

| A1 | South African | Female | 40 | Coloured | Manufacturing |

The not-greeting nature of Chinese people is corroborated, in this case, by Chinese expert C4 who, on commenting on interaction between African and Chinese people in organisations, says,

> *South Africans have a good cultural trait of always greeting people, while Chinese don't. Very few Chinese say "good morning" and "good evening".*

| C4 | Chinese | Male | 50 | Chinese | Manufacturing |

This relates to etiquette, in that A3 had earlier noted how the Chinese engage in smaller discussions in a meeting, instead of listening to the main speaker. Although this was perceived to be rude by A3, it appears to be normal for the Chinese people.

7.4.2.17 Chinese people value relationships – guanxi

A2 and A7 attest to the importance of relationships when communicating with Chinese people by alluding to the close-knit nature of Chinese society.

> *I think the second thing is relationships. When you engage in Chinese organisations, it is absolutely imperative to have a friend on the inside, anywhere. Not for reason that are surreptitious but just to know what's going on. It's so thick from the outside, you need to understand what's going on internally, why is decision-making taking so long, why is your organisation not aligned to this outcome, what's the problem there, who's this guy or who's that girl. That's what's needed.*

A2	South African	Male	44	White	Professional

A7 speaks explicitly of guanxi and trust, which makes for potentially easier communication.

> *They have something they do called guanxi that the Chinese use. Guanxi is they can only trust a person that has been introduced to them by a person that they trust. So for you to earn absolute trust from a Chinese person, you must have been introduced by someone that they know. It is called guanxi. It is key to the Chinese.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.4.2.18 Chinese people are indirect

African experts are of the view that Chinese people are direct. For example A6 points out that when interacting with Chinese people it is easy to lose out on the content of communication if one misses the nuances and how things are said.

> *I think there are so many nuances, so many things which can be lost. Just the way you say things.*

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

In addition, A4 shares his experiences on how he missed the subtle message embedded in a conversation with his manager. A4 preferred to work from home, but his manager preferred him to work in the office. Rather than directly informing A4 of his expectations, the Chinese manager used an indirect expression whose meaning A4 missed, but only came to realise much later.

> *There is something I should have picked up on, that his subtle comments were extremely important. He was saying that "freedom is overrated" or something like that. Those weren't his exact words but something along those lines. I couldn't sense that he was*

telling me something very important around how he works. So it's very important to be mindful of those comments or cues, verbal or body language cues when you are speaking with a Chinese person in business.

A4	Cameroonian	Male	37	Black	Legal

7.4.2.19 Summary

African experts' IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture are that Chinese people follow rules and protocol, are in-group focused, keep their own culture, communicate nonverbally, are abrupt, insincere, authoritative and do not display emotion. African experts further view Chinese people as status-driven, calm in manner, not saying "no", concerned with face maintenance, hierarchical, honourable and communicating indirectly with few words. Although not to a large extent, additional inferences from these interviews are that African experts find Chinese people to be family-orientated, relationship-focused, harmony-seeking, observing of gender roles, low contact, rude, and at times humorous. In the next section, Chinese own and African IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture are compared.

7.4.3 Intercultural communication awareness in Chinese culture – own and other perspectives

RQ-E3: *What are the similarities and/or differences in IC awareness perspectives in African and Chinese cultures in the Sino-African organisational context? **b)** Chinese culture.*

The IC awareness perspectives of Chinese and African experts on Chinese culture, citing only those occurring more than three times in each cultural group, are juxtaposed in Table 7.7 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.12. However, to show the contrast between own and other perspectives in some instances where one cultural group scores greater or equal to three, the other cultural group may score zero as is depicted in the graphical illustration Fig. 7.12).

Supporting quotations for the IC awareness perspectives have already been given in sections 7.4.1 and 7.4.2.

As is reflected in Table 7.7 and Fig. 7.12 below, the areas of agreement for Chinese and African experts regarding IC awareness of Chinese culture are the following:

- following rules and protocol
- face-giving/face-saving
- in-group focus
- indirect manner
- hierarchical

- little talk
- communicating nonverbally
- relationship focus
- respect

There is however a divergence, in that African people also view Chinese people as:

- keeping their own culture
- abrupt
- insincere
- authoritative
- not showing emotion
- never saying "no".

Table 7.7: IC awareness in Chinese culture – own and other perspectives

CHINESE OWN PERSPECTIVES			AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON CHINESE		
Interviewee	IC awareness perspective	(fi)	Interview	IC awareness perspective	(fi)
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Following rules and protocol	23	A1; A3; A4; A5; A6; A7	Following rules and protocol	20
C1; C3; C5; C7; C8	Face giving/saving	13	A1; A2; A4; A5; A6; A7	In-group focus	12
C1; C3; C4; C6; C7; C8	In-group focus	13	A1; A3; A5; A6	Keep their own culture	12
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Indirect manner	13	A1; A4; A6; A7	Nonverbal communication	11
C1; C2; C7	Pursuit of harmony	9	A1; A6	Abrupt	8
C1; C2; C7; C8	Hierarchical	6	A1; A6; A7	Insincere	8
C2; C7; C8	Little talk	5	A1; A6	Authoritative	7
C1; C4; C5; C6	Nonverbal communication	5	A1; A3; A7	Do not show emotions	7
C1; C3; C7	Relationship focus	4	A3; A5; A7	Status driven	7
C5; C6; C7	Respect	4	A3; A4; A7	Calm manner	6
C1; C8	Arrogant	3	A1; A7	Do not say "no"	6
C3; C4	Calm manner	3	A1; A4; A5; A6; A7	Face giving/saving	6
C2; C6; C7	Collectivistic	3	A3; A4; A6; A7	Hierarchical	5
C5; C7; C8	Human centredness	3	A1; A7	Honour	5
C2; C8	Sceptical	3	A4; A6	Indirect manner	5
			A1; A5; A7	Little talk	5
			A1; A6	Family orientation	4
			A3; A7	Relationship focus	4
			A3; A5	Respect	4
			A1; A3; A6	Rude	4

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.12: IC awareness in Chinese culture – own and other perspectives

IC awareness – Chinese culture
Own and other perspectives

IC awareness perspectives

— Chinese 'own' perspective
— African perspectives on Chinese

* * Minus sign depicts a negative of the perspective

Source: Author's own contribution
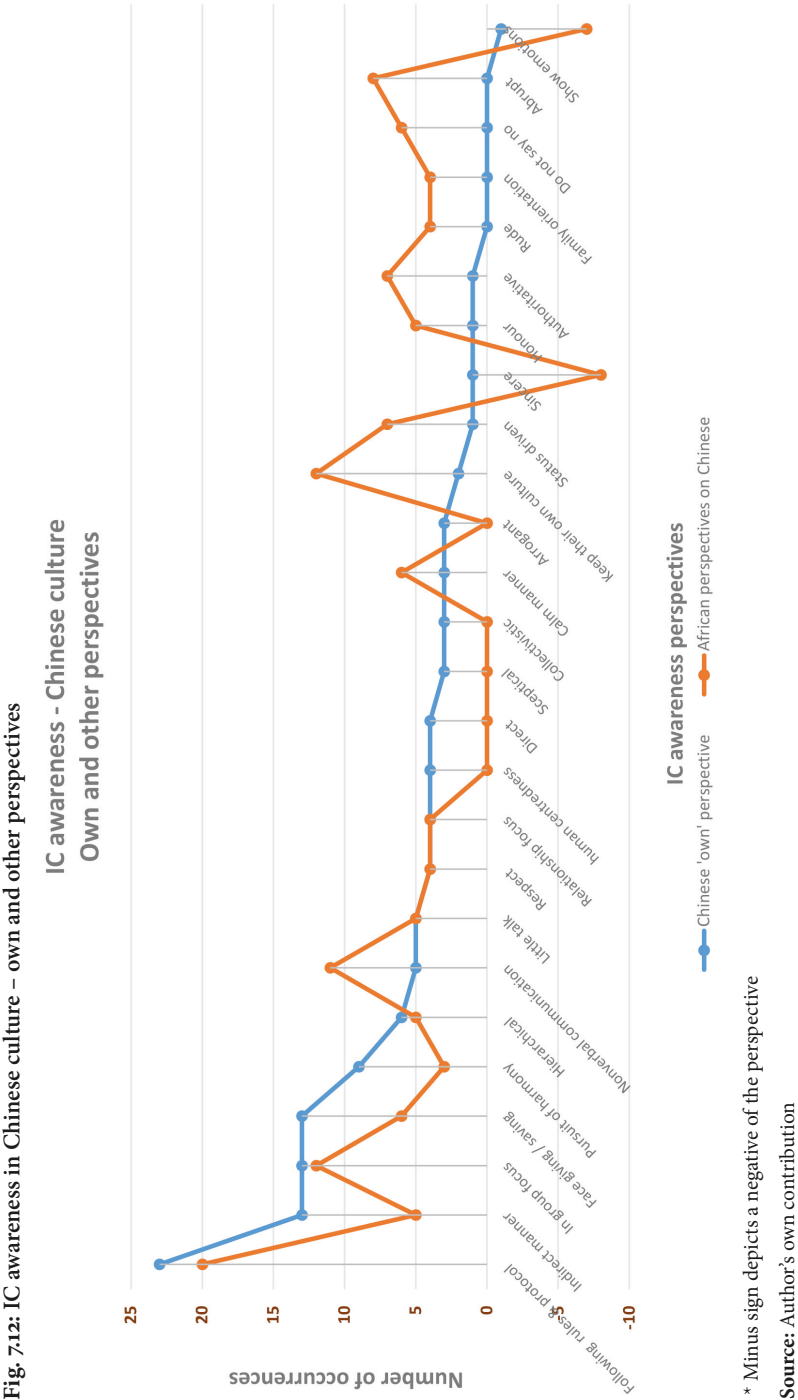
7.4.3.1 Discussion

The similarities and differences between Chinese own and African experts' IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture have both positive and negative implications for IC congruence. Agreement in perspectives suggests that people from an African culture are aware of the stated aspects of Chinese culture. Therefore, given that knowledge, the IC encounter can be approached from a position of understanding. Despite this knowledge however, it is evident that there is a need to understand exactly which behaviours constitute the communication norm (Koester and Olebe, 1988). For example, while face-giving and face-saving (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Luo, 2008; Huang, 2010; Gan, 2014) may, on occasion, involve the telling of untruths (C6), this may be unacceptable in African culture where truth is valued (Maomeka, 1989). In fact, the equivalence of face maintenance in African culture could easily be respect and behaving like a human being, as articulated by Mutombo Nkulu-N'Sengha (2009 cited in Metz, 2015, p. 85).

The fact that African people are aware of the indirect manner of Chinese people means than African people should be careful not to always infer literal meaning, but rather be sensitive to potentially hidden meanings in communication. A possible strategy could be to ask when in doubt.

Nonverbal communication is another area in which much could be done to educate African people on the meanings implied. For instance, silence used in different contexts could have different meanings. It could mean not agreeing, as experienced by A1 on presenting financial figures to her Chinese manager:

> *They didn't have to say much or they did say it in Chinese, but you could see in the body language (no eye contact) that it's a no.* (A6)

Furthermore, silence is a sign of humility and does not necessary imply ignorance as expressed by C1:

> *As I said, in the Western world if you don't speak out then the people just interpret that you don't know. You don't need to say anything but in your heart you want to say something. They cannot just work everything out straightforward, then they suffer. For instance, if they say or see something wrong in the office then they don't like to speak out or if they see some decisions from the leaders which aren't correct then they won't speak out. Then people ask later why didn't they say anything? So here in the Western organisation, the Chinese has to take the blame.* (C1)

Interestingly Chinese experts do not comment on their patriotism or propensity to keep their own culture. They also do not comment on their tendency not to show emotion – which suggests that these are norms in Chinese culture. The patriotism, strict following of rules and protocol, as well as keeping of own culture by Chinese people observed by African experts, suggests an underlying influence guiding behaviour – potentially Confucianism (Wah, 2001; Tang, 2014, p. 77). Strong patriotism may have implications for achieving IC congruence in that Chinese people may find it more difficult to adapt and to accommo-

date others outside their culture. Chinese experts also do not comment on the fact that they never say "no", perhaps suggesting pride or reluctance to disappoint. Such behaviours may have implications for IC congruence, as African people may imagine a response to be positive, when in fact it is negative – or vice versa.

In the area of divergence in perspectives, where Chinese experts view themselves as being sincere, African experts view them as otherwise. The insincerity of Chinese people as perceived by African people is in behaviours such as lying, playing to the gallery, being ambiguous and generally not being straightforward as highlighted in section 7.3. A1 labels Chinese people as prone to lying when she says,

> The problem I have is that a big part of Chinese way of doing business is that lying is a normal part of business and I think it's really frustrates things. We would sit in a normal meeting and a price would be agreed and the meeting is minuted, then when the minutes have to be signed off, they don't want to sign off the minutes. To the extent that I wanted the meetings to be recorded. (A1)

The perceptions of A1 could be a result of a lack of understating of the nuances of Chinese culture, in which trust is important. It is possible that the Chinese manager's reluctance to sign minutes could be an indication that enough trust has been gained, hence no need for formalities. It is these nuances that need further investigation and that could constitute a big part of training provided to African managers on the road towards IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

The abrupt and authoritative nature of Chinese people, as perceived by African experts, could be a result of a lack of understanding of the Chinese culture in which talk is minimal. It could also be that a limited vocabulary causes the Chinese to use words that are seemingly harsh and curt. For example, A1 reports that feedback on failure to meet performance targets in a performance review could include questions such as *"Are you competent? Are you stupid?"* Such communication is perceived as rude in African culture, and is also in opposition to the face-giving and face-saving behaviours expected of Chinese people.

In summary, the contradictions between Chinese own, African IC awareness perspectives and theoretical perspectives as established in Chapter 5, point to the presence of contextual and other considerations influencing IC interactions. These emerging perspectives or influences are presented in section 7.7.

7.5 Intercultural Communication Awareness: African Own and Chinese Own Perspectives Compared

While own and other IC awareness perspectives in each of African and Chinese cultures have been described and compared in sections 7.3 and 7.4, in this section, own IC awareness perspectives of African experts and own IC awareness perspectives of Chinese experts are compared. Although not addressing any specific empirical research question, this sup-

portive analysis is aimed at further illuminating the similarities and differences between IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese cultures by comparing how African and Chinese people view themselves. Presented in Table 7.8 and graphically illustrated in Fig. 7.13 below, are African and Chinese perspectives on IC awareness in each of their own cultures. Supporting quotations for the IC awareness perspectives have already been provided in sections 7.3.1 and 7.4.1.

Table 7.8: IC awareness – African own and Chinese own perspectives

Interview	IC awareness perspective	African experts' own	Chinese experts' own
A1; A5; A6; A7; C5; C7; C8	Human centredness	12	3
A1; A4; A6; A7	Consensus seeking	10	0
A1; A3; A4; A5; A6	Respect	10	4
A1; A3; A4; A7; C2; C4; C6	Direct manner	7	1
A1; A3; A6; A7; C3	Humble	7	1
A1; A5; C8	Showing emotions	7	–1
A1; A4; A5; C4	Accommodating others	6	1
A1; A4; A3; A7	Communalistic	6	0
A1; A3; A6; C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Following rules and protocol	6	23
A1; A4; A6; A7	Family orientation	5	0
A1; A3; A7	Social etiquette	5	0
A3; A7; C1; C2; C7; C8	Hierarchical	3	6
A3; A7	Individualistic	3	0
A2;	Logical thinking	3	0
A1; A2	Rebellious	3	0
A1; C1; C2; C7	Pursuit of harmony	2	9
A3; C1	Arrogant	1	3
A7	In-group focus	1	13
C3; C4	Calm manner	0	3
C2; C6; C7	Collectivistic	0	3
C1; C3; C5; C7; C8	Face giving/saving	0	13
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8	Indirect manner	0	13
C2; C7; C8	Little talk	0	5
C1; C4; C5; C6	Nonverbal communication	0	5
C1; C3; C7	Relationship focus	0	4
C2; C8	Sceptical	0	3

*Scores indicate frequencies
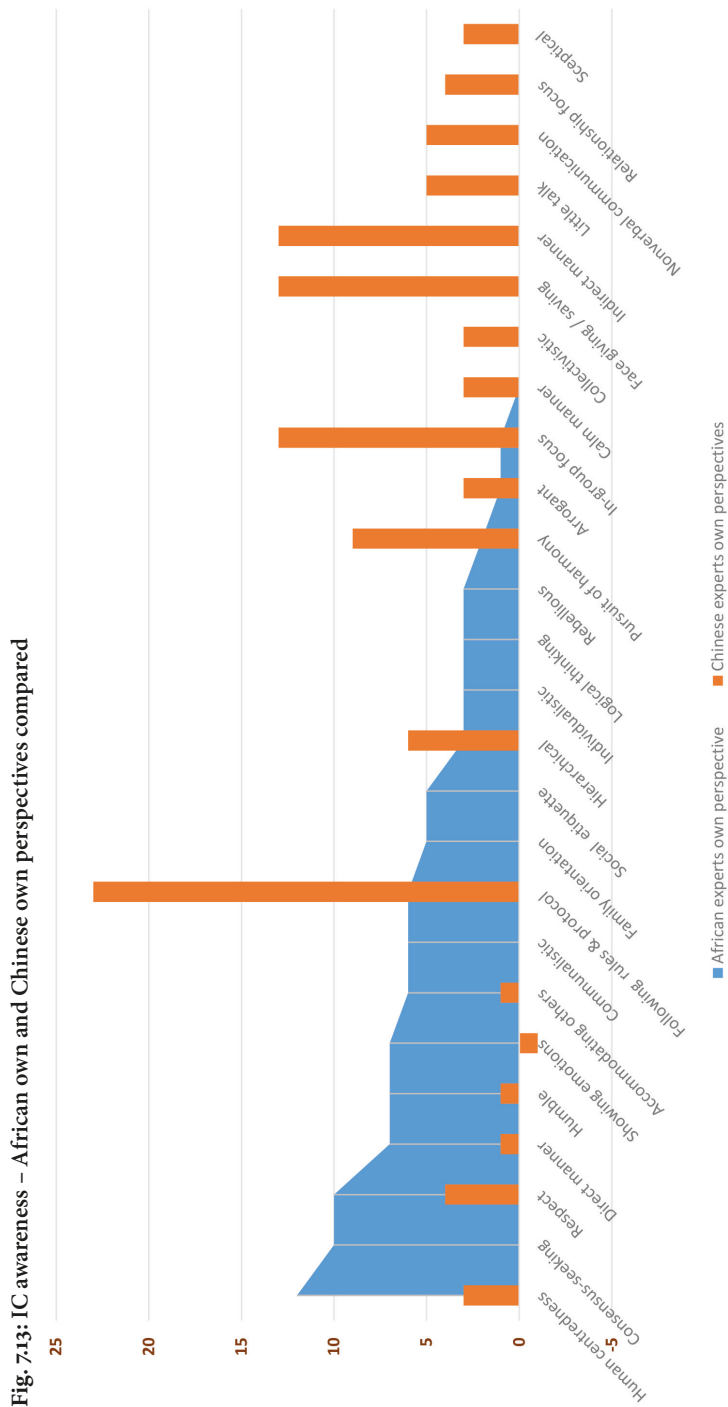
Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.13: IC awareness – African own and Chinese own perspectives compared

Source: Author's own contribution

As reflected in Table 7.8 and Fig. 7.13, the top IC awareness perspectives on African culture, as inferred from the interviews with African experts based on frequency counts are:

- human centredness
- consensus-seeking
- respect
- direct manner
- humble
- showing emotions
- accommodating others
- communalistic
- following rules and protocol.

As is reflected in Table 7.8 and Fig. 7.13, the top IC awareness perspectives on Chinese culture as inferred from the interviews with Chinese experts based on frequency counts are:

- following rules and protocol
- in-group focus
- face-giving/face-saving
- indirect manner
- pursuit of harmony
- hierarchical
- little talk
- nonverbal communication.

7.5.1 Summary

Based on frequency counts, own perspectives of African experts suggest that a focus on consensus (10), human beings in the community at large (12) as well as respect (10) is of high importance in African culture. Furthermore, humility (7), accommodating others (7), being communalistic (6), being family orientated (5) and following rules and protocol (6) is a way of life. There is no shame in showing emotions (7).

In Chinese culture on the other hand, the following of rules and protocol (23), an in-group focus (13), face giving and face saving (13), an indirect manner (13) and the pursuit of harmony (9) are of prime importance. Furthermore, observance of hierarchy (6) is the norm. Essentially, an indirect manner with limited talk (5), nonverbal communication (5) and a desire to maintain face, is preferred in the pursuit of harmony. Emotions largely are kept in check (-1).

In the next section, African and Chinese IC awareness perspectives of each other are compared.

7.6 Intercultural Communication Awareness: African and Chinese Perspectives of "Other" Compared

Similar to the comparison of own IC awareness perspectives in the previous section, here a comparison is made between African IC awareness views of Chinese culture, and Chinese IC awareness views of African culture. It is suggested that perspectives of *other* are likely to be more realistic and accurate, therefore potentially indicating areas of challenge or opportunity for IC congruence. Presented in Table 7.9 and graphically illustrated in Fig. 7.14 are African and Chinese IC awareness perspectives of *other*. Supporting quotations for the IC awareness perspectives have been given in sections 7.3.2 and 7.4.2.

As reflected in Table 7.9 and Fig. 7.14, the top IC awareness perspectives on African culture inferred from the interviews with Chinese experts based on frequency counts are:

- human centredness
- arrogant
- direct manner
- family orientation
- humble

Table 7.9: IC awareness – African and Chinese perspectives of "other"

Interview	IC Awareness perspective	Chinese on Africans	African on Chinese
C1; C2; C4; C7; C8	Human centredness	20	0
C1; C3	Arrogant	6	0
C1; C3; C8	Direct manner	5	0
C1; C2; C5; A1; A6	Family orientation	5	4
C5; C7; C8	Humble	5	0
C1; C3	Curiosity	4	0
C2; C3	Lots of talk	4	0
C7; C8; A1; A3; A7	Show emotions	4	-7
C8	Communalistic	3	0
C3; C7; A1; A3; A4; A5; A6; A7	Following rules and protocol	2	20
C1; A3; A7;	Relationship-focused	2	4
A1; A6	Abrupt	0	8
A1; A6	Authoritative	0	7
A3; A4; A7	Calm manner	0	6
A1; A7	Do not say "no"	0	6
A1; A4; A5; A6; A7	Face giving/saving	0	6
A3; A4; A6; A7	Hierarchical	0	5
A1; A7	Honour	0	5
A1; A2; A4; A5; A6; A7	In-group focus	0	12
A4; A6	Indirect manner	0	5
A1; A6; A7	Sincere	0	-8
A1; A3; A5; A6	Keep their own culture	0	12
A1; A5; A7	Little talk	0	5
A1; A4; A6; A7	Nonverbal communication	0	11
A1	Pursuit of harmony	0	3
A3; A5	Respect	0	4
A1; A3; A6	Rude	0	4
A3; A5; A7	Status-driven	0	7

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.14: IC awareness – African and Chinese perspectives of other compared
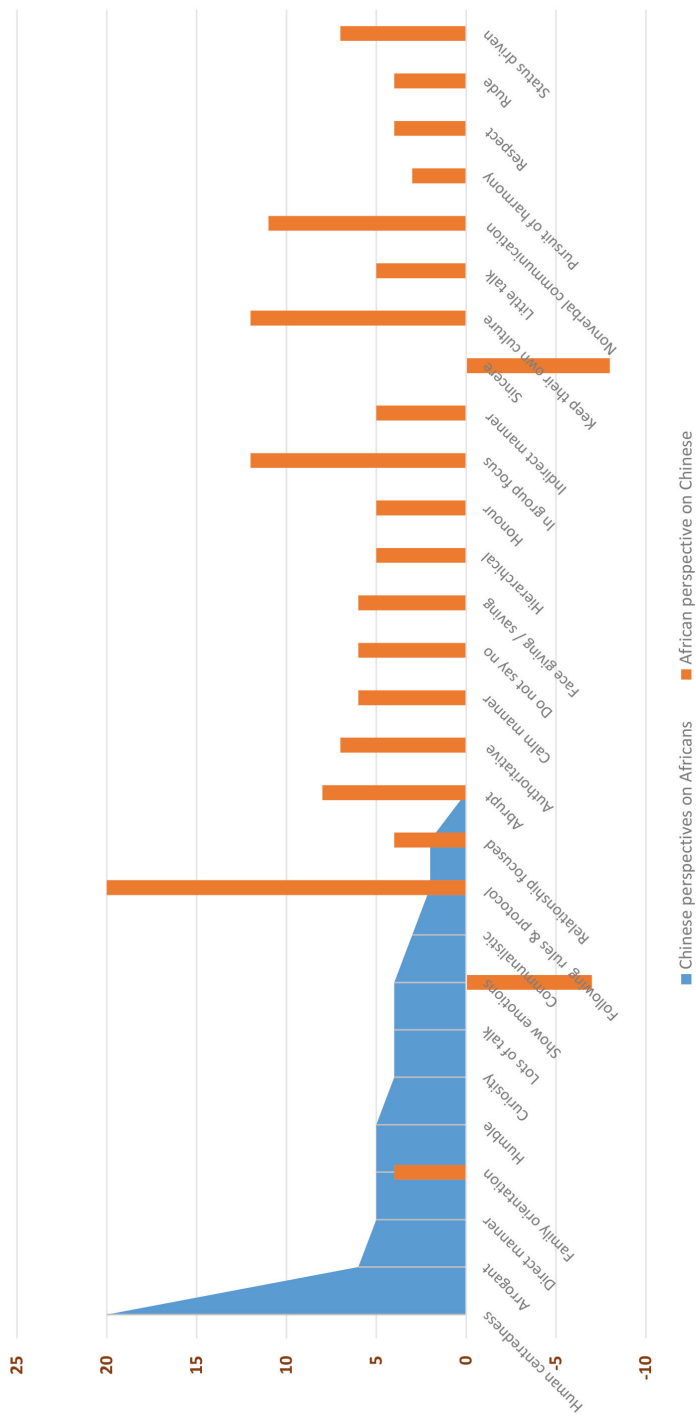
Source: Author's own contribution

In addition, in Table 7.9 and Fig. 7.14, the top IC awareness perspectives on Chinese culture as inferred from the interviews with African experts based on frequency counts are:

- following rules and protocol
- in-group focus
- keep their own culture
- nonverbal communication
- abrupt
- sincere (-8) implying that Chinese people are seen as being insincere
- authoritative
- showing emotions (-7) implying that Chinese people are seen as not showing their emotions.

7.6.1 Summary

While Chinese people view African people as largely human-centred (20), African people see Chinese people as principally protocol- and rule-following (20). Both African and Chinese experts view each other as family-orientated and relationship-focused. While Chinese experts view African people as arrogant, African experts view Chinese people as abrupt, authoritative, insincere and rude. Furthermore, Chinese sincerity and showing of emotions were extremely negatively viewed by the African experts. All in all, it would appear that they share far fewer perspectives – each of the other – than those characteristics viewed as unique to each culture. In addition, while it would appear that that Chinese experts were less critical of their African colleagues there remains need for understanding of the unique aspects arising and reconciliation of potential differences towards IC congruence.

In the next section, findings on emerging IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts are presented.

7.7 Emerging Intercultural Communication Awareness Perspectives (African and Chinese Experts)

The findings discussed in this section relate to research questions RQ-E1 and RQ-E2. As stated in section 7.2 regarding the findings on IC awareness perspectives, a distinction is drawn between those informed by findings from the study of theory in Chapter 5 (sections 7.3 to 7.6), and inductively emerging perspectives as presented in the current section.

Emerging IC awareness perspectives from interviews with both African and Chinese experts are presented in Table 7.10 and illustrated graphically in Fig. 7.15. The table and figure are organised in terms of three types of category to distinguish the perspectives from each other; these are "variations", "expert observations" and "influences".

Table 7.10: Emerging IC awareness perspectives – African and Chinese

Interviews	Emerging ICA perspective	Variations		Observations		Influences	
		Chinese perspective	African perspective	Chinese perspective	African perspective	Chinese perspective	African perspective
C1; C5;	Age	4					
C3; C4; C7; A3; A5	Business and social contexts	5	4				
C6	Class	2					
C4; C6; C7; A7	Level of education	3	1				
C2; C7; A2; A5	Organisational typology	3	4				
A2; A3; C1; C3	Race	3	3				
C1	Seniority	1					
A7; C1; C7; C8	Similarity of African and Chinese			3	2		
C1; C2; C7; C8; A5	Mix of Western and African			3	1		
A1; A2; A5	Motive for interaction						4
A2; A7	No interaction						2
A6	Personal circumstances						1
A1	Preconceptions						3
A1	Prejudice						1
A1; A4; A6; C2; C3; C8	Stereotypes					11	6
C2; C3; C4; C7; C8; A1; A5; A7	Work ethic					7	6
C8 ; A1; A5 A6	Ethnocentrism					1	3

*Scores indicate frequencies

Source: Author's own contribution

Fig. 7.15: Emerging IC awareness perspectives – African and Chinese experts
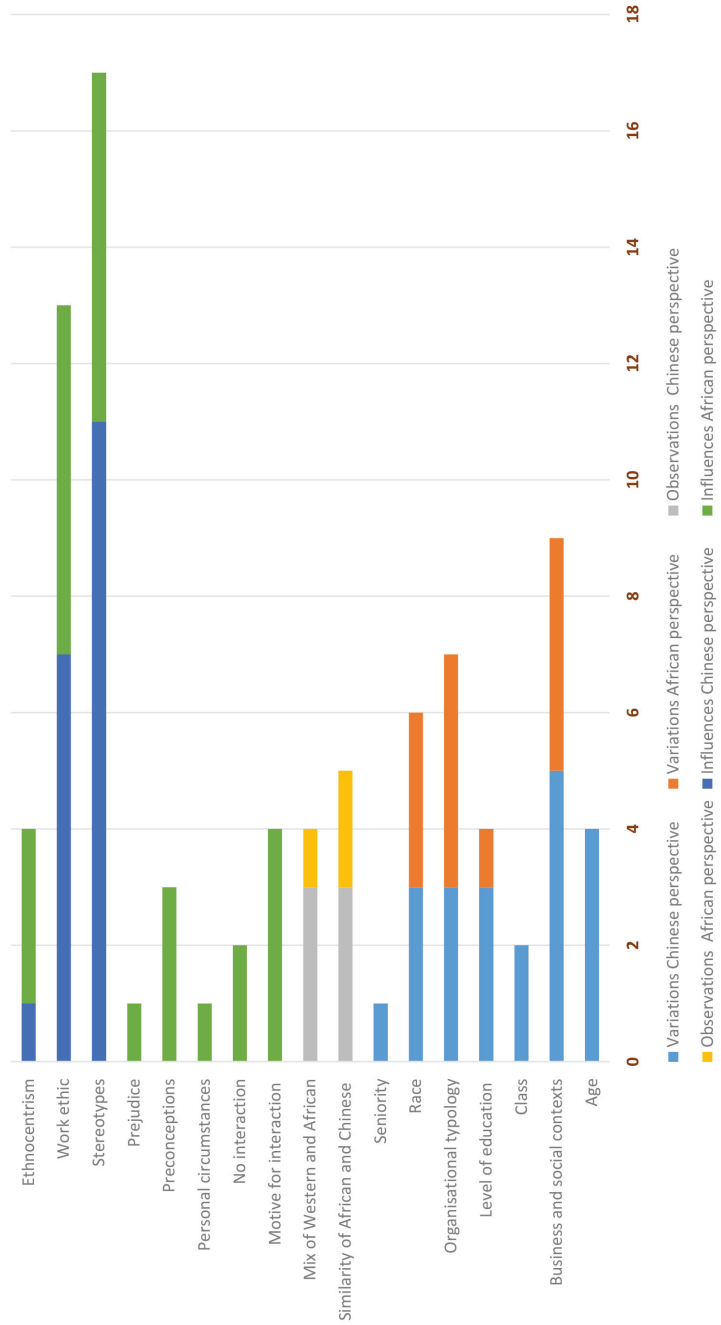
Source: Author's own contribution

"Variations" refers to particular characteristics which may vary in terms of perspectives of IC awareness. For example within a cultural grouping, differences in IC awareness perspectives may exist based on the typology of the organisation to which they are affiliated. An example is the distinction between IC awareness perspectives of people affiliated to an SOE and those in a private organisation. Other variations include those between business and social contexts, across the racial groups, age, class, level of education and seniority.

"Expert observations" refer to the comments made by both African and Chinese experts, for example, regarding similarity between African and Chinese ways of communicating – suggesting cultural proximity between African and Chinese people. Another observation made is that of a mix of Western and African ways in the African manner of communicating – suggesting Western influences.

"Influences" refer to factors that appear to play a role in the IC encounter, hence inadvertently influencing IC awareness perspectives. A few examples of influences are ethnocentrism, prejudice, work ethic, and motive for interaction, as reflected in the findings presented in Table 7.10.

In reading Fig. 7.15 it is important to note that the perspectives of each of the African and Chinese experts are distinguished by a colour as denoted in the key directly below and imbedded within the figure.

Emerging IC awareness perspectives as inferred from interviews with African and Chinese experts will now be presented, together with supporting quotations. First, emerging perspectives regarding variations in IC awareness perspectives are presented.

7.7.1 Variations

The quotations provided in this section indicate the different levels at which IC awareness and IC perspectives may vary within a cultural group. Chinese experts cite, age, business vs social contexts, class differences levels of education, organisational typology race and seniority as causes of variations in IC awareness within a cultural group. African experts on the other hand cite differences between business and social contexts, level of education, organisational typology and race as causes of variations. Perspectives of both African and Chinese experts are discussed below, with supporting quotes provided.

7.7.1.1 Business and social contexts

A3 reports that in response to the Westernisation of urban Africans, there are many communicative behaviours that are seen as unacceptable when one is at home and not in the business space. This is because "leisure is completely different from the business perspective because business is a formal occasion" (A5). These views suggest that the way in which Africans communicate in the organisational context will differ from how they communi-

cate in the more natural settings of their homes. This view implies that it may not be adequate to develop an understanding of IC awareness of African colleagues in the Sino-African context if it is based purely on known cultural values.

My father's family is from Limpopo and if I go back home it's very much akin to the Chinese way of respect. We are so Westernised in the urban areas that there is a massive difference between the two … Just like I have mentioned about the Westernisation of urban Africans, that doesn't fly when you back at home.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

Leisure is completely different from the business perspective because business is a formal occasion.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

7.7.1.2 Organisational typology

A2 emphasises the differences in behaviour that exist in SOEs and entrepreneurial operations. While both organisation types may be staffed with Chinese people, the communication behaviour displayed in the organisations may differ.

A two character or general stereotypes would be, state capitalists and secondly, micro entrepreneurs. Those are the two generics. Both those conversations and engagements are very, very different.

A2	South African	Male	44	White	Professional

This point of departure highlights the need for a specially targeted and context-focused approach in developing IC awareness, particularly of Chinese colleagues.

7.7.1.3 Race

Further complexity is added to understanding IC awareness of African colleagues in the Sino-African organisational context when the different races are considered. For instance, A3 puts forward the view that White South African males are more aggressive than their Black counterparts; this is in agreement with the views expressed by C1 that they are viewed as frank and straightforward.

White South African males, generally, get their point across by being loud, demanding and bossy.

A3	South African	Male	34	Black	Manufacturing

To the White South Africans, the so-called Afrikaners, my first impression was that they are very straightforward, very frank.

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

7.7.1.4 Level of education

Highlighting the IC awareness variations that can exist among Chinese colleagues, A7 reports that in his line of work, he experiences minimal communication difficulty because the people he interacts with are well educated.

The kind of Chinese they bring to SA, mind you, I think they go through a separate English assessment or training before they come into Africa to work. That is one. And the second thing is they are not just ordinary Chinese in terms of experience and expertise: they are more experts in their own fields.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

The above quotation suggests that greater challenges and more difficulties are likely to be experienced at the lower levels of the organisation where the level of education is also low.

7.7.1.5 Class

An interesting IC awareness perspective raised is the influence of class in communication where C6 suggests that the higher the class, the more amicable the communication.

A lot of difference in behaviour comes with classicism, and not race, not gender. It is the class of people. So obviously that elite class Chinese/elite local African, their cultural clashes will be less because they have more understanding, more exposed, more aware, more respect.

C6	Chinese	Male	31	Chinese/SA	Legal

The above perspective gives support to the view that increased knowledge and understanding enhances IC as people are *more* exposed to each other.

7.7.2 Expert observations

Chinese and African experts make general observations that may help further the understanding of IC hence contributing to the achievement of IC congruence. Included in the

general observations are seeming mix of Western and African ways in African communication as well as instances of similarity of Chinese and African ways in communication. Quotes supporting these views are provided below.

7.7.2.1 Mix of Western and African ways

Chinese experts attest to a degree of similarity in the Western and African ways, suggesting that IC awareness of their African colleagues should not be based on African values alone, but should rather be understood in context. The following quotations extracted from an interview with C8 support the notion of a blending of Western and African ways.

> *For me, White people, Black people, Coloured people are all the same. They behave like Western. We see them as having something in common. Indian people are different. We see them as Asian.*

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

7.7.2.2 Similarity between Chinese and African ways

A7 and C1 report potential similarity between African and Chinese people. A7 remarks that both African and Chinese colleagues tend to converge in groups or cliques who partake in friendly banter and gossip. The quotations provided validate the IC awareness perspective that posits similarity between African and Chinese ways.

> *You find that Eastern way of doing things and the African way of doing things, there is a thin line there.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

C1 suggests a similarity in the value ascribed to the community where achievements are jointly celebrated.

> *Chinese people often converge within their community as well. If one of you in the community does something outstanding, all the people in the community are proud of you and I think it's the same in the African culture. In terms of culture, the Chinese people and African people are closer.*

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

In spite of the appearances of similarity, however, there may also be instances of difference, such as the Ubuntu focus on the community at large in African culture (Bell and Metz, 2011) and a more in-group focus distinguishing between insiders and outsiders in Chinese culture (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Salo-Lee, 2006).

7.7.3 Influences

African and Chinese experts directly and indirectly allude to various influences on the IC encounter and these include stereotyping, differences in work ethic, ethnocentrism, motive for interaction, preconceptions, prejudice and personal circumstances. Perspectives on IC influences raised by African and Chinese experts are supported with quotes in the below discussion.

7.7.3.1 Stereotypes

The issue of stereotypes arises in a number of instances, eleven times in the Chinese interviews and six times in the African interviews. Examples of stereotyping are when it is implied that Africans are lazy, untrustworthy and liars. The quotations given below reflect these perspectives.

> *South Africans are extremely lazy and make no effort to seek progress.*

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

A comment by A6 that African executives were not given similar responsibilities to their Chinese peers in his organisation, highlights a lack of trust of Africans on the part of the Chinese.

> *They were not given the respect, they were not given the same responsibilities – especially when it came to money – there seemed to be almost a distrust of Africans* [laughs].

A6	South African	Male	55	White	Professional

C3 makes a generalisation that South Africans are liars:

> *South African locals say* [speak] *lies too easily, and their business relations are dishonest.*

C3	Chinese	Male	46	Chinese	Manufacturing

C4 views African people as irresponsible, and is somewhat patriarchal in his management approach to them.

> *I couldn't pay my staff one month's salary all at once, otherwise they will use up all their money in one week and won't come in to work. For this reason, I have to pay them wages on a weekly basis.*

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

7.7.3.2 Differences in work ethic

Fundamental differences in work ethic that may influence people's attitude towards each other (and by extension, how they communicate) are corroborated by quotations provided in this section.

A1's comment below shows that African people are not accustomed to working a seven-day week; this is viewed as a sign of laziness by their Chinese colleagues.

> *Very difficult to get that through sometimes because they* [Chinese] *just see it as you being lazy. They don't understand why we* [Africans] *don't work on a Saturday; they don't understand why the* [African] *managers don't leave late at night.*

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

Offering a Chinese perspective, C2 observes how his African colleagues give their families precedence over their jobs, and there is an indication that C2 views this in a negative light.

> *They will take holiday or look after their family at weekends, even they talk that "they will do so", they will work harder together, but in reality they don't fulfil that task completely. In my experience.*

C2	Chinese	Male	35	Chinese	ICT

C8 talks of the ill-discipline of African people who are not punctual in coming to work and who refuse to work overtime.

> *African people like to be late all the time. From a Chinese point of view I don't think that African people work very hard. The Chinese like to work overtime but the African people no. It is a difference of culture I think.*

C8	Chinese	Male	37	Chinese	SOE

Finally, also related to work ethic, A7 differentiates between the levels of sacrifice shown by Chinese and African people. Chinese people give maximum commitment to their jobs which seemingly take precedence over their families. The opposite appears to hold true for their African colleagues. A7 also highlights a sense of urgency displayed by Chinese colleagues that contrasts with the laid-back nature of African colleagues where schedules can be broken when matters of community interest arise. The following quotations from interviews with A7 illustrate the Chinese work ethic in Sino-African organisational contexts.

> *I think there can be a lot of misunderstandings you know, for example in China a lot of people are willing to sacrifice their personal lives for work, right.*
> *They keep to themselves, they only speak when it is necessary. I know why I call them "simbi dzebasa" [iron men] – that is what I always say to my wife, these guys work like*

16 or 18 hour days. They take naps after lunch, they go for lunch for an hour, exercise for 30 minutes and then take a nap for an hour. So their lunch is 2.5 hours, but then those guys are prepared to work until tomorrow morning.

In China people would want to proceed things rather quickly because the time is developing very quickly and the pressure is high so they expect that you know, after work you have to work and maybe weekends you have to put things out of your time for work as well and then they expect things to turn over quickly and they are more sort of hurried after success.

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.7.3.3 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism appears to influence how people communicate; the IC encounter may be entered into with parties harbouring ethnocentric beliefs. The statements below suggest ethnocentrism on the part of the Chinese.

The Chinese just think they are bigger … They do believe that I believe, in some way, shape or form, that our education may be inferior to theirs. Which is ironic because actually theirs is inferior to ours.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

The expectation from the Chinese is that things should be done in Chinese but it's impossible.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

7.7.3.4 Motives for interaction

The extracts from A2 and A5 below suggest that the motive for interaction should be taken into account when developing IC awareness. While both African and Chinese people in a Sino-African organisational context have their own cultural values and beliefs, it must not be forgotten that the main motive for interaction is business and financial gain. This viewpoint correlates with that which emphasises a distinction between business and social contexts, where communication behaviour in social contexts may be more reflective of a person's cultural orientation.

When engaging with the Chinese, from my perspective, one needs to understand, first and foremost, what the motivations are. To get things done, you need to understand incentive. Different people react to different incentives. Different organisations and cultures react to different incentives. The Chinese, generally speaking, have their own set of incentives … Unfortunately, also, state capitalists have a very different perspective

of the continent. They come here very goal-orientated, are very policy-shaped, very arguably superficial on the surface.

A2	South African	Male	44	White	Professional

Commenting on what she calls a conformist approach to communication by Chinese people in SOEs, A5 says,

It's mostly similar, its very business-driven. That is why they are here, that is the focus, the focus is business.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

Despite the potential for differences in motives for interaction, the present study maintains that IC awareness is essential in aiming for IC congruence. The learning here is that African and Chinese people engaged in IC should not expect their counterparts to behave in ways as suggested by theory, but they should rather also take cognisance of the communication behaviours influenced by the motives for interaction.

7.7.3.5 Preconceptions

One of the preconceptions identified as potentially influencing IC and with potential to affect IC congruence, is that African people are incompetent. Reflecting her Chinese colleague's views, A1 complains of how tirelessly she has to work to prove her competence, suggesting that Chinese colleagues can see themselves as better qualified and competent. The quotation below supports these assertions.

We have to prove to them we have competence because they just don't trust. So my financials that I prepare will be audited three times by different people.

A1	South African	Female	40	Coloured	Manufacturing

Because the Chinese superiors view their African colleagues as being incompetent, they may speak to them in a condescending manner. As such, the preconceptions of incompetence may create animosity on the part of African colleagues, hence influencing their attitudes and approach when communicating with their Chinese superiors.

7.7.3.6 Personal circumstances

A5 suggests that personal circumstances can influence how people communicate. For example, a Chinese colleague who has left his family in China to work in Africa may have a sour outlook in communication – as shown in the narration below by A5.

I have heard the stories of a similar nature – is that these guys would come into a coun-try and they weren't allowed to bring their families. So the mother and the children/child are left behind in China and the man has to work, and sometimes stretches of a year at a time, where he has to work and then only can they go back and be with their families. So you have situations where these people are split up, and of course that in itself causes problems, it causes resentment, it causes dissatisfaction.

A5	South African	Female	26	White	Legal

This view highlights the fact that, before belonging to cultural group, people are first of all individuals, each having their own personality, history and life experience (Martin and Na-kayama, 2010). As such, the resentment felt by Chinese people who have been separated from their families may affect the manner in which they communicate with others and does not necessarily have anything to do with their cultural orientation.

7.7.3.7 Prejudice

The comments of C1 and C2 reflect the influence of prejudice in IC. The views put forward suggest that White people approach IC with their Chinese colleagues from a position of superiority. This is likely to influence the manner of communication and the responses giv-en. The extract from C1 below refers.

White people here have some kind of prejudice or misperception about China in the way of China's living conditions.

C1	Chinese	Male	50+	Chinese/SA	Mining

C4 on the other hand mentions a rather prejudicial and ethnocentric book that he believes sums up the differences between Black, White and Chinese people. He says,

There is a quotation from this book which I still remember and I think is true: "Blacks today use tomorrow's money, Whites today use today's money and Chinese today use a portion of yesterday's money".

C4	Chinese	Male	50	Chinese	Manufacturing

This study postulates that approaching IC from such a position of superiority is likely to influence IC awareness perspectives and also to hinder IC congruence.

7.7.3.8 No communication occurs

Perhaps underlying the whole notion of IC awareness of *other* is the fact some experts in the study believe there is actually no meaningful interaction taking place between African

and Chinese colleagues; consequently, it is impossible to gain IC awareness and move towards IC congruence. A2 observes the minimal number of friendships between African and Chinese people, pointing out that apart from the challenges faced in organisations, there seems to be no real effort to interact with a view to understanding the other. Relations have mostly been kept strictly business. In fact, A2 asks of the researcher,

> *So how many Africans have Chinese friends and how many Chinese have African friends? Very, very few and this is why you are doing your research. So to say how people on both sides communicate, well, they don't.*

A2	South African	Male	44	White	Professional

A7 echoes the views of A2, suggesting that the conditions for IC congruence currently do not exist in Sino-African organisational contexts.

> *That is my view. As long as you create conditions for communication where people can actually interact, exchange words and have dialogue or commune in a certain way, it will work out. It is communication.*

A7	Zimbabwean	Male	35	Black	ICT

7.7.4 Summary

In this section it has been suggested that, in the endeavour to achieve IC awareness, apart from understanding communication orientation and the manner of communication as suggested in the study of theory (Chapter 2 to Chapter 5), it may also be useful to understand the role of various influences on the IC encounter, essentially taking the context into account. This section has also shown that a one-size-fits-all approach premised on broad shared national culture simply provides indicators, but does not do enough to capture variations that can occur at different levels. Such levels include social class, level of education, organisational typology and so on. It can therefore be concluded that the emerging IC awareness perspectives presented in section 7.7.3 ought to be considered in the development of any framework aimed at achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

Finally, the perspectives identified in sections 7.3 to 7.7 give an impression of the IC awareness in *own* and *other*'s culture from both African and Chinese perspectives. On the basis of the entire process of content analysis and interpretation procedures as discussed in Chapter 6 (section 6.4.5), categories of IC awareness have been constructed. These are presented in the section which follows.

7.8 Intercultural Communication Awareness Categories – Sino-African Organisational Contexts

7.8.1 Categories of intercultural communication awareness

In this section, IC awareness perspectives described in sections 7.3 to 7.7 are linked to IC awareness categories, hence addressing the research question

RQ-E4: *What new categories of IC awareness emerged from the data?* (RQ-E1 to RQ-E3)

Six overall IC awareness categories have emerged from the data and in the context of the present study will also be referred to as IC awareness enablers. The emerged categories are as follows:

Cultural orientation

This includes perspectives that relate to individualistic or collectivistic tendencies, the attitude to human nature as well as the goal or purpose of communication within a cultural group.

Manner of communication

This includes the directness or indirectness of communication, the quantity of talk, use of verbal versus nonverbal codes, the extent of consideration of others and general style of communication (verbal or nonverbal) as perceived by the interacting parties.

Orientation to rules and protocol

This deals with the extent to which communication is guided by the following of rules in relating to different profiles of people in different contexts. It also includes power relations where status and hierarchy influence communication, and the extent to which certain behaviours are tolerated in adhering to protocol.

Individual dispositions

These are factors related to an individual's outlook, temperament, mood, character and propensity to hide or show emotion.

Within-culture intercultural communication variations

This includes factors that cause variation within a cultural group despite members suppos-edly sharing the same culture. Such factors could include race, level of education, class and personal circumstances.

Intercultural communication influences

IC influences are factors that influence the way IC takes place and how it is perceived in organisational contexts. These factors include different organisational typologies, the mo-tive for interaction, ethnocentrism, stereotypes, preconceptions and prejudices.

7.8.2 Linking intercultural communication awareness perspectives to intercultural communication awareness categories

Table 7.11 shows the interlinkage between the IC awareness perspectives and the new IC awareness categories (RQ-E4) while juxtaposing perspectives on African and Chinese IC awareness. A discussion in respect of each category or IC awareness enabler is conducted in relation to the findings from the study of theory while also considering implications for IC awareness.

Table 7.11: Categories and perspectives

Interviews A1 to A7 and C1 to C8	IC awareness perspective	African own	Chinese of African	Chinese own	African of Chinese
CATEGORY: CULTURAL ORIENTATION					
C2; C6; C7	Collectivistic	0	0	3	0
A1; A4; A3; A7;C8	Communalistic	6	3	0	0
A1; A4; A6; A7	Consensus-seeking	10	0	0	0
A1; A4; A6; A7; C1; C2; C5;A1; A6	Family orientation	5	5	0	4
A1; A5; A6; A7;C1; C2; C4; C7; C8;C5; C7; C8	Human centredness	12	20	3	0
C1; C3; C4; C6; C7; C8; A1; A2; A4; A5; A6; A7	In-group focus	0	0	13	12
A3; A7	Individualistic	3	0	0	0
C1; C2; C7	Pursuit of harmony	3	0	9	0
C1; C3; C7;A3; A7	Relationship focus	0	0	3	4
CATEGORY: MANNER OF COMMUNICATION					
A1; A6	Abrupt	0	0	0	8
A1; A6	Authoritative	0	0	0	7
C3; C4;A3; A4; A7	Calm manner	0	0	3	6
A1; A3; A4; A7;C1; C3; C8	Direct manner	7	5	0	0
A1; A7	Does not say "no"	0	0	0	6
C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8;A4; A6	Indirect manner	0	0	13	5
C2; C7; C8;A1; A5; A7	Little talk	0	0	5	5
C2; C3	Lots of talk	0	4	0	0
C1; C4; C5; C6;A1; A4; A6; A7	Nonverbal communication	0	0	5	0
A1; A3; A6	Rude	0	0	0	4

Source: Author's own contribution

Table 7.11 (continued): Categories and perspectives

Interviews A1 to A7 and C1 to C8	IC awareness perspective	African own	Chinese of African	Chinese own	African of Chinese
CATEGORY: ORIENTATION TO RULES AND PROTOCOL					
C1; C3; C5; C7; C8;A1; A4; A5; A6; A7	Face giving/saving	0	0	13	6
A1; A3; A6;C1; C2; C3; C4; C5; C6; C7; C8;A1; A3; A4; A5; A6; A7	Following rules and protocol	6	0	23	20
A3; A7;C1; C2; C7; C8;A3; A4; A6; A7	Hierarchical	3	0	6	5
A1; A3; A5; A6	Keep their own culture	0	0	0	12
A1; A3; A4; A5; A6;A3; A5	Respect	10	0	0	5
A1; A3; A7	Social etiquette	5	0	0	0
A3; A5; A7	Status-driven	0	0	0	7

Interviews A1 to A7 and C1 to C8	IC awareness perspective	African own	Chinese of African	Chinese own	African of Chinese
CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL DISPOSITIONS					
A1; A4; A5	Accommodating others	6	0	0	0
C1; C3; C1; C8	Arrogant	0	6	3	0
A1; A7	Honour	0	0	0	5
A1; A3; A6; A7;C5; C7; C8	Humble	7	0	0	0
A2	Logical thinking	3	0	0	0
A1; A2	Rebellious	3	0	0	0
C7; C8;C2; C8	Sceptical	0	0	3	0
A1; A5;A1; A3; A7	Showing emotions	7	4	0	-7
C1; C3	Curiosity	0	4	0	0
A1; A6; A7	Insincere	0	0	0	-8

Source: Author's own contribution

Table 7.11 (continued): Categories and perspectives

CATEGORY: WITHIN-CULTURE IC VARIATIONS	
Interview	**Emerging ICA perspective**
A3; A5; C3; C4; C7	Business and social contexts
C1	By seniority
C1; C5;	By age
C6	By class
A7; C4; C6; C7	By level of education
A2; A5; C2; C7	By organisational typology
A2; A3; C1; C3	Race
CATEGORY: IC INFLUENCES	
C8; A1; A5 A6	Ethnocentrism
A1; A2; A5	Motive for interaction
A2; A7	No interaction
A6	Personal circumstances
A1	Preconceptions
A1	Prejudice
A1; A4; A6; C2; C3; C8	Stereotypes
A1; A5; A7; C1; C2; C3; C4;C7; C8	Work ethic
A5; C1	Western influences

Source: Author's own contribution

7.8.2.1 Cultural orientation

The category of cultural orientation can be equated with communication orientation as proposed and explained in the study of theory (Chapter 3). It contains nine IC awareness perspectives as reflected in Table 7.11. The positioning of African and Chinese cultures within the category is inferred and compared.

The African expert *own* IC awareness perspectives of being human-centred, consensus-seeking and family-orientated are corroborated by the Chinese experts' view of Africans. Significantly, this finding aligns with views propagated in the study of theory where the Ubuntu philosophy and communalism guide African way of life (Khoza, 2005), with harmony and social maintenance being objectives of communication (Myers, 1987; Maomeka, 1989; Igboin, 2011; Narh, 2013). The human centredness of African culture as reported also supports the notion of open collectivism where the community extends to all human beings, rather than being restricted to in-groups as was established in the study of theory (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.1).

A finding that deviates from the study of theory is that African experts' own IC awareness perspectives suggests African people may also be individualistic. Because Chinese experts are of the view that their African colleagues are collectivistic, it is likely that dualism of collectivism and individualism exists within African people in Sino-African organisational contexts; this has implications for IC awareness which aims for IC congruence.

With regard to Chinese culture, in line with the findings of the study of theory (Chapter 5), Chinese experts' own IC awareness perspectives portray Chinese colleagues as in-group-focused, collectivistic, relationship-focused and pursuing harmony. The in-group and relationship focus of Chinese colleagues is corroborated in African experts' views of Chinese people. An in-group focus supports the notion of submerged collectivism (Chen, 2015) as was established in the study of theory, where Chinese collectivism is aimed at the in-group rather than the community at large as is the case with African culture. Also corresponding with the study of theory (Chapter 5), is the African experts' view that the pursuit of harmony is an objective in everyday life and in Chinese culture.

In summary, with regard to cultural orientation, it is possible to conclude that African colleagues are human-centred, displaying a blend of openly collectivistic and individualistic behaviours while aiming for consensus in communication. Chinese people, on the other hand, can be said to be in-group focused (submerged collectivism) and guided by the pursuit of harmony in communication.

7.8.2.2 Manner of communication

The category manner of communication comprises 10 IC awareness perspectives as presented in Table 7.11. The positioning of African and Chinese cultures within the category is inferred and compared.

African experts' own IC awareness perspectives portray African people as direct in communication – a view that is corroborated by the Chinese experts. This empirical finding is somewhat aligned to the theoretical view that African people have a blended manner (Chigwendere, 2017) of communication that is characterised by a mix of direct and indirect messaging. This finding is unsurprising, given the cultural orientation of African people established in section 7.8.2.1 where a duality of collectivism and individualism exists. Chinese experts further report a great deal of talking by their African colleagues, hence suggesting an elaborate manner of communication (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988).

The Chinese experts' own IC awareness perspectives portray Chinese people as indirect, calm, of few words and communicating nonverbally. The aforementioned *own* perspectives of Chinese experts mirror findings from the study of theory in Chapter 5, and are also corroborated by the African experts' perspectives of Chinese culture. However, African experts also see their Chinese colleagues as abrupt, rude and authoritative. The present study speculates that these African experts' views may be a result of their Chinese colleagues' preference for using few words in communication and submerging into their in-groups,

potentially painting a picture of inhumanness and not treating others as human beings. This view however needs to be validated through further research. With reference to the seemingly authoritative manner of Chinese communication, it is plausible that this could be associated with the strict rule- and protocol-following characteristic of Chinese culture (as was established in Chapter 5) and inferred in the findings of the empirical study currently being reported.

In summary, it may be said that African people in Sino-African organisations communicate in a direct and elaborate manner while Chinese people communicate according to their cultural expectations – in an indirect and succinct manner – which can be interpreted negatively by African people as abrupt and rude.

7.8.2.3   Orientation to rules and protocol

The category orientation to rules and protocol comprises seven IC awareness perspectives as shown in Table 7.11. The positioning of African and Chinese cultures within the category is inferred and compared.

The African expert *own* IC awareness perspectives of being respectful, having good social etiquette, observance of hierarchy and following rules and protocol are not corroborated by the Chinese experts. These perspectives are, however, in line with the findings of theory, which value respect for elders, the sanctity of authority and behaving appropriately at all times (Maomeka, 1989; Matondo, 2012; Metz, 2015).

The Chinese experts' own IC awareness perspectives – that portray Chinese colleagues as inclined to follow rules and protocol, concerned with face maintenance and observing hierarchy – are corroborated by African experts. In addition, African experts are of the view that Chinese people keep their own culture, are status-driven and respectful.

In summary, it may be concluded that, for African people in the Sino-African organisational context, rules and protocol are geared towards maintaining the value and dignity of the individual as well as to maintain social order. For Chinese people, on the other hand, this study suggests that rules and protocol are geared towards ensuring that Chinese culture and values are maintained, ensuring face maintenance, meeting expectations of roles and relationships, and ensuring that status is accorded to those deserving of it – thus observing Confucianist principles, as it were.

Next discussed is the category of individual dispositions.

7.8.2.4   Individual dispositions

This category comprises 10 IC awareness perspectives as presented in Table 7.11. The positioning of African and Chinese cultures within the category is inferred and compared.

The African experts' own IC awareness perspectives portraying African people as humble, accommodating and showing of emotions, aligns with the human-centred cultural orientation as established in section 7.8.2.1. Chinese experts' perspectives, however, potentially do not view their African colleagues in the same light as they view themselves, only agreeing on the aspect of showing emotions. In fact, Chinese experts view their African colleagues as being arrogant in contrast to African experts' own IC awareness perspectives of humility. Inferences from African experts' narrations also suggest a rebellious nature and logical thinking, where things have to make sense – which is a characteristic of Western cultures. Based on the association of logical thinking and a rebellious nature with Western tendencies (Miike, 2002; Littlejohn and Foss, 2010; Chen, 2015), this study proposes that any attempt to understand the likely individual dispositions of African people in Sino-African organisational contexts should take potential Western influences into account.

In comparison to African experts' perspectives of themselves, it was found that Chinese experts were not too revealing of their individual dispositions. In direct statements, C1 and C8 pointed out that some Chinese people are arrogant, suggesting that this could be more of an exception than the rule. Chinese experts also portrayed themselves as being untrusting of those who do not share their culture or belong to the in-groups.

Upon examining African experts' IC awareness perspectives of Chinese people, it was found that African people generally view Chinese people as honourable, not showing of emotions, and insincere. The insincerity of Chinese people has been discussed in section 7.4.2.6 of the present chapter and could be a result of different measures of sincerity in African and Chinese culture. The honour associated with Chinese people generally points to a virtue orientation (Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Metz, 2015) as was established in the study of theory in Chapter 5. In the empirical study, honour is associated with not stealing, a characteristic mentioned by several experts.

African people may display a mix of arrogance, humility and humanness in IC in Sino-African organisational contexts, while Chinese people are likely emotionless, sceptical and inclined to behave in a virtuous manner at all times.

7.8.2.5 Within-culture variations

As shown in Table 7.11, the category of within-culture variations comprises seven perspectives with views of African and Chinese experts discussed in unison. This emerging IC awareness category highlights the importance of context, as was earlier explained in section 7.7 where findings on emerging IC awareness perspectives were presented.

7.8.2.6 Intercultural communication awareness influences

The category of IC awareness influences, as reflected in Table 7.11, comprises nine IC awareness perspectives with views of African and Chinese experts discussed in unison. This study

suggests that IC barriers of stereotyping, prejudice, and ethnocentrism remain. These were seen as representing IC barriers in the theory study in Chapter 2 (Gudykunst, 1995; Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak; 2005; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Beebe, Beebe and Redmond, 2011; Chen, 2015; Okech et al., 2015). However, IC barriers can be viewed in another light as IC awareness influencers, because when they exist, they may shape the IC awareness of others, potentially painting them in an inaccurate light. The present study therefore suggests that to gain IC awareness, a keen awareness of the stereotypes and prejudices of both African and Chinese people should be part of what colleagues in Sino-African organisational contexts expect to encounter in interaction. That said, those engaged in the IC encounter should make an effort to understand true cultural nuances and communication realities in *own* and *other*'s culture, as this can both circumvent IC barriers and minimise their influence on IC awareness.

Other emerging influences on IC and IC awareness are: differences in work ethic, Western influences, motive for interaction, preconceptions, and the absence of a conducive environment for interaction that has resulted in the view that Chinese and African people do not communicate. The implications for IC awareness of the various IC influences have been discussed in section 7.7.1.

Now that the research question has been addressed regarding the IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts, their similarities and differences, as well as new IC awareness categories emerging from the data (RQ-E1 to RQ-E4), implications of these categories with regard to the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework in general (developed in Chapter 4), as well as that *specific* to Sino-African organisational contexts (developed in Chapter 5), will be explored in the final chapter of the study (Chapter 8). In the next section, a summary of the findings from each of the sections of this chapter is provided.

7.9   Summary

In this chapter, the biographical indicators of the sample of study have been provided, showing an almost equitable representation of seven African and eight Chinese experts, representing a cross-section of industry sectors, all with more than 24 months' IC experience in Sino-African organisational contexts. In addition, the empirical research questions RQ-E1 to RQ-E3 identifying and describing *own* and *other* IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts have been answered, with supporting quotations. In addition, new IC awareness categories as emerged from the data (RQ-E4).

- Regarding *own* IC awareness perspectives of African experts (section 7.3.1), the perspectives raised are that African people are mostly human-centred, consensus-seeking, respectful, direct in manner, humble, showing of emotions, accommodating of others, communalistic, follow rules and protocol, are family-orientated and have a concern for good social etiquette.

- Regarding *other* IC awareness perspectives of African people as inferred from the interviews with Chinese experts (section 7.3.2), African people are mostly human-centred. There is also a suggestion that while some may be seen as arrogant, others are viewed as humble, hence giving support to the view that not all African people are the same. Furthermore, African people are seen as direct in manner, family-orientated, curious, showing of emotions and talking a lot at times with little action.

- Regarding *own* African versus *other* Chinese IC awareness perspectives of people from African cultures (section 7.3.3), there is agreement from both African and Chinese experts that African people are human-centred, direct, humble, showing of emotions, family-orientated and communalistic. There is however a divergence, in that Chinese experts view African people as arrogant, talkative and curious. African experts also describe Africans as rebellious, thinking logically, individualistic and valuing good social etiquette such as greeting others and saying thank you.

- Regarding *own* IC awareness perspectives of Chinese experts (section 7.4.1), Chinese people mostly follow rules and protocol, practise face-giving and face-saving behaviours, are in-group focused, indirect in manner, pursue harmony, observe hierarchy, have little talk, communicate nonverbally, are relationship-focused and respectful of elders and seniors.

- Regarding *other* IC awareness perspectives of Chinese people as inferred from the interviews with African experts (section 7.4.2), Chinese people mostly follow rules and protocol, are in-group focused, keep their own culture, communicate nonverbally, are abrupt, insincere, prone to not always telling truth, authoritative, not showing of emotions, are status-driven, calm in manner, do not say "no", practice face-giving and face-saving behaviours, observe hierarchy, are honourable and indirect.

- Regarding *own* Chinese versus *other* African IC awareness perspectives of people from Chinese culture (section 7.4.3), there is agreement from both Chinese and African experts that Chinese people mostly follow rules and protocol, practise face-giving and face-saving behaviours, are in-group focused, indirect, hierarchical, have little talk, communicate nonverbally, value relationships and are respectful of elders and seniors.

- Regarding *own* versus *own* African and Chinese IC awareness perspectives (section 7.5), the most often cited own IC awareness perspectives by African experts are human centredness, consensus-seeking, respect, direct manner, humble, showing of emotions and accommodating others. On the other hand, the most frequently cited own IC awareness perspectives by Chinese experts are following rules and protocol, in-group focus, face-saving and face-giving, indirect manner and pursuit of harmony.

- Regarding *other* versus *other* African and Chinese IC awareness perspectives (section 7.6), the most often cited IC awareness perspectives of African culture by Chinese experts are human centredness, arrogant, direct manner, family orientation, humble, curiosity, lots of talk, showing of emotions. On the other hand, the most often cited own IC awareness perspectives of Chinese culture by African experts are following rules and protocol, in-group focus, keep their own culture, communicate nonverbally, abrupt, insincere, do not show emotions and are status-driven.

- Regarding IC awareness perspectives emerging from the inductive process, 17 new perspectives emerged. The new perspectives are distinguished as those that are seen as influencing IC awareness, those that cause variation within a seemingly well-defined cultural group such as African, and general observations regarding IC made by the experts. The emerging IC awareness perspectives help contextualise the investigation.
- Regarding categories of IC awareness developed from that data (section 7.8), six categories were developed, namely cultural orientation, manner of communication, orientation to rules and protocol, individual dispositions, within-culture variations and IC influences The positioning of African and Chinese people in each of the categories was determined, highlighting areas of similarity and difference.

The next chapter summarises the entire study and draws conclusions by integrating the newly developed categories (IC awareness enablers) into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework developed in Chapter 4 and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* developed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 8
Summary, Conclusion And Recommendations

Brief Synopsis of the Research

Despite the prevalence of theories and research that could serve as guidelines for addressing intercultural communication (IC) challenges – a few of which are misunderstanding, ineffectiveness and inappropriateness – the fact that these challenges still exist in Sino-African organisational contexts suggests the inadequacy of such theories. Furthermore, some theories have been criticised for being ethnocentric in recommending the adoption of Western styles as a solution to world problems. The primary aim of this research was therefore to develop a hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework in order to enhance IC and achieve IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. *In this framework, IC congruence means effectiveness and appropriateness in intercultural communication.* Towards this end, a two-pronged approach was used, namely a study of theory and a qualitative empirical study, each underpinned by specific aims, objectives and research questions.

This research also proposes to make a meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge in the field of IC in the new and sparsely researched Sino-African organisational context.

The first step was a study of theory, which resulted in the conceptualisation of IC congruence as the potential ultimate state in IC, only possible when IC enhancement strategies are anchored in IC awareness. IC awareness was broadly described as having knowledge and understanding of the cultural, behavioural and social norms of communication in one's own culture and the other's culture. This in turn fosters a responsive and adaptive mindset, practical for enhancing IC (Gao and Ting Toomey, 1998, p. 84).

Accordingly, the researcher developed a generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework, a portion of which relates to IC awareness, to be informed by a synthesis of extant culture and communication literature in Western, African and Chinese cultures. The synthesis process resulted in the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures. The theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) was then built into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework to form a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.*

An empirical qualitative study was then conducted to validate the IC awareness aspects of the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*. In-depth interviews were conducted with African and Chinese experts to solicit IC awareness perspectives regarding their own and their counterparts' cultures. The ensuing content analysis resulted in categories (termed "IC awareness enablers") – which are incorporated into the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* to form the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts.

A concise chapter-by-chapter overview of this research now follows.

Chapter 1 served as an introduction and orientation to the research. The background to the research was provided and the research problem defined. The aims and objectives of the research questions to be answered were also presented, and the methodological approach was briefly introduced. The demarcation of the study and an outline of the thesis format were also provided.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 laid the groundwork for the construction of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework in Chapter 4. In Chapter 2, after a review of IC theory and literature, the concept of *IC congruence* took shape. It was also proposed that IC awareness underpinned by communication orientation and manner of communication, provides the foundation for IC congruence. In addition, it was suggested that while different approaches can be used dialectically in understanding IC, an interpretive and cross-cultural approach may be the most suitable for understanding the similarities and differences between African and Chinese cultures in the novel Sino-African organisational context. In view of identified barriers and challenges of IC and their ascribed causes, important considerations for IC congruence were highlighted in this chapter.

In **Chapter 3**, the foundations for IC awareness were proposed and explained. Specifically, these were values and guiding philosophies (incorporating self-perceptions), the nature of communication, the objective of communication, the degree of interaction in communication and the thinking process in communication. The conceptualisation of IC awareness and IC awareness enablers was facilitated by a deliberation on themes and subthemes underlying IC, namely culture and values, communication, self-perceptions, worldviews and dimensions of cultural variation in communication. The Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) framework provided a quick and universally understood comparison of communication in different cultures.

In **Chapter 4** the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework was proposed as a culmination of the review and meta-synthesis of literature in Chapters 2 and 3. The TICC framework proposed a hypothetical ultimate state of IC congruence, where the manner of communication is effective and appropriate and where IC congruence is premised on the multiple views of those in interaction, tempered by appropriate interventions.

By adopting a cross-cultural approach in **Chapter 5**, a meta-synthesis of literature and theoretical communication perspectives on Western, African and Chinese cultures was created. This resulted in the formation of a theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures. Findings from the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) were then incorporated into the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework proposed in Chapter 4, to result in a theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*.

In **Chapter 6** the research process was explained, providing an audit trail and information to enable the reader to assess the quality of the research process. Part A elaborated on the methodological process of the study of theory (Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5) previously introduced in Chapter 1, section 1.5.1. Part B described the methodological process followed in the empirical qualitative study comprising in-depth interviews with 15 experts (seven of African origin and eight of Chinese origin). The interpretivist pragmatism paradigm adopted in this research and the data analysis procedures used were also described.

In **Chapter 7,** findings of the empirical qualitative study aimed at validating the IC awareness aspect in the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* were presented. The findings on African and Chinese experts' perspectives on *own* and *other* IC awareness were juxtaposed to highlight the similarities and differences. Verbatim extracts from the interviews were provided in support of the inferred perspectives. Following the process of identifying, describing and comparing IC awareness perspectives of the African and Chinese experts, six categories were developed from the data to represent IC awareness enablers. The six IC awareness enablers would subsequently be integrated into both the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework (Chapter 4) and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts,* as is done in sections 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 of the present chapter.

8.1   Conclusions and Recommendations

The study of theory completed in Chapter 2 to Chapter 5 had two key outcomes:

- a generic theoretical IC congruence framework;
- a theoretical IC congruence framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts.*

In light of the findings of the empirical qualitative study, this research culminates in updated versions of the two above-mentioned frameworks, taking into account, the perspectives of African and Chinese experts. First presented and discussed is the updated generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework.

8.1.1   Updated generic theoretical intercultural communication congruence framework

Following the study of theory (Chapter 2 to Chapter 5), the researcher understood that in order to aim for IC congruence, it was necessary to first develop IC awareness. The point of departure at that stage, was that IC awareness is possible with reciprocal knowledge and understanding of communication orientation and the manner of communication by African and Chinese colleagues in their own and in the other's culture. It was also suggested, at that point, that *values and guiding philosophies (incorporating self-perceptions), the nature of communication, the objective of communication, the degree of interaction in communication, as well as the thinking process in communication* (termed IC enablers in section 3.2) were at the core of understanding communication orientation and the manner of communication in different cultures (see section 2.4).

The findings of the empirical qualitative study, however, suggested that apart from communication orientation and the manner of communication, four other considerations were key to IC awareness, namely orientation to rules and protocol, individual dispositions, within-culture variations and IC influences. Cultural orientation is not a new consideration for IC awareness, but is presented as a refined version of communication orientation as proposed in the study of theory (see section 2.4). Accordingly, following the empirical qualitative study, IC awareness enablers are proposed as being *cultural orientation, manner of communication, orientation to rules and protocol, individual dispositions, within-culture variations and IC influences.*

As testimony to the recursive and iterative nature of research, the five IC awareness enablers earlier proposed in Chapter 3 remain as enablers, not of IC awareness, but rather of communication orientation and manner of communication. They become "lower-order" enablers, mainly aiding the understanding the nuances of communication orientation, and are best explored through longitudinal ethnographic studies in the future. The generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework as proposed in Chapter 4 is updated to be more reflective of the new proposed IC awareness enablers (as represented by the emerged categories in Chapter 7, section 7.8.2) now presented in Fig. 8.1.

Fig. 8.1: Updated generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework

Contextual considerations

(3) ENHANCED INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONGRUENCE (IC Congruence)

(The pinnacle of intercultural communication where manner of communication is reciprocally effective and appropriate)

(2) IC AWARENESS ENGENDERED CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBILITIES IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

- Reciprocal learning by African and Chinese colleagues presents an opportunity to seek **common ground** and potentially accept differences.
- IC awareness provides a premise upon which to build and implement intercultural communication enhancing **strategies and interventions.**
- Adoption /**integrated communication goals.**
- IC awareness **engenders mindfulness and the intercultural sensitivity** that enables **appropriateness** in intercultural communication.
- Adapted /adjusted manner of communication hence resulting in greater **effectiveness and appropriateness.**
- IC awareness **mitigates intercultural communication barriers** such as lack of knowledge, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and anxiety, hence reducing challenges such as ineffectiveness and inappropriateness.
- A '**win, win**' in communication.

(1) DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AWARENESS

Cross-cultural approach

*C2

*C1

IC AWARENESS ENABLERS
(Criterion for conceptualising IC awareness)

CULTURAL ORIENTATION
- Values and guiding philosophies
- The objective of communication
- The degree of interaction

MANNER OF COMMUNICATION
- Direct or indirect
- Elaborate or succinct
- Personal or contextual
- Instrumental or affective

ORIENTATION TO RULES AND PROTOCOL
- Negotiated or prescribed
- Rule / protocol, objective and focus
- Target relationships
- Substance and nature of rules and protocol

INDIVIDUAL DISPOSITIONS
- Open or closed
- Humble or arrogant
- Honourable or dishonourable

IC INFLUENCES
- **Internal organisational environment** *(For example, lack of knowledge, motive for interaction, differences in work ethic, stereotypical views, prejudice, preconceptions, ethnocentrism and so on)*
- **IC barriers**

IC VARIATIONS
- **Within-culture variation** *(For example by age, class, race, level of education, seniority, organisational typology, business and social contexts)*

Contextual considerations

*C1 and *C2 represents African and Chinese culture in interaction, where colleagues seek IC awareness of their own and their counterparts' culture.

Source: Author's own contribution

The figure is columnar to be read in number sequence from (1) to (3) (left to right), with each column reading from top to bottom as explained in Chapter 4 of this study. Only point (1) in the figure (developing IC awareness) is discussed in this chapter as it is the only portion that formed the subject of validation in the empirical qualitative study. Point (2) and point (3) remain unchanged and may form the subject of future investigations.

Beneath each of the IC awareness enablers falling under column 1 are points that serve as guidelines for interpreting how colleagues from a particular culture can be described. The guidelines for each IC awareness enabler or category have been derived from the IC awareness perspectives contained within each enabler, with respect to both African and Chinese culture (as shown in section 7.8, Table 7.11), while also drawing on theoretical findings. The points of guidance under each enabler are only stated and could be further investigated in future research.

8.1.1.1   Cultural orientation

As is reflected in Fig. 8.1 point (1), it is proposed that the cultural orientation of a group of people in communication can be determined on the basis of an understanding of their values and guiding philosophies, their objective of communication, and the degree of interaction. These guidelines, previously referred to as IC awareness enablers, are explained in section 3.2.1 of this study.

8.1.1.2   Manner of communication

This research proposes that the manner of communication can be understood, described and compared on the basis of criteria as indicated in Fig. 8.1. These criteria were previously proposed and described in section 3.2.3 of the study.

8.1.1.3   Orientation to rules and protocol

While the findings of the empirical study presented in Chapter 7 suggest that both African and Chinese cultures are protocol- and rule-following, this understanding is not useful unless one understands the nature of each culture's rules and protocol. As such, on the basis of the IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts presented in Chapter 7 and reflected in Fig. 8.1, it is proposed that orientation to rules and protocol for different cultures be distinguished according to the following considerations:

- understanding whether orientation to rules and protocol is negotiated or prescribed;
- understanding the objectives or focus of the rule- and protocol-following (with a human focus, status focus, or business focus);
- understanding the targeted relationships in rule- and protocol-following;
- understanding the substance or nature of the rules.

8.1.1.4   Individual dispositions

Findings of the present research suggest that individual dispositions in IC vary, and that understanding the individual dispositions that are likely be encountered, will add to IC awareness. Furthermore, in broader terms, this research suggests that individual dispositions can either serve as IC congruence enhancers or IC congruence detractors. IC enhancers contribute to towards the attainment of IC congruence, while detractors move further away from this goal.

As shown in Fig. 8.1, individual dispositions can be:

- open or closed – related to the degree of interaction displayed;
- humble or honourable – dependent on perceptions;
- honourable or dishonourable – also dependent on perceptions.

In summary, this research suggests that other dichotomies may also be used to distinguish between individual dispositions displayed by people from different cultures.

8.1.1.5   Intercultural communication influences

Because IC does not occur in a vacuum, but within a context (Martin and Nakayama, 2010), the findings of this research suggest that considerations such as the internal organisational environment, understanding the motivation for interaction, differences in work ethic and IC barriers such as prevailing lack of knowledge, stereotypical views, prejudice, ethnocentrism and preconceptions should be taken into account in developing IC awareness (Fig. 7.8.1). This is because IC influences have the potential to influence both *own* and *other* colleagues' views and individual dispositions, consequently impacting on IC congruence.

8.1.1.6   Intercultural communication variations

The findings of this research suggest that IC awareness in the Sino-African organisational context should not be essentialised on the basis of cultural belonging (for example, African or Chinese). The sixth enabler – IC variations – as reflected in Fig. 8.1, makes provision for the fact that differences may exist along different lines, as explained in section 7.7.2.

In the next section, the findings of the empirical qualitative study are interpreted in terms of the IC awareness enablers and guidelines of both the updated generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework and the TICC framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* proposed in Chapter 5. This gives rise to a hybrid IC congruence framework (HICC) for Sino-African organisational contexts.

8.1.2 Hybrid intercultural communication congruence framework (HICC) for Sino-African organisational contexts

In this section, categories (representing IC awareness enablers) that emerged from African and Chinese experts' perspectives on IC awareness in their own and their counterparts' culture – have been incorporated into the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts, aptly termed the "multi-view approach" in this research (Chigwendere, 2017) (Fig. 8.2).

Fig. 8.2: Hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts – the multi-view approach

Contextual considerations

(3) ENHANCED INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONGRUENCE (IC congruence) (ICC)

(The pinnacle of intercultural communication where manner of communication is reciprocally effective and appropriate)

(2) IC AWARENESS ENGENDERED CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBILITIES IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

- Reciprocal learning by African and Chinese colleagues presents an opportunity to seek **common ground.**
- IC awareness provides a premise upon which to build and implement intercultural communication enhancing **strategies and interventions.**
- Adoption /**integrated communication goals.**
- IC awareness **engenders mindfulness and the intercultural sensitivity** that enables **appropriateness** in intercultural communication.
- Adapted /adjusted manner of communication hence resulting in greater **effectiveness and appropriateness.**
- IC awareness **mitigates intercultural communication barriers** such as lack of knowledge, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and anxiety, hence reducing challenges such as ineffectiveness and inappropriateness.
- A **'win, win'** in communication.

(1) DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AWARENESS FOR SINO-AFRICAN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXTS

*C1   *C2   Cross-cultural approach

IC AWARENESS ENABLER	AFRICAN CULTURE	CHINESE CULTURE
CULTURAL ORIENTATION	• Community-focused *(open collectivism)* • Consensus-seeking • Human-centred *(humanism)* **HUMAN-ORIENTATED** *(Ubuntu)*	• In group focused *(submerged collectivism)* • Harmony-seeking • Relationship-driven *(guanxi)* **IN GROUP - HARMONY ORIENTATED**
MANNER OF COMMUNICATION	• Direct *(confrontational)* • Elaborate • Both personal and contextual • Both affective and instrumental **BLENDED** *(mix of African and Western)*	• Indirect • Succinct / abrupt • Contextual • Both affective and instrumental *(authoritative)* **VARIABLE** *(by context, circumstance, in or out group)*
ORIENTATION TO RULES AND PROTOCOL	• Prescribed and negotiated rule-following • Rules aimed at social maintenance • Protocol is people-focused *(being human)* • Respect for elders and observing hierarchy **SOCIAL MAINTENANCE**	• Strict prescribed rule-following • Rules aimed at status and face-maintenance • Protocol is status-focused • Respect for elders and observing hierarchy **CULTURAL PATRIOTISM** *(Confucianism)*
INDIVIDUAL DISPOSITIONS	• Humble • Accommodating • Showing of emotions • Arrogant **OPEN AND ACCOMMODATING** *(related to human-centeredness)*	• Honourable *(virtue orientated)* • Ambiguous *(insincerity)* • Not showing of emotions • Arrogant **CLOSED AND AMBIGUOUS** *(related to not showing emotions)*
IC INFLUENCES	• stereotyping, prejudice, and ethnocentrism, differences in work ethic, western influences, preconceptions, motive for interaction, personal circumstances, no interaction **THE ABOVE MENTIONED INFLUENCE IC AWARENESS PERSPECTIVES HENCE SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN SEEKING TO GAIN IC AWARENESS**	
IC VARIATIONS	• Age, class, race, level of education, seniority, organisational typology, business and social contexts **MEMBERS OF A CULTURAL GROUP SHARING THE SAME CORE VALUES MAY COMMUNICATE IN A DIFFERENT MANNER BASED ON ONE OR A NUMBER OF IC VARIANTS AS STATED**	

Contextual considerations

*C1 and *C2 represents African and Chinese culture in interaction, where colleagues seek IC awareness of their own and their counterparts' culture.

Source: Author's own contribution

As in Fig. 8.1, Fig. 8.2 is columnar, to be read in number sequence from (1) to (3) (left to right), with each column reading from top to bottom as explained for Fig. 8.1. Again, only point (1) in the figure (developing IC awareness) is discussed, as it is the only portion that forms the subject of validation in the empirical qualitative study.

Based on perspectives of African and Chinese experts and insights from the study of theory, Fig. 8.2 summarises IC awareness of African and Chinese cultures in Sino-African organisational contexts. Sections 8.1.2.1 through to 8.1.2.6 describe the positioning of African and Chinese colleagues in Sino-African contexts according to each IC awareness enabler.

8.1.2.1   Cultural orientation in Sino-African organisational contexts

As reflected in Fig. 8.2, in the Sino-African organisational context, African people display *open collectivism*, are consensus-seeking and generally human-centred in communication. This research concludes that African people in this context are human- or Ubuntu-orientated. Their Chinese colleagues, on the other hand, display an in-group focus or submerged collectivism (Chen, 2015), seek harmony, and are relationship-driven. Consequently, this research concludes that Chinese people are in-group-orientated and harmony-orientated. In summary, the findings for both African and Chinese colleagues in respect of cultural orientation are in agreement with the theoretical findings discussed in Chapter 5. The findings also support the view that despite various influences bringing gradual change over time, African and Chinese cultures maintain their core guiding philosophies of Ubuntu and Confucianism respectively.

8.1.2.2   Manner of communication in Sino-African organisational contexts

This research concludes that African people communicate in a direct manner which is also viewed as confrontational by their Chinese colleagues. Furthermore, the manner of communication is elaborate, personal and contextual as well as being simultaneously affective and instrumental. As such, in agreement with the findings of the study of theory, this research finds that the manner of communication of African people in the Sino-African organisational context is *blended,* reflecting a mix of traditionally Western and African ways.

In respect of the Chinese people, this study concludes that the manner of communication is indirect, contextual and succinct as was established in the study of theory (Chapter 5). However, Chinese people are also considered abrupt by their African colleagues; the study suggests that this perception occurs because the Chinese use few words in communication, and perhaps because the African people do not understand Chinese ways. Finally, Chinese people also communicate in both an affective and instrumental way, which is viewed as authoritative by their African colleagues. The study attributes this finding to the strict following of rules and protocol as well as the Confucianism of Chinese cultures. It is further suggested that the manner of communication in Chinese culture can be broadly labelled

as variable, contextual, circumstantial and governed by in-group, out-group relationships. Apart from being labelled as abrupt, the findings in respect of Chinese people align with findings reported in the study of theory (Chapter 5).

8.1.2.3 Orientation to rules and protocol in Sino-African organisational contexts

As shown in Fig. 8.2, this research concludes that African people follow rules and protocol that are both prescribed and negotiated to ensure social maintenance as well as respect for elders and hierarchy. Furthermore, there is a focus on maintaining dignity of the individual and behaving like a "proper" human being (as discussed in Chapter 5). Regarding the Chinese colleagues on the other hand, this study concludes that there is strict adherence to rules and protocol focused on maintenance of face, status, respect for elders and hierarchy. To add to that, in light of the African experts' views that their Chinese colleagues "keep their own culture", the present research suggests that the Chinese peoples' orientation to rules and protocol is characterised by high *cultural patriotism*. As reflected in Fig. 8.2, the study finds that in the Sino-African organisational context, compared to their Chinese counterparts, African people may be more flexible and able to adapt to rules and protocol set within the organisational context. On the other hand, it is likely that once rules of engagement have been set, Chinese people are more likely to adhere to them than are their African colleagues.

8.1.2.4 Individual dispositions in Sino-African organisational contexts

In respect of the IC awareness enabler of individual dispositions, this research finds that African people within Sino-African organisational contexts display a variety of dispositions including humility, being accommodating, showing of emotions, and arrogance. The first three dispositions are aligned to their openly collectivistic, human-centred and affective nature, as corroborated by theory. Arrogance is an unexpected finding. However, it could be attributed to the racial diversity of the African sample, the blending of African and Western ways, African ethnocentrism, as well as to a lack of knowledge and understanding or even the prejudices on the part of the Chinese. This is clearly an area needing further investigation.

This research concludes that the Chinese people are largely honourable in line with a virtue orientation suggested in the study of theory. They also have a disdain for behaviours such as stealing, as verified in the empirical study. In addition, the Chinese people were found to be ambiguous, not given to showing emotion, and arrogant. The reported arrogance of the Chinese culture may again be the result of Chinese ethnocentrism, and of a lack of knowledge and understanding, or even the prejudices of their African colleagues.

In summary then, in terms of individual dispositions, the study concludes that African people have an *open and accommodating* disposition while their Chinese colleagues have

a *closed and ambiguous* disposition associated with the paradoxical nature of Chinese culture (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Fang, 2011).

8.1.2.5 Intercultural communication influences in Sino-African organisational contexts

As reflected in Fig. 8.2 and discussed in section 7.7.1, various influences impact on IC awareness of both African and Chinese colleagues and should accordingly be taken into consideration when seeking IC awareness.

8.1.2.6 Intercultural communication variations in Sino-African organisational contexts

With regard to the IC awareness enabler of IC variations, this study finds that even in a group of people of the same culture, variations in IC awareness exist in terms of strata such as age, class, race, level of education, seniority, organisational typology and business or social context.

8.2 Significance and Contributions of this Research

The contributions of the research and their significance are now outlined.

8.2.1 Main contribution

- The main contribution of this research comes in the form of a *hybrid intercultural communication congruence (HICC) framework* for IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts – also referred to as the *multi-view approach.* Its significance lies in the fact that it builds on existing IC theory frameworks (for example Asante, 1987, 1991, 1999; Chen, 2015, 2011; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988; Miike, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2013; Yum, 2015, 1988), and on the IC awareness perspectives of African and Chinese experts to develop a context-focused framework for IC congruence in Sino-African organisations. Currently, such a multi-view framework does not exist.

8.2.2 Study of theory

- This study of theory introduces new concepts to IC discourse, thereby stimulating debate and creating opportunities for further research aimed at refining the concepts and increasing the body of IC knowledge. New concepts introduced include IC congruence, IC awareness, communication orientation, manner of communication (Chapter 2) and IC awareness enablers (Chapter 3).
- In adopting a cross-cultural approach to the literature meta-synthesis, the research produced the theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA), which serves as a

quick reference tool for those seeking to understand communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures on a comparable basis. African and Chinese managers and employees can potentially benefit from this framework (comparing communication orientation and manner of communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures) as they will be better informed when making adjustments or adaptations in policies aimed at achieving IC congruence. Also, management practitioners are provided with a starting point for developing suitable interventions and strategies for IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. These interventions could include staff development programmes and training, which has long been identified as a key strategy for addressing many of the challenges emerging in the Sino-African relationship (Feng and Mu, 2010). The advantage of this understanding for African and Chinese colleagues is that they are better positioned to interact effectively and appropriately while getting on with business.

- The theoretical framework for IC awareness (TFICA) in Western, African and Chinese cultures, as developed in this research, points to a degree of cultural proximity between African and Chinese culture as opposed to Western culture. However, similarities are not absolute, meaning that while there may exist universally acceptable communicative behaviours, their expression and interpretation may vary from culture to culture. For instance, while African and Chinese cultures value respectful communication, the way in which respect is shown is not necessarily the same. This contribution presents opportunities for future research.

8.2.3. Empirical qualitative study

- The empirical qualitative study begins a process of validating both the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework (Chapter 4) and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* (Chapter 5), hence testing the researcher's assertions regarding IC awareness in the study of theory. As reflected in sections 8.1.1 and 8.1.2, empirical insights from interviews with African and Chinese experts led to an updating of both the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts* to result in the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for Sino-African organisational contexts. It is likely that with continuing research, further refinement of these frameworks will occur.
- The research highlights and compares IC awareness perspectives in own and other's cultures for African and Chinese cultures, thereby highlighting actual lived similarities and differences. This is useful as it begins to narrow the focus on IC awareness issues for management practitioners to consider in interventions aimed at enhancing IC and achieving IC congruence.
- The research provides extensive quotations and is therefore revealing of the state of IC in Sino-African organisational contexts from the perspectives of African and Chinese experts. The study thus adds to the body of knowledge of IC in these contexts.

8.2.4 Methodology

- In response to the need for creation of action-orientated knowledge in the sparsely researched Sino-African organisational context, this research employed innovative methods encapsulated in an interpretive pragmatism paradigm. While interpretivist approaches are appropriate for investigating the complexity and uniqueness of business and management contexts (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 9), a level of pragmatism was also required to ensure solution outcomes which suited the demands of the situation; hence, interpretive pragmatism was used.
- The research creatively engages a *quasi-systematic* review and meta-synthesis technique termed "framework synthesis", to abductively, deductively and inductively pull together diverse literature and construct a new point of reference or heuristic for understanding communication in Western, African and Chinese cultures.

8.3 Limitations of this Research

8.3.1 Study of theory

The abductive and inductive techniques engaged in the meta-synthesis process are largely inferential and interpretive; therefore they could be deemed subjective owing to supposed researcher preconceptions in interpretation. Despite this shortcoming however, cognisance was taken of the fact that one has to start somewhere, whatever the shortcomings of the method. Interpretation has always involved dispute (Khoza, 2011:16). Furthermore, Eisenhardt (1989, pp. 546–547) dismisses the myth that building theory from case studies is limited by the investigator's preconceptions:

> *The constant juxtaposition of conflicting realities tends to "unfreeze" thinking, and so the process has the potential to generate theory with less researcher bias than theory built from incremental studies, or armchair, axiomatic deduction.*

Another limitation pertains to literature that may not have been included in the synthesis as a result of time and resource constraints. Unlike typical systematic reviews in the health sciences where copious amounts of literature are reviewed by large collaborative teams, the review of this study was conducted solely by the researcher. Notwithstanding this limitation, despite potential omissions of some relevant publications, the use of multiple sources provided a degree of confidence that literature included in the synthesis is representative of the body of knowledge on culture and communication in African culture. With respect to culture and communication in Chinese culture, a major limitation was the inability to access literature written in the Chinese language owing to the language limitations of the researcher. Nevertheless, a sizeable amount of literature was included.

Finally, while it may be argued that alternative methods could have been adopted to complete the study, the diversity of concepts and scarcity of context-specific empirical research pointed to a *quasi-systematic review* and meta-synthesis method as the best approach in

the first instance. What was required was to develop an understanding that would enable development of frameworks to serve as launch pads for understanding and enhancing IC – or achieving IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

8.3.2 Empirical qualitative study

The limitations of the empirical study are stated below.

- As a consequence of the complexity of the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework and the theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework *specific to Sino-African organisational contexts*, only partial empirical validation of aspects related to IC awareness was possible. This was done through interviews with African and Chinese experts.
- The experts interviewed come from a cross-section of industries representing different Chinese organisational typologies (Yu, 2012, p. 32) including SOEs, private companies and entrepreneurial business. The insights from the empirical study are therefore highly generalised; further industry-specific research needs to be done. This recommendation is a consequence of the research findings which indicate differences across organisational typologies. Despite this limitation however, the study awakens researchers to these differences in future research.
- The sample of experts interviewed were mainly senior professionals and managers, perhaps offering views from a better educated perspective. It is possible that interviews with lower-level employees could yield further or different insights. It is suggested that this research be replicated with a cross-section of employees in order to ascertain the differences in perceptions at different levels of the organisations.
- The researcher was obliged to rely on what experts chose to speak about and on the feelings they demonstrated, rather than witnessing the incidents first-hand. As such, there was no real-time observation of the phenomena under study. However, in order to mitigate the effects of lone dependence on interview data, the researcher drew on research experience in academic and commercial sectors to infer meaning from interviews which were both audio-recorded and transcribed. In addition, the researcher's reflective notes and impressions of the interview, which were noted after each interview, proved useful in the final data analysis by adding meaning to the transcribed texts.

In conclusion, despite the aforementioned limitations it is hoped that the research will not only stimulate academic debate but also pave the way for future research aimed at IC congruence in organisational contexts. Some suggestions for future research are provided in the next section.

8.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the outcomes of this research, the following are recommendations are suggested regarding future research in the broader field of IC and subfields of IC awareness and IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts.

- Additional research could refine the concepts of IC awareness, IC congruence, and the hybrid IC congruence framework for Sino-African organisational contexts.
- Research could also be undertaken which aims to refine the generic theoretical IC congruence (TICC) framework and the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework for IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. This could be achieved through use of the Delphi method which is "an iterative process to collect and distil the anonymous judgments of experts using a series of data collection and analysis techniques interspersed with feedback" (Skulmoski, Hartman and Krahn, 2007, p. 1).
- Apart from the use of experts to determine IC awareness perspectives and categories, future research could be expanded to include:
  - employees with differing educational levels at different levels in the organisation;
  - different organisational typologies;
  - different industry sectors;
  - exploration of similarities or differences between gender, racial and ethnic groups.
- Longitudinal studies could be undertaken in selected organisations following an ethnographic approach, in order to fully comprehend the nuances of how African and Chinese colleagues communicate in Sino-African organisational contexts and determine IC awareness enablers necessary to achieve IC congruence.
- The extent of the influence of the internal environment of business and organisational behaviour on IC awareness and IC congruence could be explored.

As reflected in these recommendations for future research, the list is potentially endless. There are many more questions still to be asked, based on the findings emanating from this research.

8.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study suggests that a *multi-view* approach using the hybrid IC congruence (HICC) framework is potentially useful in seeking to understand and achieve IC congruence in Sino-African organisational contexts. It provides a starting point from which to consider the perspectives of those involved in interaction, by not dwelling on predetermined standards set in other cultures. Specifically, the *hybrid IC congruence framework for Sino-African organisational contexts* proposes the development of IC awareness that enables identification, optimisation and reconciliation of similarities or differences in communication through applying appropriate intervention strategies to achieve a state of congruence. Arguably, therefore, the quest in IC may not necessarily be for effectiveness, but rather for congruence, at which point IC is both effective and appropriate.

9 References

Abe, H. and Wiseman, R. L., 1983. A cross-cultural confirmation of the dimensions of intercultural effectiveness. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 7(1), pp. 53–67.

Ajei, M. O., 2007. *Africa's development: the imperatives of indigenous knowledge and values*. Ph.D. University of South Africa. Available at: http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/1266/thesis.pdf?Sequence=1[Accessed 2 March 2016].

Alberts, J. K., Nakayama, T. K. and Martin, J. N., 2010. *Human Communication in Society*. 2nd ed. US: Pearson Education.

Alden, C. and Davies, M., 2006. A profile of the operations of Chinese multinationals in Africa. *South African journal of international affairs*, 13(1), pp. 83–96.

Alden, C., Large, D. and De Oliveira, R. S., 2008. *China returns to Africa: A rising power and a continent embrace*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Alden, C. and Park, Y. J., 2013. Upstairs and downstairs dimensions of China and the Chinese in South Africa. pp. 643–662. In: U. Pillay, G. Hagg and F. Nyamnjoh, eds. 2012. State of the Nation: Tackling poverty and inequality. Pretoria: HSRC Press.

Alexander, B. K., Arasaratnam, L. A, Avant-Mier, R., Durham, A., Flores, L., Leeds-Hurwitz, W., Mendoza, S. L., Oetzel, J., Osland, J., Tsuda, Y., Yin, J. and Halualani, R., 2014. Defining and Communicating What "Intercultural" and "Intercultural Communication" Means to Us. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 7(1), pp. 14–37.

Allen, P. M. and Varga, L., 2007. Complexity: The Co-evolution of Epistemology, Axiology and Ontology. *Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Sciences*, 11(1), pp. 19–50.

Allwood, J., 1985. Intercultural Communication. Translated from Swedish by J. Allwoood. In: J. Allwood, ed. 1985. *Tvärkulturell kommunikation, Papers in Anthropological Linguistics* 12. Dept of Linguistics, University of Göteborg. [online] Available at: http://sskkii.gu.se/jens/publications/docs001-050/041E.pdf. [Accessed 24 October 2017].

Andersen, P. A, Hetch, M. L., Hoobler, G. D. and Smallwood, M., 2003. Nonverbal communication across cultures. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 2003. *Cross cultural and intercultural communication.* London: Sage. pp. 73–90.

Aneas, M. A. and Sandin, M. P., 2009. Intercultural and Cross-cultural communication research: Some reflections about culture and qualitative methods. Research. *Forum Qualitative Social Research*, [e-journal] 10(1), pp. 1–13. Available at: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0901519. [Accessed 27 October 2013].

Anedo, O., 2012. China-Africa culture differences in business relations. African *Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 6(4), pp. 92–96.

Ani, N. C, 2013. Appraisal of African Epistemology in the Global System. *Alternation*, 20(1), pp. 295–320.

Applebaum, B., 2000. On the Meaning and Necessity of a White, Anti-Racist Identity. In: L. Stone, Ed. 2000. *Philosophy of Education Society*. Urbana: Illinois. pp. 306–317.

Ardichvilli, A., Maurer, M., Li, W., Wentling, T. and Stuedemann, R., 2006. Cultural Influences on knowledge sharing through online communities of practice. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 10(1), pp. 94–107.

Arsene, C., 2014. Chinese employers and their Ugandan workers: Tensions, frictions and cooperation in an African city. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 43(1), pp. 139–176.

Asante, M. K., 1987. *The Afrocentric idea*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Asante, M. K., 1991. The Afrocentric Idea in education. *Journal of Negro Education*, 60, pp. 170–79.

Asante, M. K., 1999. Afrocentric Theories of Communication. In: J. L. Lucaites, C. M. Condit and S. Caudill, eds.1999. *Contemporary Rhetorical Theories: A Reader*. New York: The Guilford Press. pp. 552–562.

Asante, M. K. 2005. "Blackness as an Ethical Trope: Toward a Post Western Assertion." In, G. Yancy, Ed. 2005. *White on White/Black on Black*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield. pp. 203–216.

Asante, M. K. and Vora, E., 1983. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 1983. Toward multiple philosophical approaches. *International and Intercultural Communication Ann*ual, VII, pp. 293–298.

Åsvoll, H., 2014. Abduction, deduction and induction: can these concepts be used for an understanding of methodological processes in interpretative case studies? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education,* 27(3) pp. 289–307.

Baah, A. Y. and Jauch, H. eds., 2009. *Chinese investments in Africa: A labour perspective*. [Pdf] African Labour Research Network. Available at: https://www.fnv.nl/site/over-de-fnv/internationaal/mondiaal-fnv/documenten/english/publications/Chinese_investments_in_Africa_final_report1.pdf[Accessed 18 October 2017].

Bakan, D., 1996. Some reflections about narrative research and hurt and harm'. In: R. Josselson, ed. *Ethics and Process in the Narrative Study of Lives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 3–8.

Barnett, G. A. and Kincaid, D. L., 1983. A mathematical theory of cultural convergence. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 1983. *Intercultural communication theory: Current perspectives.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. pp. 171–179.

Barnett, G. A. and Lee, M., 2003. Issues in Intercultural Communication Research. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. *Cross Cultural and Intercultural Communication*. Thousand Oakes, California: Sage. pp. 259–273.

Barnett-Page, E. and Thomas, J., 2009. Methods for the synthesis of qualitative research: A critical review. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 1(9), pp. 1–26, [online] Available at: http://bmcmedresmethodol.biomedcentral.com/papers/10.1186/1471-2288-9-59. [Accessed 28 January 2017].

Beebe, S. A., Beebe, S. J. and Redmond, M. V., 2011. *Interpersonal Communication: Relating to Others*. 6th ed. United States: Pearson Education.

Bell, D. A. A. and Metz, T., 2011. Confucianism and Ubuntu: Reflections and a dialogue between Chinese and African Traditions. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy,* 38, pp. 78–95.

Berger, C. R., 2005. Interpersonal Communication: Theoretical Perspectives, Future Prospects. *Journal of Communication*, 55(3), pp. 415–447.

Bernard, H. R., 2006. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 4th ed. Lanham: Altamira Press.

Biddle, C., 2012. Individualism vs. Collectivism: Our Future, Our Choice. *The Objective Standard*, 7(1). [online] Available at: https://www.theobjectivestandard.com/issues/2012-spring/individualism-collectivism/ [Accessed 1 March, 2016].

Blommaert, J., 1998. Different approaches to intercultural communication: A critical survey. In: *Plenary lecture Lernen und Arbeiten in einer international vernetzten und multikulturellen Gesellschaft.* Expertentagung Universität Bremen, Institut für Projektmanagement und Witschaftsinformatik (IPMI)*,* 27–28 February 1998. [online] Communicatie, Informatie, Educatie. Available at: http://www.cie.ugent.be/CIE/blommaert1.htm [Accessed April 2016].

Boafo, S. T. K. ed., 1989. *Communication and Culture: African Perspectives*. Nairobi: Africa Church Information Services.

Bogner, A. and Menz, W., 2009. The Theory-Generating Expert Interview: Epistemological Interest, Forms of Knowledge, Interaction. In: A. Bogner, B. Littig and W. Menz, eds. *Interviewing Experts.* Hamshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 43–80.

Booth, A., Papaioannou, D. and Sutton, A., 2012. *Systematic Approaches to a successful literature review*. London: Sage.

Bourgeois III, L. J., 1979. Towards a Method of Middle-Range Theorising. *The Academy of Management Review*, 4(3), pp. 443–447.

Boyne, S., 2009. The Phd literature review: its structure and contribution. In: M. Jolly and P. K. Wong, eds. 2009. *The Proceedings of the Plymouth Postgraduate Symposium*. UK: University of Plymouth. pp. 229–315. [online] Available at: http://www.academia.edu/413909/Boyne_S._2009_The_phd_literature_review_its_structure_and_contribution_in_Jolly_M._and_Wong_P._K._eds_The_Proceedings_of_the_Plymouth_Postgraduate_Symposium_2009_University_of_Plymouth_UK_pp. 299–315. [Accessed 1 March 2016].

Brautigam, D., 2003. Close encounters: Chinese business networks as industrial catalysts in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Affairs*, 102, pp. 447–467.

Brautigam, D., 2011. *China in Africa: what can Western donors learn?* [Pdf] Norfund. Available at: https://www.norfund.no/getfile.php. 133986/Bilder/Publications/ Norfund_China_in_Africa.pdf [Accessed 22 April 2017].

Brautigam, D. and Xiaoyang, T., 2011. African Shenzhen: China's special economic zones in Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 49(1), pp. 27–54.

Brinkmann, S., 2014. Doing without data. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(6), pp. 720–725.

Bryman, A., 2004. *Social research methods*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bücker, J. J. L. E., Furrer, O., Poutsma, E. and Buyens, D., 2014. The impact of cultural intelligence on communication effectiveness, job satisfaction and anxiety for Chinese host country managers working for foreign multinationals. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(4), pp. 2068–2087.

Burgoon, J. K., Berger, C. R. and Waldron, V. R., 2000. Mindfulness and Interpersonal Communication. *Journal of Social Iss*ues, 56(1), pp. 105–127.

Cardon, P. W., 2008. A critique of hall's contexting model: A meta-analysis of literature on intercultural business and technical communication. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 22, pp. 399–428.

Cardon, P. W. and Scott, J. C., 2003. Chinese business face: Communication behaviours and teaching approaches. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 66(4), pp. 9–22.

Chaney, L. H. and Martin, J. S., 2007. *Intercultural business communication*. 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Chang, Y. Y., 2008. Cultural "faces" of interpersonal communication in the USA and China. *Intercultural Studies,* XVII (1), pp. 299–313.

Chen, G. M., 2002. The past, present, and future of Chinese communication study. *China Media Reports*, (*2*), pp. 4–12.

Chen, G. M., 2011. An Introduction to key concepts in understanding the Chinese: Harmony as the foundation of Chinese Communication. *China Media Research*, *7*(4), pp. 1–12.

Chen, G. M., 2015. Seeking Common Ground While Accepting Differences through Tolerance: U. S. – China Intercultural Communication in the Global Community. In: L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel and C. Sexton Roy, eds. 2015. *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*.14th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning. pp. 465–471.

Chen, G. M. and Chung, J., 1994. The Impact of Confucianism on Organisational Communication. *Communication Quarte*rly, 42(2), pp. 93–105.

Chen, G. M. and Starosta, W. J., 1997. A review of the concept of intercultural sensitivity. *Human Communication*, 1, pp. 1–16.

Chen, G. M. and Starosta, W. J., 2003. Asian approaches to human communication: A dialogue. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 12, pp. 1–15.

Chigwendere, F. B., 2017. *Towards Intercultural Communication Congruence in Sino-African Organisational Contexts.* Unpublished PhD Thesis. Rhodes University.

Chipandambira, N., 2015. *Proverbs that show the collectivistic nature of Zimbabwean Shona culture.* [phone call] (Personal communication, 15 August 2015).

Chong, H. Y., 1994. Abduction? Deduction? Induction? Is There a Logic of Exploratory Data Analysis? In: American Educational Research Association, *Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.* New Orleans, L. A, 4–8 April 1994. [Pdf]. Available at: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED376173.pdf [Accessed 14 August 2017]

Cole, C., Chase, S., Couch, O. and Clark, M., 2011. Research Methodologies and Professional Practice: Considerations and Practicalities. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, [e-journal] 9(2), pp. 141–151. [online] Available at: www.ejbrm.com [Accessed 8 October 2016].

Collier, M. J., 2015. Cultural Identity and Intercultural Communication. In: L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel and C. Sexton Roy, eds. *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, 14th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning. pp. 53–61.

Collier, M. J., Hegde, R. S., Lee, W. S., Nakayama, T. K. and Yep, G. A., 2001. Dialogue on the edges: Ferment in communication and culture. In M. J. Collier, ed. 2001. *International and Intercultural Communication Annual 24: Transforming communication about culture: Critical new directions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 219–280.

Collier, M. J., Ribeau, S. A. and Hetch, M. L., 1986. Intracultural communication rules and outcomes within three domestic cultures. *International journal of Intercultural Relations,* 10, pp. 439–457.

Conrad, C. and Poole, M. S., 1998. *Communication: Toward the twenty-first century.* 4th ed. Fort Worth, TX: Harcout, Brace and Jananovich.

Creswell, J. W., 2007. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. and Miller, D. L., 2000. Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), pp. 124–131.

Cronin, P., Ryan, F. and Coughlan, M., 2008. Undertaking a literature review: A step by step approach. *British Journal of Nursing*, 17(1), pp. 38–43.

Crotty, M., 1998. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. London: Sage.

Croucher, S. M., Sommier, M. and Rahmani, D., 2015. Intercultural communication: Where we've been, where we're going, issues we face. *Communication Research and Practice*, 1(1), pp. 71–87.

Cruz, W., 2001. Differences in non-verbal communication styles between cultures: The Latino Anglo perspective. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, pp. 51–53.

Cui, G. and Awa, N. E., 1992. Measuring intercultural effectiveness: An integrative approach. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 16(3), pp. 311–328.

Dai, X., 2010. *Intercultural Communication in China: Thirty years Review*. [Pdf] People's Republic of China: Shanghai Normal University. Available at: https://www2.hu-berlin.de/aks/PDF/Dai%20Xiaodong%20IC_Theory_in_China%20ppt.pdf [Accessed 22 August 2014].

Daigneault, P. M., Jacob, S. and Ouimet, M., 2014. Using systematic review methods within a Ph.D. dissertation in political science: challenges and lessons learned from practice. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* 17(3), [online] Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13645579.2012.730704?-journalCode=tsrm20#.UeanwIcVGS0 [Accessed 25 October 2017].

Dainton, M., 2004. *Explaining theories of interpersonal communication*. [online] Available at: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/4984_Dainton_Chapter_3.pdf. [Accessed 5 June, 2015].

Dainton, M. and Zelley, E. D., 2015. *Applying Communication Theory for a Professional Life*. California: Sage.

Dean, O. and Popp, G. E., 1990. Intercultural Communication Effectiveness as Perceived By American Managers in Saudi Arabia and French Managers in the U. S. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 14, pp. 40–424.

Denyer, D. and Tranfield, D., 2009. *Producing a systematic review*. [online] Available at: http://gent.uab.cat/diego_prior/sites/gent.uab.cat.diego_prior/files/01_a_01_Denyer-Tranfield-Producing-a-Systematic-Review.pdf [Accessed, 25 October, 2017].

Devito, J. A., 2013. *Interpersonal messages. Foundations of interpersonal communication.* [online] Available at: http://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/hip/us/hip_us_pearsonhighered/samplechapter/0205943608.pdf. [Accessed 28 May 2015].

De Vries, R. E., Bakker-Pieper, A., Siberg, R. A., Van Gameren, K. and Vlug, M., 2009. The Content and Dimensionality of Communication Styles. *Communication Research*, 36(2), pp. 178–206.

Dhliwayo, E., 2007. *A critical study of the praise singer yesterday, today and tomorrow*. Masters of Arts. University of South Africa.

Dietz, M. C., Orr, G. and Xing, J., 2008. *How Chinese companies can succeed abroad.* [Pdf] McKinsey on Finance. Available at: file:///C:/Users/Management/Downloads/MoF_Issue_28_Summer%2008.pdf [Accessed 18 October 2017]

Ding, D. D., 2006. An Indirect Style in Business Communication. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 20(1), pp. 87–100.

Downe-Wamboldt, B., 1992. Content analysis: method, applications and issues. *Healthcare for Women International,* 13, pp. 313–321.

Dunkerley, K. J. and Robinson, E. P., 2002. Similarities and differences in perceptions and evaluations of the communication styles of American and British mangers. *Journal of language and social psychology*, 21(4), pp. 393–409.

Earley. C. and Mosakowski, E., 2004. *Cultural Intelligence*. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: https://hbr.org/2004/10/cultural-intelligence [Accessed 11 August 2017].

Eaton, L. and Louw, J., 2000. Culture and Self in Africa: Individualism-collectivism predictions. *The Journal of Psychology*, 140(2), pp. 210–217.

Eisenhardt, K. M., 1989. Theory Theories from Case Study Research. *The Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), pp. 532–550.

Fang, T., 2003. A Critique of Hofstede's Fifth National Culture Dimension. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management,* 3(3), pp. 347–368.

Fang, T., 2011. Yin Yang: A New Perspective on Culture. *Management and Organization Review,* 8(1), pp. 25–50.

Fang, T. and Faure, G. O., 2011. Chinese communication characteristics: A Yin Yang perspective. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 5, pp. 320–333.

Fang, T., Zhao. S. and Worm, V., 2008. The changing Chinese culture and business behaviour. *International Business Review*, 17(2), pp. 141–145.

Faniran, J. O., 2014. Toward a Theory of African Communication. In: C. Christian and K. Nordenstreng, eds. 2014. *Communication Theories in a Multi-Cultural W*orld. New York: Peter Lang. pp. 146–159.

Faure, G. O. and Fang, T., 2008. Changing Chinese Values, Keeping up with the paradoxes. *International Business Review*. 17, pp. 194–207.

Fay, R. and Spintahourakis-katsillis, J. A., 2000. *Communicating in Another Language: The Influence of culture.* pp. 53–84. [online] Available at: https://www.academia.edu/3604675/_Chapter_12_The_influence_of_culture_on_communication [Accessed 7 May 2015].

Feng, G. and Mu, X., 2010. Cultural challenges to Chinese Oil companies in Africa and their strategies. *Energy Policy.* 38 (11), pp. 7250–7256.

Francesca, A. M. and Gold, B. A., 2005. *International Organisational Behaviour: Texts, Cases and Exercises*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Gallois, C., Giles, H., Jones, E., Cargile, A. C. and Ota, H., 1995. Accommodating Intercultural Encounters: Elaborations and Extensions. In: R. L Wiseman, ed. Intercultural Communication Theory. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 115–147.

Gan, S., 2014. *How to do business with China: An inside view on Chinese culture and etiquette.* United Kingdom: AuthorHouse.

Gao, G. and Ting-Toomey, S., 1998. *Communicating effectively with the Chinese*. Thousand Oakes, California: Sage.

Geertz, C., 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture". In: C. Geertz, ed. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Gelo, O., Braakman, D. and Benetka, G., 2008. Quantitative and qualitative research: Beyond the debate. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioural Science*, 42(3), pp. 266–290.

Giese, K., 2014. Perceptions, Practices and Adaptations: Understanding Chinese-African Interactions in Africa. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 43(1), pp. 3–8.

Golafshani, N., 2003. Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report,* 8(4), pp. 597–606. [online] Available: http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR8-4/golafshani.pdf [Accessed 30 September 2016].

Grunig, L. A., Grunig, J. E. and Ehling, W. P., 1992. What is an effective organisation? In: J. E. Grunig, ed. 1992. *Excellence in Public Relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gu, J., 2009. China's private enterprises in Africa and the implications for African development. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 21(4), pp. 570–587.

Gu, F. F., Hung, K. and Tse, D. K., 2008. When does Guanxi matter? Issues of capitalisation and its dark sides. *Journal of Mark*eting, 72, pp. 12–28.

Guba, E. G., 1990. The alternative paradigm dialogue. In: E. G. Guba, 1990. *The paradigm dialogue.* California: Sage. pp. 17–27.

Guba, E. G. and Lincoln, Y. S., 1994. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In: N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gudykunst, W. B., 1995. Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory: Current status. In: R. L. Wiseman, ed. 1995. *Intercultural communication theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 8–58.

Gudykunst, W. B., 1998. Applying anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory to intercultural adjustment training. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22, pp. 227–250.

Gudykunst, W. B., 2003. Intercultural Communication theories. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 2003. *Cross-Cultural and intercultural communication*. Thousand Oakes, California: Sage. pp. 167–189.

Gudykunst, W. B., Matsumoto, Y., Ting-Toomey, S., Nishida, T., Kim, K. and Heyman, S., 1996. The influence of cultural individualism-collectivism, self-construal's, and individual values on communication styles across cultures. *Human Communication Research*, 22(4), pp. 510–543.

Gudykunst, W. B. and Nishida, T., 2001. Anxiety, uncertainty, and perceived effectiveness of communication across relationships and cultures. International *Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 25(1), pp. 55–71.

Gudykunst, W., B. and Ting-Toomey, S., 1988. *Culture and interpersonal communication*. New park, California: Sage.

Guest, G., Bunce, A. and Johnson, L., 2006. How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18(59), pp. 59–82.

Guitel, V. D., 2006. *Intercultural or Cross-cultural Management? The confirmation of a research field and the issue concerning the definition and development of an intercultural competency for expatriates and international managers.* [online] Available at: file:///C:/Users/funchi/Downloads/12_Intercultural%20or%20Crosscultural%20Management.pdf. [Accessed 16 August 2013].

Guliwe, T., Mkhonta, S. and Vickers, B., 2009. Chinese investments in South Africa. In: Y. Baah and H. Jauchi, eds. 2009. *Chinese investments in Africa: A labour perspective.* African Labour Research Network. pp. 300–332.

Hall, E. T., 1959. *The Silent Language.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday.

Hall, E. T., 1976. *Beyond Culture.* New York: Doubleday.

Hall, E. T. and Hall, M. R., 1990. *Understanding Cultural Differences, Germans, French and Americans.* Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.

Halualani, R. T., Mendoza, S. L. and Drzewiecka, J. A., 2009. "Critical" Junctures in Intercultural Communication Studies: A Review. *The Review of Communication*, 9(1), pp. 17–35.

Halualani, R. T. and Nakayama, T. K., 2013. Critical Intercultural Communication studies. In: T. K Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 1–16.

Ham-Baloyi, W. T. and Jordan, P., 2016. Systematic review as a research method in postgraduate nursing education. *Health SA Gesonheid,* 21, pp. 120–128.

Hammer, M. R, Gudykunst, W. B. and Wiseman, R. L., 1978. Dimensions of intercultural effectiveness: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 2(4), pp. 382–393.

Handley, R. C., 2016. *Exploring the relationship between leadership styles and quality of work life: a case study of a Chinese-South African joint venture.* Masters Thesis. Rhodes University.

Hannigan, T. P., 1990. Traits, attitudes, and skills that are related to intercultural effectiveness and their implications for cross-cultural training: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 4(1), pp. 89–111.

Hart, C., 1998. *Going a literature review: Releasing the Social Science research imagination.* London: Sage.

Hartmann, D., Gerteis, J. and Croll. P. R., 2009. An Empirical Assessment of Whiteness Theory: Hidden from How Many? *Social Problems*, 56 (3), pp. 403–424.

Higgins, J. P. T, and Green, S. eds., 2011. *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions Version 5.1.0.* [Online] The Cochrane Collaboration. Available at: www.cochrane-handbook.org. [Accessed 22 March 2016].

Higgs, P., 2010. 'Towards an indigenous African epistemology of community in education research'. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 2, pp. 2414–2421.

Hill, L. B. and Faulk, E., 2005. Towards a Comprehensive Perspective for Intercultural Communication Study: Directions for IAICS. *Intercultural Communication Studies,* XIV (2), pp. 38–52.

Hilton, C. and Kameda, N., 1999. Email and the internet as international business communication teaching and research tools: A case study. *Journal of Education for business,* 35(4), pp. 181–185.

Hofstede, G., 1980. Motivation, leadership and organisation: Do American theories apply abroad? *Organisational Dynamics*, pp. 42–63.

Hofstede, G., 1991. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. London: McGrawHill.

Hofstede, G., 1997. *Culture and Organisations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hofstede, G., 2011. Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture,* [e-journal] 2(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014 [Accessed 15 November 2015].

Hofstede, G. and Bond, M. H., 1988. The Confucius Connection. From Cultural Roots to Economic Growth. *Organisational Dynamics*, pp. 5–21.

Holliday, A., Hyde, M. and Kullman, J., 2010. *Intercultural Communication: An Advanced Resource book for students*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D. and Murphy, K., 2013. Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse Researcher*, 20(4), pp. 12–−7.

Hsieh, H. F. and Shannon, S. E., 2005. Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 1(9), pp. 1277–1288.

Hu, Y. and Fan, W., 2011. An exploratory study on intercultural communication research contents and methods: A survey based on international and domestic journals published from 2001 to 2005. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 35, pp. 554–566.

Huang, Y. H., 2010. Theorising Chinese Communication Research: A holistic framework for comparative studies. *Chinese Journal of Communication*. 3(1), pp. 95–113.

Huang, Q., Davison, R. M. and Gu, J., 2008. Impact of personal and cultural factors on knowledge sharing in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management,* 25, pp. 451–471.

Hussey, J. and Hussey, R., 1997. *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies*. London: Macmillan.

Igboin, B. O., 2011 Colonialism and African Cultural Values. *African Journal of History and Culture*, 3(6), pp. 93–106.

Jackson, T., 1999. Managing change in South Africa: Developing people and Organizations. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(2), pp. 306–326.

Jackson, T., 2012. Post colonialism and organisational knowledge in the wake of China's presence in Africa: Interrogating South-South Relations. *Organisations*, 19(2), pp. 181–204.

Jackson, T., Louw, L. and Zhao, S., 2011. Chinese Organisation and Management in Sub-Saharan Africa: Towards a cross-cultural research agenda. In: *Seventh International Symposium on Multinational Business Management – Enterprise Management in a Transitional Economy and Post Financial Crisis.* Nanjing, China, 5–6 June 2011. [Pdf] Available at:http://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/management/documents/resources/chinainafrica_researchagenda.pdf [Accessed 20 October 2017].

Jameson, D. A., 2007. Reconceptualising cultural identity and its role in intercultural business communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), pp. 199–235.

Jesson, J. K., Matheson, L. and Lacey, F. M., 2011. *Doing you Literature Review: Traditional and Systematic Techniques.* London: Sage.

Kane, O., 2014. Bridging Research and Expertise: Dominant West African Trends in Communication studies. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 39, pp. 127–143.

Kang, J. and Hyun, S. S., 2012. Effective communication styles for the customer-oriented service employee: Inducing dedicational behaviours in luxury restaurant patrons. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31, pp. 772–785.

Kaplinsky, R. and Morris, M., 2009. Chinese FDI in Sub-Saharan Africa: Engaging with Large Dragons. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 21, p. 551.

Karsten, L., and Illa, H., 2005. Ubuntu as a key African management concept: contextual background and practical insights for knowledge application. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 20(7), pp. 607–620.

Khoza, R. J., 2005. *Let Africa Lead: African Transformational Leadership for the 21st Century Business.* Sunninghill: Vezubuntu Publishers.

Khoza, R. J., 2011. *Attuned Leadership: African Humanism As Compass.* Cape Town: CPT Printers.

Kigongo, J. K., 2002. The Relevance of African Ethics to Contemporary African Society. In: A. T Dalfovo (ed), *Ethic, Human Rights, and Development in Africa: Ugandan Philosophical Studies*, Washington DC, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change, 11(8), pp. 51–67.

Kim, M. S., 2005. Culture-based conversational constraints theory: Individual and culture level analysis. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 2005. *Theorising about Intercultural Communication*. California: Sage. pp. 93–117.

Kim, M. S., 2007. The Four Cultures of Cultural Research. *Communication Monographs*, 74 (2), pp. 27– 285.

Kincaid, D. L. ed., 1987. *Communication Theory: Eastern and Western Perspectives.* San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Kittler, M. G., Rygl, D. and Mackinnon, A., 2011. Beyond Culture or Beyond Control? Reviewing the use of Halls high/low context concept. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management,* 11, pp. 63–82.

Kluckhohn, F. R. and Strodtbeck, F., 1961. *Variations in value orientations.* Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Koch, T., 1994. Establishing rigour in qualitative research: the decision trail. *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* 19(5), pp. 976–986.

Koester, J. and Olebe, M., 1988. The behavioural assessment scale for intercultural communication effectiveness. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 12, pp. 233–246.

Kondracki, N. L. and Wellman, N. S., 2002. Content analysis: Review of methods and their applications in nutrition education. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour,* 34, pp. 224–230.

Korzenny, F. and Korzenny, B. A. G., 1984. Quantitative Approaches: An overview. In: W. B. Gudykunst and Y. Y. Kim, eds. 1984. *Methods for intercultural Communication research.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. pp. 85–94.

Kriz, A., Gummesson, E. and Quazi, A., 2014. Methodology meets culture: Relational and Guanxi-oriented research in China. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management,* 14(1), pp. 27–46.

Kroeber, A. L. and Kluckhohn, C., 1952. *Culture: A critical review of concepts and definitions.* Cambridge: Massachusetts.

Kubota, R., 2012. In: C. B. Paulston, S. F. Kiesling and E. S. Rangel, eds. 2012. *The Handbook of Intercultural Discourse and Communication.* 1st ed. West Sussex: Blackwell. pp. 90–109.

Kumaradivelu, B., 2008. In: A. Holliday, M. Hyde, J. Kullman, eds. 2010. *Intercultural communication: An advanced book for students.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Routledge. pp. 76–79.

Ladegaard, H. J. and Jenks, C. J., 2015. Language and intercultural communication in the workplace: critical approaches to theory and practice. *Language and Intercultural Communication,* 15 (1), pp. 1–12.

LaFrance, M. and Mayo, C., 1978. Cultural aspects of non-verbal communication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations.*

Lampert, B. and Mohan, G., 2015. Making Space for African Agency in China-Africa Engagements: Ghanaian and Nigerian Patrons Shaping Chinese Enterprise. In: A. W. Gadzala, ed. 2005. *Africa and China: How Africans and Their Governments are Shaping Relations with China.* Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield. pp. 109–126.

Lee, Y., 2010. Home versus host- Identifying with either, both or neither. The relationship between dual cultural identities and intercultural effectiveness. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management,* 10(1), pp. 55–76.

Lee, C. J. G., 2012. 'Reconsidering constructivism in qualitative research'. *Educational philosophy and theory*, 44, pp. 403–412.

Leeds-Hurwitz, W., 2013. Writing the Intercultural History of Intercultural Communication. In Nakayama, T. K. and R. T., Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. Pp. 21–33.

Leung, K., 2008. Chinese Culture, modernization and international business. *International Business Review*, 17, pp. 184–187.

Levy, Y. and Ellis, T. J., 2006. A systems approach to conduct an effective literature review in support of information systems research. *Information Science Journal,* 9, pp. 182–212.

Lim, T. A., 2003. Languages and verbal communication. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. *Cross Cultural and Intercultural Communication*. London: Sage. pp. 53–71.

Lin, G., 2009. Higher Education Research Methodology- Literature Method. *International Education Studies*, 2(4), pp. 179–181.

Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G., 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Littig, B., 2009. Interviewing the Elite – Interviewing Experts: Is There a Difference? In: A. Bogner, B. Littig and W. Menz, eds. *Expert interviews-An introduction to a new methodological debate.* Hamshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 98–116.

Littlejohn, S. W. and Foss, K. A., 2008. *Theories of human communication.* [e-book] Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth. Available at: https://www.nelsonbrain.com/content/littlejohn95877_0495095877_02.01_chapter01.pdf [Accessed 21 December 2015].

Littlejohn, S. W. and Foss, K. A., 2010. *Theories of Human Com*munication. 10th ed. Long Groove, IL: Waveland Press.

Liu, H., 2009. *Chinese Business: Landscapes and Strategies*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Liu, S., 2012. Rethinking Intercultural Competence: Local and Global Nexus. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses,* 7(3), pp. 299–275.

Liu, S., Volcic, Z. and Gallois, C., 2011. *Introducing Intercultural Communication: Global Cultures and Contexts*. London: Sage.

Lockett, M., 1988. Culture and the problems of Chinese Management. *Organisational Studies*, 9(4), pp. 475–496.

Lovitt, C. R., 1999. Rethinking the role of culture in international professional communication. In: C. R. Lovitt and D. Goswami, eds. *Exploring the rhetoric of international professional communication: an agenda for teachers and researchers*. Amityville, NY: Baywood. pp. 1–13.

Luo, Y., 2008. The Changing Chinese Culture and business behaviour: The perspective of intertwinement between guanxi and corruption. *International Business Review*, 17, pp. 188–193.

Lustig, M. W. and Koester. J., 1993. *Intercultural Competence – Interpersonal Communication across Cultures*. New York: Harper Collins.

Ma, R., 2011. Social Relations (Guanxi): A Chinese Approach to Interpersonal Communication. *China Media Research*, 7(4). pp. 25–33.

Mabuza, L. T., 2015. *The influence of organisational culture on a high commitment work system and organisational commitment: the case of a Chinese multinational corporation in South Africa*. Masters. Rhodes University.

Madzingira, N., 2001. *Culture, Communication and Development in Africa*. [Pdf] UNDP Human Development Report. Available at: unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/IDEP/UNPAN003348.pdf [Accessed 23 October 2017].

Mangaliso, M. P., 2001. Building competitive advantage from "Ubuntu": management lessons from South Africa. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 15(3), pp. 23–34.

Maomeka, A. A., 1989. Communication and African Culture: A Sociological Analysis. In: S. T. K. Bofao, ed.1989. *Communication and Culture: African Perspectives*. Nairobi: Africa Church Information Services.

Maomeka, A. A., 1997. Communalistic Societies/; Community and self-respect as African Values. In: C. Christians and M. Traber, eds. 2014. *Communication ethics and universal values*. Thousand Oakes, California: Sage. pp. 170–193.

Martin, N. J., and Nakayama, T. K. 1999. Thinking dialectically about culture and communication. *Communication Theory,* 9(1), pp. 1–25.

Martin, J. N. and Nakayama, T. K., 2010. *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Martin, J. N. and Nakayama, T. K., 2013. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 59–83.

Martin, J. N. and Nakayama, T. K., 2015. Reconsidering intercultural (communication) competence in the workplace: a dialectical approach. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 15(1), pp. 13–28.

Mathews, L. C. and Thakkar, B., 2012. The Impact of Globalization on Cross Cultural Communication. In: H. Cuadra-Montiel, ed. 2012. *Globalization- Education and management agendas.* Ch.13. [Pdf] Intech. Available at: http://cdn.intechopen.com/pdfs-wm/38267.pdf [Accessed 15 December 2016].

Matondo, M. J. P., 2012. Cross-Cultural Value Comparisons between Chinese and Sub-Saharan Africans. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(11), pp. 38–45.

Mayer, C. H., 2008. *Managing Conflict across cultures, values and identities: A case study in the South African automotive industry*. Ph. D. Rhodes University.

Mayer, C-H., Boness, C. M. and Louw, L., 2017. Perceptions of Chinese and Tanzanian employees regarding intercultural collaboration. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management,* [e- journal] 15(0). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.921. [Accessed 25 October 2017)].

Mayring, P., 2000. Qualitative content analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, [e-journal] 1(2). Available at: http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1089/2385 [Accessed May 28, 2017].

Mazama, A., 2001. The Afrocentric Paradigm: Contours and Definitions. *Journal of Black Studies*, 31(4), pp. 387–405.

Mazrui, A. A., 2005. The Re-invention of Africa: Edward Said, V. Y. Mudimbe, and Beyond. *Research in African Literatures,* 36(3), pp. 68–82.

Mbigi, L., 1997. *The African dream in manageme*nt. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.

Mbigi, L. and Maree, J., 1995. *Ubuntu: The Spirit of African Transformation Management*. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.

McFarlin, D. B., Coster, E. A. and Mogale-Pretorius, C., 1999. South African management development in the twenty-first century. Moving toward an Africanized model. *Journal of Management Develop*ment, 18(1), pp. 63–78.

McSweeney, B., 2002. Hofstede's model of national cultural differences and their consequences: A triumph of faith – A failure of analysis. *Human Relations*, 55(1), pp. 89–118.

Men, T., 2014. Place-based and Place-bound Realities: A Chinese Firms Embeddedness in Tanzania. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 43(1), pp. 103–138.

Mendenhall, M. E., Stevens, M. J., Bird, A., Oddou, G. R. and Maznevski, M. L., 2008. Specification of the content domain of the intercultural effectiveness scale. *The Kozai Monograph Series*, 1(2), pp. 3–22.

Mendoza, S. L., 2013. Reflections on bridging paradigms: How not to throw out the baby of collective representation with the functionalist bathwater in critical intercultural communication. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 98–111.

Metz, T., 2014. Harmonising Global ethics in the future: A proposal to add south and east to west. *Journal of Global Ethics*, 10(2), pp. 146–155.

Metz, T., 2015. Values in China as compared to Africa. In: H. Du Plessis, T. Metz, G. Raza, R. Poplak, D. Cisse, M. Davies, Y. Zhao, G. Le Pere, A. Ross and M. Lauzon-Lacroix, eds. 2015. *The Rise and Decline and Rise of China: Searching for an Organizing Philosophy*. South Africa: Real African Publishers.

Meuser, M. and Nagel, U., 2009. The Expert Interview and Changes in Knowledge Production. In: A. Bogner, B. Littig and W. Menz, eds. *Expert interviews- an introduction to a new methodological debate.* Hamshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillanpp. pp. 17–42.

Microsoft Word Office Support, 2017. *Create or run a macro.* [online] Available at: https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Create-or-run-a-macro-C6B99036-905C-49A6-818A-DFB98B7C3C9C [Accessed 26 August 2017].

Miemis, V., 2010. *What is an expert? Emergent by Design.* [online] Available at: https://emergentbydesign.com/2010/02/25/what-is-an-expert/. [Accessed 29 October 2015].

Miike, Y., 2002. Theorising Culture and Communication in the Asian Context: An Assumptive Foundation. In: G. M. Chen, ed. Culture and Communication an East Asian Perspective. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 11(1), pp. 1–21.

Miike, Y., 2003. Toward an alternative metatheory of human communication: An Asiacentric vision. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 12(4), pp. 39–64.

Miike, Y., 2004. Rethinking humanity, culture, and communication: Asiacentric critiques and contributions. Human Communication: *A Journal of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association*, 7(1), pp. 62–82.

Miike, Y., 2006. Non-Western Theory in Western Research? An Asiacentric Agenda for Asian Communication Studies. *Review of Communication*, 6(1–2), pp. 4–31.

Miike, Y., 2007. An Asiacentric reflection on Eurocentric bias in Communication Theory. *Communication Monographs*, 74(2), pp. 272–278.

Miike, Y., 2013. Culture as text and culture as theory: Asiacentricity and its raison d'etre in Intercultural Communication Research. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 190–215.

Miike, Y. and Yin, J., 2015. Asiacentricity and shapes of the future: Envisioning the field of intercultural communication in the globalisation era. In: L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel and C. Sexton Roy, eds. *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. 14th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning. pp. 449–465.

Miller, A. N., Deeter, C., Trelstad, A., Hawk, M., Ingram, G. and Ramirez, A., 2013. Still the Dark Continent: A content analysis of research about Africa and by African scholars in 18 major communication-related journals. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 6(4), pp. 317–333.

Mingers, J., 2012. Abduction: the missing link between deduction and induction. A comment on Ormerod's'rational inference: deductive, inductive and probabilistic thinking. The Journal of the Operational Research Society, 63(6) pp. 860–861.

Minnameier, G., 2010. The Logicality of Abduction, Deduction and Induction. In: M. Bergman, S. Paavola, A. V. Pietarinen and H. Rydenfelt, eds. 2010. *Ideas in Action: Proceedings of the Applying Peirce Conference.* Helsinki, Finland: Pragmatism Network. pp. 239–251. [online] Available at: http://www.nordprag.org/nsp.1/Minnameier.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Moon, D. G., 2013. Critical reflections on culture and critical intercultural communication. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 34–52.

Monson, J. and Rupp, S., 2013. Africa and China: new engagements, new research. *African Studies Review*, *56*(1), pp. 21–44.

Mutere, M., 2012. Towards an Africa-centered and pan-African theory of communication: Ubuntu and the oral-aesthetic perspective, *Communicatio*, 38(2), pp. 147–163.

Myers, L. J., 1987. The Deep Structure of Culture: Relevance of Traditional African Culture in Contemporary Life. *Journal of Black Studies,* 18(1), pp. 72–85.

Naidoo, P., 2011. *Intercultural communication: A comparative study of Japanese and South African work practice.* Ph. D. University of Zululand.

Nair-Venugopal, S., 2015. Issues of language and competence in intercultural business contexts. *Language and Intercultural Communication*. 15(1), pp. 29–45.

Narh, P., 2013. *Philosophical Foundation of knowledge creation on Africa.* [Pdf] Farafina Institute's Discussion Papers Series. Available at: http://www.farafina-institute.org/attachments/article/119/Philosophical%20foundation%20of%20knowledge%20creation%20on%20Africa.pdf [Accessed 23 October 2017].

Neuliep. J. W., 2012. The Relationship among Intercultural Communication Apprehension, Ethnocentrism, Uncertainty Reduction, and Communication Satisfaction during Initial Intercultural Interaction: An Extension of Anxiety and Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 41(1), pp. 1–16.

Nkomo, S. M., 2013. A postcolonial and anti-colonial reading of African leadership and management in organisation studies: tensions, contradictions and possibilities. *Organisation*, 18(3), pp. 265–386.

Ntuli, C. D., 2012. Intercultural Misunderstanding in South Africa: An Analysis of Nonverbal Communication Behaviour in Context. *Intercultural Communication Studies,* XXI (2), pp. 20–31.

Nussbaum, B., 2003. African Culture and Ubuntu. *World Business Academy*, 17(1), pp. 1–12.

Nwosu, P. O., Taylor, D. S., and Blake, C. A., 1998. Communication and development: Imperatives for an Afrocentric Methodology. In: J. D. Hamlet, ed. 1998. *Afrocentric Visions: Studies in Culture and Communication*. California: Thousand Oakes. pp. 229–246.

Obonyo, L., 2011. Towards a theory of communication for Africa: The Challenges for emerging democracies. Communicatio: *South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 37(1), pp. 1–20.

O'connor, H. and Gibson, N., 2003. A Step-by-Step Guide to Qualitative Data Analysis. *Pimatiziwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health* 1(1), *pp. 63–90.* [online] Available at: http://www.pimatisiwin.com/uploads/1289566991.pdf. [Accessed, 8 November, 2016].

Oetzel, J., 2014. Intercultural health communication. In: T. L. Thompson, ed. 2014. *Encyclopaedia of Heath Communication*. Sage Publications. pp. 735–738.

Okech, J. E. A., Pimpleton, A. M., Vannatta, R. and Champe, J., 2015. Intercultural Communication: An Application to Group Work. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work,* 40 (3), pp. 268–293.

Ono, K. A., 2013. Reflections on Problematizing 'Nation' in Intercultural communication research. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. pp. 84–97.

Park, Y, J. and Alden, C., 2013. 'Upstairs' and 'Downstairs' dimensions of China and the Chinese in South Africa In: State of the Nation, 2012. *Tackling Poverty and Inequality.* Pretoria: HSRC Press. pp. 611–630.

Paterson, S., 2014. *Perceptions of organisational commitment within a selected Chinese organisation in South Africa: A case study approach.* Masters. Rhodes University.

Patton, M. Q, 1999. Enhancing the Quality and Credibility of Qualitative Analysis. *HSR: Health Services Research,* 34(5), pp. 1189–1208.

Patton, M. Q., 2002. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods.* 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Payne, G. and Payne, J., 2004. *Key Concepts in Social Research.* London: Sage.

Pfadenhauer, M., 2009. At Eye Level: The Expert Interview – a Talk between Expert and Quasi-expert. In: A. Bogner, B. Littig and W. Menz, eds. *Expert interviews-and introduction to a new methodological debate.* Hamshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 81–97.

Phatak, A. V., Bhagat, R. S. and Kashlak, R. J., 2005. *International Management: Managing in a Diverse and Dynamic Global Environment.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Pietersen, H. J., 2005. Western Humanism, African Humanism and Work Organizations. *SA Journal of Industrial Psych*ology, 31(3), pp. 54–61.

Pigato, M. and Tang, W., 2015. China and Africa: Expanding Economic Ties in an Evolving Global Context. In*: Investing in Africa Forum, Partnering to accelerate investment, industrialization and results in Africa.* Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25 March 2015. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Ping, H. and Yan, T., 2013. The Comparison of Chinese and American Interpersonal Relationships. *International Academic Workshop on Social Science (IAW-SC 2013),* pp. 1118–1120.

Polit D. F. and Beck C. T., 2004. *Nursing Research. Principles and Methods.* Philadelphia, PA.: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Ponterotto, J. G., 2005. Qualitative Research in Counselling Psychology: A Primer on Research Paradigms and Philosophy of Science. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 52(2), pp. 126–136.

Praeg. S. L. and Magadla, S., 2014. *Ubuntu: Curating the archive.* UKZN Press.

Reichertz, J., 2009. Abduction: The Logic of Discovery of Grounded Theory. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research,* [e- journal] 11(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.1.1412.

Remenyi, D., 2013. *Case Study Research*: The quick guide series. 2nd ed. Reading, UK: Academic Publishing International.

Ristic, I., 2013. *Intracultural, Intercultural, Cross-Cultural, and International Communication: What's the Difference?* [online] igoristic wordpress. Available at: https://igorristic.wordpress.com/2013/03/12/intracultural-intercultural-cross-cultural-and-international-communication-whats-the-difference/ [Accessed, 7 June 2013].

Rogers, E. M., 2003. *Diffusion of innovations*. 5th ed. New York: Free Press.

Romney, K. A., Batchelder, W. H. and Weller, S. C., 1986. Culture as Consensus: A Theory of Culture and Informant Accuracy. *American Anthropologist,* 88(2), pp. 313–338.

Rubin, J. H. and Rubin S. J., 1995. *Qualitative interviewing, the Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Salazar, L. F., Crosby, R. A., and Diclemente, R. J., 2015. *Research Methods in Health Promotion*. 2nd ed. San-Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Salo-Lee, L., 2006. *Introduction to Intercultural Communication*. [online] Moniviestin. Available at: https://moniviestin.jyu.fi/ohjelmat/hum/viesti/en/ics/. [Accessed: 4 February, 2016].

Samovar, L. A. and Porter, R. E., 1995. *Communication between Cultures*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Sanjari, M., Bahramnezhad, F., Fomani, F. K., Shoghi, M. and Cheraghi, M. A., 2014. Ethical challenges of researchers in qualitative studies: the necessity to develop a specific guideline. *Journal of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine*, 7(4). [online] Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4263394/ [Accessed, 5 October 2016].

Sarantakos, S., 1993. *Social Research*. South Melbourne: Macmillan Education.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A., 2009. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 5th ed. Edinburgh: Pearson Education

Schein, E. H., 1990. Organisational culture. *American Psychologist,* 45(2), pp. 109–119.

Schein, E. H., 2010, *Organisational Culture and Leadership*. 4th ed. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons.

Schiele. J. H., 1990. Organisational Theory from an African perspective. *Journal of Black Studies*, 21(2), pp. 145–161.

Schwandt, T. A., 2001. *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Schwartz, S. H., 1992. Universals in the content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 25, pp. 1–65.

Schwartz, S. H., 1994. Are there universal aspects in the structure and content of human values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50(4), pp. 19–45.

Schwartz, S. H., 1996. Value priorities and behaviour: Applying of theory of integrated value systems. In: C. Seligman, J. M. Olson, and M. P. Zanna, eds. *The Psychology of Values: The Ontario Symposium*, 8. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum: pp. 1–24.

Schwartz, S. H., 2009. Culture matters: National value cultures, sources, and consequences. In: R. S. Wyer, C-Y. Chiu and Y-Y. Hong, eds. *Understanding culture: Theory, research, and application*. New York: Psychology Press. pp. 127–150.

Schwartz, S. H., 2012. An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, [e-journal] 2(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116 [Accessed 18 November 2015].

Scotland, J., 2012. Exploring the Philosophical Underpinnings of Research: Relating Ontology and Epistemology to the Methodology and Methods of the Scientific, Interpretive, and Critical Research Paradigms. *English Language Teaching*. 5 (9), pp. 9–16.

Seale, C., 1999. Quality in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(4), pp. 465–478.

Shen, X., 2015. Private Chinese investment in Africa: Myths and realities. *Development Policy Review*, 33(1), pp. 83–106.

Shenton, A. K., 2004. Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), pp. 63–75.

Shonhiwa, S., 2008. *The Effective cross-cultural manager: A guide for business leaders in Africa.* Cape Town: Zebra Press.

Shuter, R., 2012. The Centrality of Culture and Indigenous Values. *China Media Research*, 8(3), pp. 1–10, [online] Available at: http://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1091&context=comm_fac. Accessed 23 October 2017.

Singh, K. D., 2015. Creating Your Own Qualitative Research Approach: Selecting, Integrating and Operationalizing Philosophy, Methodology and Methods. *Vision (09722629)*, 19(2), pp. 132–146.

Skow, L. and Samovar, L. A., 2015. Cultural Patterns of the Maasai. In: L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel and C. Sexton Roy, eds. *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. 14th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning. pp. 141–149.

Skulmoski, G. J., Hartman, F. T. and Krahn, J., 2007. The Delphi Method for Graduate Research. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, 6, pp. 1–21, [online] Available at : https://www.learntechlib.org/p. 111405/ [Accessed 22 October, 2017].

Slabbert, A. and Ukpere, W. I., 2011. A comparative analysis of the Chinese and South African work ethic. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 38(8), pp. 734–74.

Smith, P. B., 2011. Communication Styles as Dimensions of National Culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(2), pp. 216–233.

Solderholm, G. W., 2013. Beyond Literature Review of Hall's Context Dimension: Scale Development, Validation and Empirical Findings within a Norwegian Study. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(10), pp. 27–40.

Spitzberg, B. H., 2000. A model of intercultural communication competence. In: L. A. Samovar and R. E. Porter, eds. *Intercultural Communication Competence: A Reade*r. 9th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. pp. 375–387.

Srivastava, A. and Thomson, S. B., 2009. Framework Analysis: A Qualitative Methodology for Applied Research Note Policy Research. *Journal of Administration and Governance*, 4(2), pp. 72–79.

Starosta, W. J., and Chen, G. M., 2013. Expanding the Circumference of Intercultural Communication Study. In: T. K. Nakayama and R. T. Halualani, eds. *The Handbook of Intercultural Communication.* Oxford: Wiley Blackwell. pp. 130–146.

Stenbacka, C., 2001. Qualitative research requires quality concepts of its own. *Management Decision*, 39(7), pp. 551–555.

Sun, I. Y., Jayaram, K. and Kassiri, O., 2017. *Dance of the lions: How are Africa and China engaging, and how will the partnership evolve?* [Pdf] McKinsey and Company. Available at: https://www.google.co.za/search?q=Dance+of+the+lions%3A+How+are+Africa+and+China+engaging%2C+and+how+will+the+partnership+evolve%3F+%5B&oq=Dance+of+the+lions%3A+How+are+Africa+and+China+engaging%2C+and+how+will+the+partnership+evolve%3F+%5B&aqs=chrome.69i57.809j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8 [Accessed 29 October 2017].

Tang, Y., 2014. The Paradox of Chinese Communication: The case of keki. *China Media Research*, 10(4), pp. 69–78.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C., 1998. *Mixed Methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oakes, California: Sage.

Terre Blanche, M. T., Durrheim, K. and Painter, D., 2006. *Research in Practice: Applied methods for the social sciences.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Tervalon, M. and Murray-Garcia, J., 1998. Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Unde*rserved, 9(2), pp. 117–125.

Ting-Toomey, S., 1988. Intercultural conflict styles: A face negotiation theory. In: Y. Y. Kim and W. B. Gudykunst, eds. 1988. *Theories in intercultural communication.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage. pp. 213–238.

Ting-Toomey, S. and Kurogi, A., 1998. Facework competence in intercultural conflict: An updated face-negotiation theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22, pp. 187–225.

Traber, R., 1989. African Communication: Problems and Prospects. *Africa Media Review*, 3 (3) pp. 86–97.

Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. and Smart, P., 2003. Towards a Methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14, pp. 207–222.

Trompenaars, F. and Hampden-Turner, C., 1993. *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business.* London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Tung, R. L., Worm, V. and Fang, T., 2008. Sino-Western Business Negotiations Revisited—30 Years after China's Open Door Policy. *Organizational Dynamics*, 37(1), pp. 60–74.

Tylor-Powell, E. and Renner, M., 2003. *Analysing qualitative data. Program development and evaluation*. [Pdf] Madison Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Extension. Available at: https://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/g3658-12.pdf [Accessed 26 August 2017]

University of Louisville Research Guides, 2016. *Critical Thinking and Academic Research*. [online] Available at: http://louisville.libguides.com/criticalthinking [Accessed 30 March 2016].

Uwah, I., 2012. Identity and culture in theorising African perspectives of communication: The case of an African cinematic model. Communicatio: South African *Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 38(2), pp. 181–194.

Van Den Heuvel, H., 2008. 'Hidden Messages' Emerging From Afrocentric Management Perspectives. *Acta Commercii*, pp. 51–54.

Van Der Colff, L., 2003. Leadership lessons from the Africa tree. *Management Decision Journal*, 41(3), pp. 257–261.

Varner, I. I. and Palmer, T. M., 2005. The role of cultural self-knowledge in successful expatriation. *Singapore Management Review*, 27(1), pp. 1–25.

Verderber, K. S. and Verderber, R. F., 2008. *Communicate*. 12th ed. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.

Victor, D., 1992. *International business communication*. New York: Harper Collins.

Von Schirach, P. M., 2012. *China's Point man for Africa in an interview admits that Chinese companies operating in the continent follow unorthodox practices to get business – "Bags of money on the table, and bribes"*. [online] Schirach reports. Available at: http://schirachreport.com/index.php. 2012/04/07/chi-nas-point-man-for-africa-in-an-interview-admits-that-chinese-companies-operating-in-the-continent-follow-unorthodox-practices-to-get-business-bags-of-money-on-the-table-and-bribes [Accessed 11 May 2012].

Wah, S. S., 2001. Chinese cultural values and their implication to Chinese management. *Singapore Management Review*, 23(2), pp. 75–83.

Wahyuni, D., 2012. The research design maze, Understanding paradigms, cases and methodologies. Journal of Applied Management Accounting Research, 10(1), pp. 69–80. [online] Available at: https://www. researchgate.net/profile/Dina_Wahyuni5/publication/256024036_The_Research_Design_Maze_Understanding_Paradigms_Cases_Methods_and_Methodologies/links/55c0099908aed621de13a5c7.pdf [Accessed 21 March 2016].

Waneless, D., 2007. Ubuntu: We all belong to each other. *International Congregational Journal*, 7(1), pp. 117–119.

Washington, M. C., 2013. Intercultural business communication: An analysis of ethnocentrism in a globalized Business environment. *Journal of Business and Management*, 1(1), pp. 20–27.

Watt, D., 2007. On Becoming a Qualitative Researcher: The Value of Reflexivity. *The Qualitative Report,* 12(1), pp. 82–101. http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR12-1/watt.pdf.

Web finance Inc, 2017. *Online Business Dictionary*. [online]. Web finance Inc. Available at: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/effectiveness.html. [Accessed 5th November 2017].

Wei, X. and LI, Q., 2013. The Confucian Value of Harmony and its Influence on Chinese Social Interactions. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 9, pp. 60–66.

Welman, J. and Kruger, S. J., 2001. *Research methodologies*. 2nd ed. Cape Town: Oxford Southern Africa.

Westropp, S., 2012. Cultural Comparison of China and Sub-Saharan Africa. *Otago Management Graduate Review,* 10, pp. 67–87.

Williams, A., 2015. *Proverbs that show the collectivistic nature of South African Tswana culture*. [conversation] (Personal communication, 17 August 2017)

Wilson, D., 1987. Traditional Systems of Communication in Modern African Development an Analytical Viewpoint. *Africa Media Review*, 1(2), pp. 87–104.

Winter, G., 2000. A comparative discussion of the notion of validity in qualitative and quantitative research. *The Qualitative Report,* 4(3–4). [online] Available at: http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-3/winter.html. [Accessed September 30, 2016].

Wiseman, R. L., 2003. Intercultural Communication Competence. In: W. B. Gudykunst, ed. 2003. *Cross Cultural and Intercultural Communication.* London: Sage. pp. 191–208.

World Book, 2009. *The World Book Dictionary*. Chicago, IL: World Book.

Xie, A., Rau, P. L, Tseng, Y., Su, H. and Zhao, C., 2009. Cross-cultural influence on communication effectiveness and user interface design. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 33, pp. 1–20.

Xu, K., 2013. Theorizing Difference in Intercultural Communication: A Critical Dialogic Perspective. *Communication Monographs*, 80(3), pp. 379–397.

Yao, X., 2000. *An Introduction to Confucianism*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

Yin, R. K., 2009. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Yoshitake, M., 2002. Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory: A critical examination of an Intercultural Communication Theory. *Intercultural Communication Studies,* XI (2), pp. 177–194.

Yu, J. (2012) China's geoeconomic strategy: firms with Chinese characteristics: the role of companies in Chinese foreign policy. *IDEAS reports – special reports*, K., Nicholas (ed.) SR012. LSE IDEAS, The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK. Available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/44205/ [Accessed 20 March 2018].

Yum, J. O., 2015. The impact of Confucianism on Interpersonal Relationships and Communication Patterns in East Asia. *Communication Monographs,* 55, pp. 374–388. In: L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel and C. Sexton Roy, eds. 2015. *Intercultural Communication: A Reader.*14th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning. pp. 110–120.

Yum, J. O., 1988. The impact of Confucianism on Interpersonal Relationships and Communication Patterns in East Asia. *Communication Monographs,* 55, pp. 374–388.

Zhang, Q., 2014. Misinterpretations pf intercultural communication among Chinese foreign language educators. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(5), pp. 917–922.

Zhu, J. and Bao, Y., 2010. The Pragmatic comparison of Chinese and Western Politeness in Cross Cultural Communication. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 1*(6), pp. 848–851.

10 Annexures

Annexure 6.1: Quasi-systematic review and meta-synthesis process

STAGE 1: Planning

(1) SCOPING STUDY *(proposal stage)*

- *Determine relevance of the study
- *Definition of scope
- *Identification of themes & sub-themes
- *Consideration of interdisciplinary perspectives
- *Consideration of previous methodologies
- *Overview of theoretical, practical & methodological history debates

(2) DEVELOPING THE REVIEW PROTOCOL

- *Statement of the questions to be addressed (these must be answerable and searchable)
- *Determination from which **population** the sample would be drawn
- *Definition of **sources for the review** e.g. primary sources, secondary sources
- *E**mpirical** vs **theoretical** vs **philosophical literature**
- ***Time frame** for literature to be reviewed
- * Define a search strategy for the articles
  - Electronic databases, edited books, books etc.
  - Define critical appraisal methods - setting inclusion exclusion criteria
  - Determine key words, alternative words and search strings, backwards and forward search strategies
- * **Define a synthesis strategy**
- * **Preliminary report presentation structure**

(The **protocol** is a plan that helps to protect objectivity by providing explicit descriptions of the steps to be taken (Tranfield at al. 2003:214-215)

STAGE 2: Conducting the Review

(3) SEARCHING FOR LITERATURE

- * Literature search as **per search strategy** outlined in the review protocol

Search & processing an iterative process

(4) PROCESSING THE LITERATURE

* i. Critical appraisal
- PQRS System (preview, question, read, synthesise) Cohen's (1990) i.e. know and comprehend the literature.
- Application of inclusion - exclusion criteria through;
  - Technical appraisal
    - ✓ Does literature fit the purpose
    - ✓ Authority of the literature (e.g. H-Index, seminal work, citation index)
    - ✓ Effectiveness
    - ✓ Reliability
  - Creative analysis (dialectical thinking)
    - ✓ Logical analysis
    - ✓ Judgment
    - ✓ Reasoning
    - ✓ Synthesis

***ii. Data Extraction**
Aggregate findings to form a body of evidence regarding the research questions

***iii. Synthesis and analyses**
- **Apply** the literature through activities such as demonstrating, illustrating, relating, classifying
- **Analyse** the literature by separating, connecting, comparing, selection and explaining (why is the selected information important)
- **Synthesise** the literature - Summarise, integrate, cumulate, modify, rearrange, design, compose, generalise through abductive, deductive and inductive methods
- **Evaluate** the literature - Assessing, deciding, recommending, judging, explaining, discriminating, supporting and concluding

STAGE 3: Reporting

(5) Reporting the findings

- Use of Tables and figures to summarise large quantities of data
- Quality review is based on a concept-centric approach rather than a chronological or author-centric approach
- A quality review means, "appropriate breadth and depth, rigour and consistency, clarity and brevity, and effective analysis and synthesis"
- Aim of systematic review is to provide collective insights through theoretical synthesis into fields and sub-fields

Source: Author's construction from sources: Ham-Baloyi and Jordan, 2016; Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton, 2012; The Cochrane Handbook: 2011; Boyne, 2009; Lin, 2009; Cronin et al., 2008; Levy and Ellis, 2006; Tranfield et al., 2003; Hart, 1998; Eisenhardt, 1989.

Annexure 6.2a: Example of framework synthesis table

The nature of communication: Western, African and Chinese cultures

Western Culture	African Culture	Chinese Culture
What is the nature of existence and human communication?		
• Western cultures orientate to atomistic views by emphasising the importance of individual components in the process of human communication (Chen, 2015:467) • Western worldview is fragmented with its separation of spirit and matter. Focus on separating mind and body, persons against nature, self and other (Myers, 1987:75) • Western ontology traditionally dominated by the theme of individualism where the independent self is the figure, and interdependent relationships are the background (Miike, 2002:6; Kincaid, 1987) • In communication in a group, people tend to be discrete, displaying the value of individualism in social interaction (Chen, 2015:467) • Western theories concerned with measurement of parts without necessarily being concerned with an ultimate integration or unification of parts (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008:5)	• Existence is made of past, present, and future generations as epistemic communities linked together as a community. The individual knowing person is a community that includes ancestors and future unborn generations (Narh, 2013:7) • The universe is a composite blend of divine, spiritual, human, animate and inanimate beings, which constantly interact with one another (Igboin, 2011:98) • The living, the dead, and the yet-unborn, form part of the African philosophy of existence and knowing (maintained by strict following of taboos, mores and norms (Narh, 2013:7) • African cultures therefore have a holistic, interconnected view of human communication • Reality is at once spiritual and material (Myers, 1987:74) • Di-unital logic (union of opposites) dominates the world-view and all sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks (Myers, 1987:74) • The self is the centre of the world, hence every experience and reality is personal experience unlike the impersonal and scientific experience of the West.	• The universe is a great whole where where subject and object are unified. Despite the existence of conflict the aim of human interaction is to achieve a holistic or collective goal (Chen, 2015:467; Chen and Starosta, 2003:5) • Everyone and everything is interrelated across space and time with an emphasis on the two themes of relationality and circularity. (Miike, 2002:6) • Chinese cultures therefore have a holistic view of human communication. • Human communication is then a holistically interconnected network and ever in a state of change and transformation (Chen and Starosta, 2003:5) • People are collectively orientated and tend to submerge into the group in social interaction (Chen, 2011:12) • Interconnectedness is where the Chinese find the real meaning of their existence. (Chen, 2015; Miike, 2002:6) • The theme of circularity refers to transcendence in space and time, providing a sense of relatedness of the present to the past and the future, and a sense of relatedness of the life world to the whole of nature (Miike, 2002:6) • Eastern theories focus on wholeness and unity (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008:5)

Source: Author's own construction from sources as indicated

Annexure 6.2b: Example of framework synthesis table

Values, guiding philosophies and communication: Western, African and Chinese cultures compared

		Western culture	African culture	Chinese culture
Western perspectives	Cultural factors influencing communication / Values and guiding philosophies. (Culture plays a significant role in developing our view of the world as well as our view of ourselves in that world.)			
		- Individualistic, low context, low uncertainty avoidance, low power distance (Hofstede, 1980; Hall, 1976) Egalitarian, autonomy and mastery value types (Schwartz, 1992)	- Medium to high context, moderate to high uncertainty avoidance, high power distance (Hofstede, 1980; Hall, 1976)	- Collectivistic, high uncertainty avoidance, high context (Hofstede, 1980; Hall, 1976)
Culture-specific values / philosophies influencing communication		**Individualism**	**Communalism / Ubuntu / Humanism**	**Confucianism**
		Individualism - Individual is an entity that is capable of existing and flourishing on its own, to a large extent unconnected to a community of other individuals, not bound by any biological relationships or socioeconomic, political, and cultural relationships, obligations, duties, responsibilities, and conventions that frame and define a community of individuals (Narh, 2013:7; Higgs, 2010:2416) - Individuals are considered to be deliberate and active in achieving personal goals (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008:5)	**Ubuntu** - "*Ubuntu ngumuntu ngabanye abantu*" - people are people through other people **Communalism** - Emphasis on the interdependence between individuals and community (Faniran, 2014:150) - Family is the primary unit of the social life of the community (Igboin, 2011:100) **Humanism** - A philosophy that places value on the human interests and acknowledges a person's individuality, intrinsic worth and effort over their sociality (Jackson, 1999; Faniran, 2014:151) Human life is highly sacred (Igboin, 2011:99) **Supremacy of the community** - Rules rather than rulers or individuals are essential mechanisms for the social order **Respect for elders** - Elders are wise and give good counsel; they guide the community hence are given due respect **Sanctity of authority** - Expectation that leaders should be above reproach; however the leader is not above the supremacy of the community **Utility of the individual** - The individual is important in the context of the welfare of the community - Individual values and opinions are valued as it is the synthesis of these views that forms the basis of community decisions - Personal will and identity are valued individualist and communistic values co-existing but the communal values reign supreme in adjudication **Religion as a way of life** - Religion pervades way of life - Symbolic proximity of African gods ensures that norms and mores of the community are adhered to - Through spirits, priests and medicine man morality of society is maintained (Nwosu, Taylor and Blake, 1998: 229-246; Maomeka, 1989:1-9; Igboin, 2011:99, Myers 1987:75) **Concept of time and reincarnation** - Time is dictated by nature - The human being lives on- physical death is not spiritual death (Nwosu, Taylor and Blake, 1998: 229-246). - Man's activities are guided by supernatural forces and ancestors (Igboin, 2011:99)	**Humanism (*Jen*)** a warm human feeling between people that emphasises reciprocity (Yum, 1988:374) consisting of 3 principles governing human behaviour - ***Jen-*** benevolence, self-discipline, filial piety, brotherly love and trust - ***Yi*** – righteousness, faithfulness and justice in social interaction - ***Li*** – propriety, rite, respect for social norms (*proper way of interaction*) **Hierarchy and role relationships** o these determine what constitutes appropriate communication behaviour in a given context **Family system** - paternalistic relationship, where harmony is the first virtue and there is a distrust of out-group members - outsider effect provides specific rules for interaction (Ding, 2006:89; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Chen and Chung, 1994) **Filial Piety** - maintenance of proper relationships between a child and parent - parents speak and children listen) **Face and face-work strategies** - influences Chinese self- perceptions as well as relations and communication with others (Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1988:60) - Face is related to notions of honour, respect, reputation and credibility (Cardon and Calvert Scott, 2003:12-18). **Reciprocity** - Prevalence of face giving communicative behaviour **Guanxi** - People exist through, and are defined by their relationships with other people and social order is ensured through each party honouring the requirements in the role of relationships (Huang, 2010:107)

Source: Author's own construction from sources as indicated

Annexure 6.3:   Interview guide (African experts)

Intercultural Communication Effectiveness
Interview Guide: African Experts

Section 1: Introduction

In the business context, it is reported that there are many challenges experienced when African and Chinese people communicate which can be attributed to differences in cultures. On the other hand, it is also reported that there may be synergies between African and Chinese cultures that could help improve communication. The researcher is interested in learning about more about how communication between the African and Chinese people takes place in business. As such, your contribution in participating in this research study will contribute towards a better understanding of how communication effectiveness between the African and Chinese people in business can be improved. Your contribution will enable the development of a framework for understanding intercultural communication effectiveness between the Africans and the Chinese people in business. This framework will inform the development of appropriate training and other intervention strategies to help improve communication effectiveness. Your identity and your association with an organisation or institution will be treated with complete confidentiality.

Section 1: Demographics

Interviewer Name	Fungai Chigwendere
Date of Interview	
Respondent ID # (e.g. 1, 2, 3)	
Nationality of respondent	
Gender	
Ethnicity (e.g. Black, White, Indian, Chinese)	
Age (How old are you?)	
Marital Status (Are you married?)	
Home Language (What language do you speak at home?)	
Current Position/Occupation	

a.   Where have you worked with or interacted with the Chinese people? *(For example: work in a Chinese owned organisation, do business with Chinese nationals etc.)*

b. What was/is your role? *(For example, manager of staff in an organisation, employee in an organisation, student or instructor at an institution, business partner etc.)*

c. How long were you/have you been or worked in that role? *(In months)*

Section 2: Communication Experiences (Question 1)

- Given your experience with the Chinese people, I would like you to describe a communication experience that you have had with a Chinese person. *(Please describe exactly what happened in the communication and where this happened).*

a. Was this a good or a bad communication experience? *Please can you explain why?*

b. What did your learn about the way Chinese people communicate from this experience?

Section 3: Understanding Differences & Similarities in Communication (Question 2)

- Would you say there is a **difference** in the way that the African people communicate and the way that the Chinese people communicate? *(Please can you tell me more about this)*

- Would you say there is a **similarity** in the way that the African people communicate and the way that the Chinese people communicate? *(Please can you tell me more about this)*

269

Section 4: Improving Intercultural Communication Effectiveness (Question 3)

- What do you think are the most important considerations when communicating with others from a different culture? *(Can you name them?)*

- Can these considerations *(above)* be taught or shared by people from both African and Chinese and cultures to have a good communication experience? *(How could this be done?)*

Section 5: Understanding Communication in African Culture (Question 4)

- Please tell me about the correct (most appropriate) style of communication in the African cultural context. In other words, what do you consider as "good communication" in the African cultural context? *(Is it direct or indirect? elaborate or succinct? personal or contextual, instrumental or affective?)*

- How important are the values and philosophies such as Ubuntu, Humanism, Communalism, etc. in communication in African culture?

Conclusion: (Question 5)

- Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about how people communicate in the African culture?

THANK YOU!

Annexure 6.4:   Interview guide (Chinese experts – translated version)

<div align="center">

跨文化交流的有效性

采访大纲: 中国人

</div>

第一部分: 介绍

在商业活动中，中国人和南非人之间存在许多由文化差异引起的沟通障碍。另一方面，增进对中国以及非洲文化的了解可以改善中国人和南非人之间的交流体验。研究者非常想要更多地了解中国人和南非人在商业活动中是如何交流的。因此，您参加本次调研有助于我们更好地研究如何能够增进中国人和南非人在商业活动中沟通的有效性。您的参与将促进用于研究商业活动中跨文化交流有效性的框架及模型的发展。该框架将指导有关提高沟通有效性的培训及其他干预措施的制定。

您的身份将会完全保密。

<u>第一部分: 基本信息</u>

采访人姓名	**Fungai Chigwendere**
采访	
应答者编号 # (例如：1, 2, 3)	
应答者国籍	
性别	
种族(例如: 黑人, 白人, 印度人, 中国人)	
年龄 （您今年多大？）	
婚姻状况(您结婚了吗？)	
家庭语言(您在家里使用哪种语言交流?)	
当前职位/职务	

    a. 您在哪里工作或在哪里与南非人打交道?*(例如: 在中资机构工作,与中国人做生意等等.)*

b. 您在与南非人的交往中扮演什么样的角色? *(例如, 经理, 员工, 学校的学生或者教员, 生意伙伴等等.)*

c. 您担任该职务多久了?(按月计算)

第二部分:交流经历 (QUESTION 1)

- 鉴于您在与南非人交往中所扮演的角色， 我想请您描述一下您与南非人的交流经历.. *(请您具体描述一下在交流过程中发生了什么?).*

    a. 您觉得这次交流经历很好还是不好？请您具体解释一下为什么？

    b. 在这次交流经历中，您对南非人的交流方式有怎样的了解?

第三部分:理解交流方式的相同点和不同点 (QUESTION 2)

- 您认为，中国人和南非人的交流方式是否存在不同点？*(请您具体解释一下)*

- 您认为，中国人和南非人的交流方式是否存在相同点？*(Please can you tell me more about this)*

第四部分:增进跨文化交流的有效性 (QUESTION 3)

- 您认为，在与来自另一个文化背景的人的交流过程中，最需要注意哪些因素？*(您能列举一下吗?)*

272

- 这些因素（问题5中提及的）是否可以由来自中国以及南非双重文化背景的人来教授或者分享，从而实现更好的交流体验？*(疑问：这如何实现呢？)*.

  ```
  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │                                              │
  └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ```

第五部分:理解中国文化中的交流方式 (QUESTION 4)

(探索儒家思想、和谐、关系、面子、礼貌等等在中国人沟通交流过程中的重要性。)

- 请您告诉我，在中国文化中正确（最得体）的交流方式是怎样的?换句话说，在中国文化中，怎样的交流体验才算得上是良好的沟通交流？

  ```
  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │                                              │
  └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ```

- 中国文化中例如,儒家思想、和谐、关系、面子、礼节等价值观念在沟通交流中具有怎样的重要性？

  ```
  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │                                              │
  └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ```

(QUESTION 5)

- 您还能告诉我一些其他有关中国人交流方式的信息吗?

  ```
  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │                                              │
  └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ```

谢谢您!

Annexure 6.5: **Ethics approval letter (Rhodes University)**

RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT • Tel: (046) 603 8250 • e-mail: t.amos@ru.ac.za

28 July 2016

Dear Fungai Chigwendere

Research Ethics Approval Feedback

Research Title: Towards Intercultural Communication Effectiveness in Chinese
                    Organisational Contexts in South Africa
Research Type: PhD
Supervisor: Prof Lynette Louw

Nature of application

An original application	√
A re-application	

At a meeting of the Department of Management Ethics Sub-Committee held on 28 July 2016 the Committee resolved to:

Approve the application	√
Approve the application, with stipulations (see below)	
Modifications required (see below)	
The project is to be monitored (see below)	
No approval required	
Not approved (see below)	

Notes (if applicable):
None

Sincerely

Trevor L Amos
Head: Department of Management
Chair: Department of Management
Human Research Ethics Committee

Mark Maritz (Mr)
Department of Management Human
Research Ethics Committee Member

Please note that this letter needs to be considered in the context of the following:
- Ethical Standards for Research on Human and Animal Subjects
- Introduction to ethics of research involving humans
- Rhodes University Ethical Standards Handbook

Annexure 6.6:   **Invitation to participate in research**

RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
Tel: [+27] 046 603 8246
Fax: [+27] 046 603 7360
E-mail j.seymour@ru.ac.za

22 October 2016

Dear,

Re: Request for interview on intercultural communication effectiveness in Chinese organisational contexts in South Africa.

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled 'Towards Intercultural Communication Effectiveness in Chinese Organisational Contexts in South Africa.' The aim of this research is to develop a framework for understanding intercultural communication effectiveness that can enhance communication effectiveness between the South African and Chinese people in the organisational context. Although evidence on Sino-African communication in the organisational context does exist, it is largely anecdotal and may not be truly reflective of the reality on the ground. Your contribution is therefore very important in order to capture the reality.

The research will be undertaken by means of face to face qualitative interviews and the data to be collected from this research will be qualitative and both text and audio recorded. Your identity and, should you be associated with an organisation or institution, will be treated with complete confidentiality. The interview will require about 30 minutes of your time. During the interview you will have the opportunity of responding to questions pertaining to communication experiences between Africans and Chinese, understanding the differences and similarities in communication between South Africans and Chinese, improving intercultural communication effectiveness and understanding communication in either the African or Chinese cultures.

This research study has been approved by the Rhodes University Ethics Standards Committee.
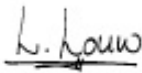
Participation in this research study is completely voluntary and this invitation does not obligate you to participate in this research study. Should you choose to participate in this research study, you will be required to complete a written consent form at the beginning of the interview process. The research ethics aspects will also be explained to you at the beginning of the interview. Your participation and cooperation is important as you will be contributing towards improving the communication effectiveness between South Africans and Chinese. Specifically, your contribution will enable the development of a framework for understanding intercultural communication effectiveness between the South African and the Chinese people in business. This framework will practically provide a point of reference in the development of appropriate training and other intervention strategies to help improve communication effectiveness.

Thank you for your time and for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

Fungai Chigwendere
Research Student

Professor Lynette Louw
Supervisor

www.ru.ao.za

Annexure 6.7:   Example Informed Consent Form

RHODES UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Department of Management

Research Project Title:	TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS IN CHINESE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXTS IN SOUTH AFRICA
Principal Investigator(s):	FUNGAI BEAULA CHIGWENDERE

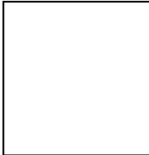| Participation Information |
|---|
| a. I understand the purpose of the research study and my involvement in it |
| b. I understand the risks of participating in this research study |
| c. I understand the benefits of participating in this research study |
| d. I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any stage without any penalty |
| e. I understand that participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis |
| f. I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential |
| **g.** I understand that I will receive no payment for participating in this study |
| **Information Explanation** |
| The above information was explained to me by: _____ |
| The above information was explained to me in: ☐English ☐Afrikaans ☐isiXhosa ☐isiZulu |
| ☐Other: Chinese |
| and I am in command of this language |
| **OR**, it was comprehensibly translated to me by: _____ |

Voluntary Consent
I hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the above-mentioned research.

Signature:	**OR**, right hand thumb print Witness signature:	Date: / /

Investigator Declaration
I, _____, declare that I have explained all the participant information to the participant and have truthfully answered all questions ask me by the participant.

Signature:	Date: / /

Translator Declaration
I, _____, declare that I translated a factually correct version of: a.   all the contents of this document b.   all questions posed by the participant c.   all answers given by the investigator In addition, I declare that all information acquired by me regarding this research will be kept confidential.

Signature	Date: / /

Annexure 6.8:   Sample transcribed interview

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CONGRUENCE
Transcription: Africa03

I=Interviewer R=Respondent

I: **We will start with a few general questions, for instance, I would like to confirm your nationality?**

R: South African.

I: **In which age bracket would you fall into? 30 to 40; 40 to 50?**

R: 34.

I: **Are you Married?**

R: Yes.

I: **What Language do you speak at home?**

R: English.

I: **I would like to find out where have you worked with or interacted with the Chinese? I already know your organisation which I won't mention now. How long have you been working with the Chinese?**

R: Interaction happened in March 2013.

I: **What was your role in the organisation with them?**

R: I started off and I am still currently the Financial Director of the organisation.

I: **Given your experiences with the Chinese people, I would like you to describe communication experiences that you have had with them or any challenges. Whether good or bad.**

R: I interact with them on a daily basis. My current CEO is Chinese; my previous CEO was Taiwanese-Chinese. This means we have constant interaction with them. The current CEO is not even 80% as fluent as my previous CEO in terms of the English. So we constantly have to have an interpreter in all our meetings. I have improved on my Chinese so I do know some words. Although it is still very difficult to have a conversation when it comes to business language. When things get technical, you have to rely on the strength on the interpreter to get your point ac-

ross and their point across as well. I am quite fortunate that my financial mana-
ger is also Chinese, she is very fluent in Chinese and she has been in South Afri-
ca for the past 25 years. This makes my communication a bit easier because she
understands the financial terms therefore isn't as difficult as it can be.

I: **Can you recall any challenges or perhaps where you were misunderstood or a
story that comes to mind about an incident?**

R: I am not going to pick out one event as it's my daily task, I talk to them every day –
five or six hours a day. I find what gets misconstrued is certain jargon that we might
use in our financial fields. As there isn't an equivalent Chinese jargon, and as good
as my financial manager is, it's difficult to put my point across about decisions that
need to be made. There hasn't been anything outstanding in terms of a complete
misunderstanding and I think that's because of the strength of my financial ma-
nager, who is exceptionally good at translating.

I: **Looking at the way Chinese people interact and communicate between them-
selves and the way we, as Africans, communicate. Would you say there is a dif-
ference in the way that South African people communicate and the way that
the Chinese people communicate?**

R: The biggest culture shock going into meetings was that in a meeting with Africans,
there is usually one conversation, generally one person speaks but in the Chinese
culture you have five conversations occurring at once even though you should be
listening to one person. I find this very interesting and till today it still baffles me.
Somebody could be addressing an issue and there's a side conversation going but
it's a norm, it's not like people are gossiping.

I: **In those discussions they could be discussing something completely different
from the main person speaking?**

R: Absolutely. They are very respectful in terms of the way they address their elders.
They know their place and I find it very common amongst Black people as well.
So as much as you might be having conversations, when they address the CEO,
they always use full names and a Mr or Mrs. They will never address you by the
first name.

I: **If the CEO is speaking, will they also tend to have those mini discussions?**

R: Yes. It's completely surprising. And they love cellular phones in meetings. Gene-
rally, its rude for us to be on our phones.

I: **I know you have touched on this but in order to improve communication ef-
fectiveness between ourselves and the Chinese, bearing in mind the cultural
differences and other factors, what would you say are the most important con-**

siderations if we want to understand how the Chinese communicate so that we can communicate better with them?

R: The obvious thing is to start picking up a bit of languages from both sides and it's actually not that difficult if you put your mind to it. I think what's really important is that the Chinese culture is really unique. For example, there is a situation or problem that needs to be assessed, we (South Africans and business white South Africa) tend to be very direct about a situation 'you messed up, these are the consequences, etc.' but this is completely different with the Chinese culture. They don't raise their voices, they don't become animated, they are not rude at all but they can make a point by being calm and serene but they aren't afraid to embarrass you in front of a group of people. That's the Chinese culture. Whereas we want to be all brash, loud, insulting and vocal. They don't do that, they will embarrass you if you do something wrong but in a very calm, serene manner. It's important that when you are addressing an issue with them, that you don't get flustered, loud and brash because it immediately cuts you off from them. That not how they communicate. Very much like the Black culture.

I: **In your experiences, have you seen any of Western type of communication coming in? I am looking at African application but obviously you have the Whites, etc. I have kind of put them all together but have you seen how the Africans communicate, there's a Western-ness that has come through in their way of communicating.**

R: Yes, it does. Especially us urbanised Black people. My father's family is from Limpopo and if I go back home its very much akin to the Chinese way of respect. We are so Westernised in the urban areas that there is a massive difference between the two. From my interaction with the Chinese, there is no Westernisation of their communication.

I: **So you would say perhaps, in the organisation setting, Black people have tended to adopt Western ways?**

R: Absolutely. My point that I want to make is that it's all about trying to understand their culture. However, I find their culture has a more civilised ways of handling things unlike the Western side. So it's important to understand not to be loud, forceful, brash or offensive, to always remain respectful no matter how angry or upset you are. That will facilitate better communication especially with the Chinese. It's all about understanding culture.

I: **I take it that as Africans those things are potentially the things we need to learn. Those are learning points for us.**

R: Yes.

I: **In seeking to understand their culture, do you have an idea on how you can?**

R: Spending more time with them. Also, to be more receptive to differences and not rigid. There's a lot of things that we would take as being not offensive but it is offensive to them. And I think it's important to spend time but to be receptive to the idea of understanding the different culture and sharing your culture with them as well because they also very receptive towards that.

I: **That's what I was going to ask next, how important do you think it is for them as well to equally and proactively learn.**
        I would like to go back to communication in the African culture, for instance the Black culture. In your views, what is the most appropriate way of communicating in the organisational context? You mentioned that the Chinese are very calm. Would you say that's how you describe appropriate communication in African culture or are there other things that expected when you communicate in African culture?

R: In African culture it's all about respect just like the Chinese. If you haven't achieved a certain status in your life, you can't address an elder, you can't be part of a conversation. So it's very hierarchical and about respect. Just like I have mentioned about the Westernisation of urban Africans, that doesn't fly when you back at home. You still have to show that level of respect. You don't talk back and you can't be opinionated just because its offensive to the elders. I think it depends on the setting and I don't think it ever goes way as Black people, I mean, I wouldn't expect my kids to talk to me any different because I wouldn't speak to my parents or grandparents like that. It's about how you address your elders. You shouldn't be rude, sarcastic and loud. These are all Western ideas that is taught to us and it is foreign to the elders.

I: **Again in the organisational setting, I understand, when we leave our villages we adopt this urban way and potentially carry it into the organisation. Have you been in or witnessed any instances when African people practise some of these western methods of communicating. I know you mentioned that the Chinese stick to their values. Have you seen a clash? Or where an African person has addressed a Chinese person and they've taken offence or caused a deadlock?**

R: Not from an African point of view. Definitely not. I have not seen it, in terms of communication with the Chinese. White South African males, generally, get their point across by being loud, demanding and bossy. You can see the body language from the Chinese, they are not as open, you just see them closed off to the idea.

I: **Looking at the Black African culture, how important are the values such as Ubuntu, humanism and communalism etc. in communication in South Africa?**

R: Extremely important. I don't think we can communicate effectively, as Africans, if we don't show a level of respect to the elders. Urban people, maybe it's different but generally it's inculcated in us to respect your elders and Ubuntu is part of that respect.

I: **Would you say that there would be merit in a study that says 'pure African values and cultures and how communication takes place, then looking at the Chinese values and culture, then try to marry these two together.'**

R: Absolutely. I think there is lots of similarities in communication. Culture, obviously not, but upbringing forms a part of how you communicate with people. So, there's definitely similarities and its worth looking at it.

I: **That's one of my aims so that we can develop a framework that identifies and compares similarities and differences. This framework will hopefully be used for training in organisations both from a Chinese and African perspective. Finally, is there anything else that you would like to share about your experiences with communication with the Chinese and African people or communication in African culture that you think might help in developing more effective communication between the parties?**

R: Chinese and South Africans both like to have a good time. Both love a party. Cheers-'Gānbēi', a meal, drinks, getting 'rat faced' -which South Africans are good at -etc. That's the best way to forming a bond with the Chinese. It's expected, they expect you to do the same.

I: **Thank you so much.**