

Intercultural experiences of South African business coaches

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COMMENTS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The editorial style as well as the references referred to in this mini-dissertation followed the format prescribed by the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University (Vanderbijlpark) that all scientific documents must use the APA style as from January 1999.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which largely agrees with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed in constructing tables.

DEDICATION

To South Africa

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I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the following parties for their contribution towards the completion of this research study:

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DECLARATION

I, Yolandé Coetzee, hereby declare that “Intercultural experiences of South African business coaches” is my own work and that the views and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and relevant literature references as shown in the references.

I further declare that the content of this research will not be submitted for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

Yolandé Coetzee

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SUMMARY

Subject: Intercultural experiences of South African business coaches

Key terms: Coaching, culture, intercultural competence, cultural self-awareness, intercultural, cross-cultural.

Interactions between business counterparts have become increasingly free from boundaries, as technological innovation brings the world closer together (Adler, 2002). Locally, the typical South African organisation employs workers from a multitude of cultural backgrounds, at various levels of acculturation. Organisational coaches must be prepared to engage with diverse national and international client populations. Coaching bodies such as the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC, 2008) and the locally-based Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA, 2009; COMENSA, 2010), require coaches to provide culturally responsive services to coachees. If the coach differs culturally from the coachee, he/she may incorrectly use his/her own understanding of what is appropriate for a situation to make sense of the coachee's behaviour, possibly leading to the misinterpretation of the diverse coachee's situation. In addition, the coach may also project his/her own cultural bias and stereotypes onto the coachee. This in turn may lead to barriers in communication, and ultimately to the inhibition of efficiency of the coaching process as possible outcomes. Inefficient coaching may not allow for the achievement of the desired results, leading to financial losses for the company. Therefore, it is imperative that the coach is aware of his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs and expectations which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes held about the coachee, i.e. his/ her cultural self-awareness.

The purpose of the current research study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. Specifically the study investigated how eight South African organisational coaches ($N = 8$) develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and what the perceived consequences of such awareness were. The study was conducted within the constructivist research paradigm and utilised a qualitative research approach. The multiple case study research strategy employed in-depth interviews to collect the research data. A grounded theory research methodology was used to analyse and explore the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in developing and utilising cultural self-awareness.

Eight findings were obtained from the interviews, namely: the cultural self-awareness cultivated during coaching developed as part of a general process of cultural self-awareness, which in turn formed part of the participants' personal development; both intentional strategies and happenstance led to the coaches' cultural self-awareness; situational and internal factors contributed to changes in their cultural self-awareness; cultural self-awareness is maintained through self-management involving internal and external strategies; future cultural self-awareness is promoted through pursuing experiences that would cause them to question bias; a change in cultural self-awareness held consequences for the personal developmental process as well as for the coachee, and the coaching process; the meaning of cultural self-awareness was explained by using metaphors. The most prominent metaphors the coaches used were 'sight', 'the past', 'internal work', and 'managing'; additional psychosocial processes that occur during intercultural coaching which can be grouped under macro, meso and micro issues, contextualised the process of cultural self-awareness during intercultural coaching.

The findings were interpreted to show that various levels, developmental paths, and applications of cultural self-awareness exist amongst organisational coaches. On the basis of the results obtained from the research study, recommendations were made for future research, coaching education and training programmes, coaching clients, and current or prospective coaches.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation explores the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. Specifically the study investigated how South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and what the perceived consequences of such awareness were. This chapter presents the problem statement and a discussion of the research objectives in which the general and specific objectives are stipulated. The research method is described and an overview of the chapters is provided.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The global business arena has become increasingly boundary-less. Adler (2002) states that the definition of organisational success has now transcended national boundaries. If organisations want to survive and remain competitive within the ever changing global business realm, organisations must seek business opportunities beyond the boundaries of their country borders, even beyond the borders of what is culturally familiar (Turner, 2007). This has brought a modern day conundrum to the fore: doing business successfully across the cultural divide. In such cross-cultural contexts, organisational coaches too may be coaching beyond their own cultural backgrounds (Rosinski, 2003a). If the coach is unaware of the biased attitudes and beliefs that he/she holds towards a coachee from a culture different to his/her own, it may negatively influence his/her perception of and interactions with that individual. This may have a detrimental effect on the success of the coaching process, such as miscommunication between parties, and ultimately lead to the inhibition of efficiency of the coaching process. As Whitmore (2002, p.33) puts it: "I am able to control only that of which I am aware. That of which I am unaware controls me. Awareness empowers me". The present study explored the phenomenon of cultural self-awareness of the South African coach.

South African organisations are faced with a dual challenge in doing business in multi-cultural contexts. At an international level, South Africa has recently become a member of the BRICS group of countries (Jordaan, 2012). BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China and now South Africa; countries that make up the fastest emerging economies in the world.

According to Wilson and Purushothaman (2003), over the next fifty years the BRICS countries could become a much larger competitive force in the world economy. South Africa has become part of this group as it is the largest economy on the African continent (Wilson & Purushothaman, 2003). This is reiterated by Trevor Manuel (2009) in his address to the Standard Bank Africa Forum, stating that it is imperative to acknowledge that all the BRICS countries are “sharpening” their relations with Africa. These international relations would inevitably include business relations such as bilateral trade agreements. Therefore, there exists a probable chance that in the near future South African organisations may increasingly do business with their BRICS organisational counterparts. Consequently, South African organisations must be prepared and equipped to conduct business within culturally unfamiliar settings across the international business landscape.

At a national level, the South African organisation is confronted with the challenge of managing its culturally diverse workforce. The last two decades have seen South Africa undergo major political and societal changes. These changes are echoed at an organisational level as the South African organisation of today appears to look different in comparison with its apartheid predecessors. It employs workers from a multitude of cultural backgrounds, at various levels of acculturation. The advent of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and employment equity has meant that organisations have had to implement new structures that will introduce, develop and retain Black men and women within predominantly White, male organisations (Makhalima, 2007). The Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act of 2003 defines ‘Black people’ as a generic term that includes Africans, Coloureds and Indians (Makhalima, 2007). If one places legislation and organisational structure aside, a deeper look will reveal that the problems and inequalities of our apartheid past are still shadowing many business practices (Burger & Jafta, 2006; Commission for Employment Equity, 2009; Modisha, 2007; Stout Rostron, 2006). Coaches can play a pivotal role in helping organisations negotiate this labyrinth of diversity (Cilliers, 2005; Meyer & Fourie, 2004; Peltier, 2001; Ting & Scisco, 2006). For example, as part of its transformation strategy, some organisations include coaching Black professionals on leadership skills, behavioural skills and emotional intelligence (Sundelson, 2005).

Consequently, the international and national business environment produces a multicultural setting wherein the South African organisational coach is more than likely to coach. However, coaching in an intercultural setting is not without its challenges. Ting and Scisco (2006) argue

that coaches need to be vigilant as they are faced with their own challenges when coaching across cultures, national and international borders.

A reflection of the current state of coaching in South Africa is provided by Stout Rostron (2006). The author states that South African coaches are not always qualified industrial psychologists; rather they come from various contexts, such as the academic, commercial and corporate world. Stout Rostron adds that the field of coaching in South Africa is faced with additional challenges such as: a shortage of Black coaches at senior levels; the field is unregulated with regard to qualifications and ethical standards; the perception exists that coaching is exclusive to the elite; and coaches are required to deal with many different cultures within an organisation.

Additionally, the literature on intercultural coaching within South Africa is sparse. The review of literature revealed that the current research base on coaching across various cultures has major limitations: International literature on coaching within a multicultural context is incomplete with an overemphasis on the West versus East debate, with very few considering the African perspective (Price, 2006). Galvao (2004) argues for research that identifies and adds insight into the barriers to the success of coaching across cultural and racial differences. The current study begins to address this critical gap by exploring the experiences and perspectives of South African organisational coaches in such intercultural settings.

Coaching

For the purpose of this study, the term ‘coaching’ is used to refer to the act of coaching within or connected to an organisational context. A review of the literature on coaching shows that various definitions of coaching exist. At the centre of these definitions seems to be a focus on the increased development of the coachee within a specific kind of relationship. The coachee is the recipient of the coaching process; he/she is the individual that the coach coaches. The coaching definitions shown below include issues of development; improving functioning; focusing on performance outcomes; setting goals to reach outcomes; and working within a formal process.

Cavanagh and Grant (2006, p. 5-6) define coaching as “a methodology used to improve skills, performance and enhance and develop individuals. It is a systemised process by which individuals are helped to define issues, set goals, develop action plans and then act, monitor and evaluate their performance in order to better reach their goals”. The authors perceive the

role of the coach to guide and facilitate the coachee throughout the coaching process. This facilitation role of the coach is supported by Palmer and Whybrow (2005, p. 8), who advocate the perspective that coaching is “the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of other”. In addition to facilitation, coaching is “directly concerned with the immediate improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction” (Palmer & Whybrow, 2005). This focus on the coachee’s performance is elaborated by Whitmore (2009, p. 10), who states that “coaching is unlocking people’s potential to maximize their own performance”.

Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh, and Parker (2010) see coaching as a collaborative relationship. Grant et al. (2010, p. 3) believe such a relationship is “formed between coach and coachee for the purpose of attaining professional or personal development outcomes which are valued by the coachee”. Valerio and Lee (2005) emphasise the one-on-one nature of the coaching relationship, and reiterate that it is a formally contracted process between a coach and a management-level client with the purpose to help achieve goals of professional development and/or business performance. However, the coachee does not necessarily always fill a management position.

The current research study follows the definition of Cox, Bachkirova, and Clutterbuck (2010, p. 1), who believe that coaching “could be seen as a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the coachee”.

As with defining coaching, there are various different styles of coaching, amongst these are: executive coaching, business coaching, team coaching, workplace coaching and life coaching. In addition, coaching is often used interchangeably with mentoring and counselling. For the purpose of this study, a differentiation between the concepts was necessary.

According to COMENSA (2009), and Law, Ireland, and Hussain (2007), the process of mentoring focuses on the longer-term personal growth or career development of the protégé. In contrast to coaching, the outcome of the mentoring process does not have to relate directly to the occupation of the protégé (Law et al., 2007). In addition, mentoring also continues through job changes, unlike coaching (Law et al., 2007). Finally, coaches are appointed, while mentors are often nominated or are volunteers (Meyer & Fourie, 2004).

The differentiation between coaching and therapy and counselling has been widely debated in both the coaching realm, as well as the therapy and counselling realms. From the coaching realm, Cavanagh and Grant (2004, p. 1) explicitly state “coaching is not therapy”. Although the two fields were viewed as similar, coaching and therapy were not seen as identical by research participants in a study of Hart, Blattner and Leipsic (2001). Grant and Cavanagh (2004) agree that even though most coaches are trained to identify and address the influence of the coachee’s internal process on his/her work and personal life, coaching is not a substitute for therapy. It should not be assumed that coaches have the expertise to differentiate between clinical and non-clinical issues (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004).

The debate around the differentiation between coaching and counselling reach the day-to-day practices of coaches. Examples of practices impacted by the differentiation include: protecting confidentiality; setting boundaries on what issues to explore and the depths of exploration; and knowing when and how to refer if the issues are beyond the coach’s scope of expertise (Hart et al., 2001). Based on the negative implication that these issues, if handled incorrectly, may hold for the coachee, it is not surprising that the authors identify concerns of legality and accountability, and emphasise the importance of adequate training and a need for supervision as future issues for exploration. Sperry (1993) supports this notion and advocates the need for adequate training opportunities, published research, development of intervention strategies, and the encouragement of networking between counsellors and coaches.

Away from its perceived overlap with other disciplines, the first citations of coaching can be traced back to 1937 (Grant et al., 2010). In relation, the coaching sector has been experiencing an upsurge from the late 1990s onwards (Cilliers, 2005). This has meant that the majority of literature on coaching in general is not older than 10 years (Grant et al., 2010). The research literature on South African coaching is also limited. In Cilliers’ (2005) review of South African literature on coaching, it was found that journal articles on coaching are limited to anecdotal evidence (i.e. ‘how to’ narratives). Cilliers (2005) argues that there is no South African scientific research that could, for instance, provide evidence that coaching increases management and leadership competence, strategic thinking, intellectual capacity, wisdom, empowerment, relationship management, and the solving of business problems. Stout Rostron (2009) acknowledges this critical gap in research, and states that coaching-related research is imperative to understand and enhance the coaching process.

According to Cilliers (2005) and Stout Rostron (2006), the South African coaching profession enjoys professional recognition through the existence of the South African Council of Coaches and Mentors (SACCM) and the Coaches and Mentors Association of South Africa (COMENSA). COMENSA, with its mission to regulate local coaching (Stout Rostron, 2006), has developed an ethical code, standards of competence and a supervisory framework for coaching in South Africa. COMENSA in section 4.2.4 of its revised ethical code (2009), states that: “The coach/mentor will: (a) embrace cultural considerations and broad-based issues of empowerment; (b) conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates an understanding and respect for the dignity and diversity of all people”. The above points reflect an appreciation of diversity that forms part of COMENSA’s self-awareness and self-management core competency, which they believe are appropriate for all levels of coaching (COMENSA, 2010).

Culture and Intercultural Competence

The above appreciation for diversity also extends toward an appreciation of others’ cultural heritage. As in the case of a definition of coaching, there are numerous definitions of culture. Amongst these, Harris, Moran, and Moran (2004) provide a definition of culture that most suits the rationale of the research study, as:

Culture is a distinctly human means of adapting to circumstances and transmitting this coping skill and knowledge to subsequent generations. Culture gives people a sense of who they are, of belonging, of how they should behave, and of what they should be doing. Culture impacts behaviour, morale, and productivity at work and includes values and patterns that influence company attitudes and actions (p. 4).

Rosinski (2003a) believes that integrating the cultural dimension into coaching is necessary, as it increases the effectiveness of coaching within today’s intercultural environment, as well as providing an opportunity to learn from alternative cultural perspectives. Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) suggest showing interest for another culture, being sensitive to identify cultural differences, and being willing to change your behaviour out of respect for another, are key skills needed to be effective in another culture. This collection of skills is called intercultural competence, which refers to acting and thinking in intercultural appropriate ways (Hammer et al., 2003).

Cultural self-awareness

In conjunction with the above intercultural competence, comes self-awareness as a core competency of the coach (Handin & Steinwedel, 2006; Jenkins, 2006). Stout Rostron (2009) in review of the competence frameworks of the International Coach Federation (ICF); Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC); European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC); and Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA), revealed that self-awareness forms a core competency for coaches. The WABC is of the opinion that self-awareness includes knowing yourself through self-insight and understanding, in other words, being aware of your own thoughts and emotions and how they affect your behaviour (Stout Rostron, 2009). COMENSA in turn states that a coach should, amongst others, demonstrate self-awareness through a constant process of “review, reflection and revision of personal values, beliefs and attitudes to improve their coaching practice” (Stout Rostron, 2009, p. 217).

Cultural self-awareness may hold the key to the coach attaining both of these core competencies. Cultural self-awareness is defined as “an understanding of one’s own cultural assumptions and patterns of behaviour” (Adler, 1997, p. 117). Cultural self-awareness enables a person to acknowledge that as a cultural being, he/she may hold attitudes and beliefs that can detrimentally influence his/her perception of and interactions with individuals who are ethnically and racially different from him or herself (American Psychological Association, 2003). Landis, Bennett, and Bennett (2004) define cultural self-awareness as “shorthand for experiencing one’s self as operating in cultural context” (p. 262).

Research on cultural self-awareness seems to be directed at services that ask an unbiased view of the client so as to develop an objective appraisal of the client’s reality. Weng (2005), in his article on multicultural lawyering, argues that multicultural lawyer training should begin with the lawyer’s self-analysis of his/her culture and its effects on the lawyer. Weng (2005) believes that cultural self-awareness is pivotal as an awareness of the individual’s own culture results in a more accurate understanding of the cultural forces that affect the lawyer, the client, and the interaction between the two. In the healthcare context, a study conducted by Sargent, Sedlak, and Martsolf (2004) on nursing students at the faculty of a British nursing college, investigated how the inclusion of active learning strategies like cultural self-assessment into the college’s curricula will lead to the development of the nursing student’s cultural self-awareness. It was postulated that cultural self-awareness will be a contributing factor to the future ability of the nursing students to provide culturally competent health care.

In addition to the legal and health care studies, the counselling context has also provided insight into cultural self-awareness. As coaching and counselling overlap on certain processes, cultural self-aware counselling may hold some truths that coaching can benefit from. When counsellors are aware of their inherent attitudes and beliefs, it may lead them to identify the specific cultural group from which they derive fundamental cultural heritage (American Psychological Association, 2003; Roysircar, 2004). This in turn may help them to identify the significant beliefs and attitudes held by those cultures that are assimilated into their own attitudes and beliefs (Roysircar, 2004). Culturally self-aware counsellors approach information critically when they can specify how their “own racial and cultural heritage may personally and professionally affect their definitions of and biases about normality/abnormality and the process of counselling” (Roysircar, 2004, p. 658). Roysircar (2004) argues when culturally self-aware counsellors show that they can openly discuss human diversity factors in counselling, including knowing when not to refer to salient cultural differences of the client, they show proficiency.

Similarly, coaching uses appraisal of the coachee’s current reality, i.e. strengths and developmental areas, to ascertain which specific performance goals and objectives should be formulated. The coach helps his/her coachee improve his/her performance through reflection on how he/she applies a specific skill or knowledge (Thorpe & Clifford, 2003). If the coach differs culturally from the coachee, he/she may incorrectly use his/her own understanding of what is appropriate for a situation, to make sense of the coachee’s behaviour, leading to the misinterpretation of the coachee’s situation. One reason for this unwanted outcome may be the coach’s unconscious belief that people from other cultures experience the world as they do (Wankel & DeFillipi, 2004). These authors state that such a belief is called “projected cognitive similarity”, or the more often used “self-reference criterion”. Czinkota, Ronkainen and Moffett (2008) are of the belief that the self-reference criteria are the root of most international business problems. The above authors hold the view that this self-reference criterion is often provoked by a lack of cultural self-awareness.

It is therefore postulated that the coach needs to be culturally self-aware; i.e. hold an awareness of his/her own cultural understanding, assumptions and bias around the cultural heritage of the coachee. If the coach is not culturally self-aware, it may lead to their projecting their own cultural bias and stereotypes onto the coachee. This in turn may lead to barriers in communication, and ultimately to the inhibition of efficiency of the coaching process. The

coaching process may therefore be prohibited from unlocking the potential of the individual, and consequently the organisation may suffer. Conversely, to explore the truth of the above postulation further, an in-depth investigation into the reality of coaching across cultures is necessary. The current coaching research is limited to “how to” narratives and anecdotal evidence. Schurink (2004) describes “anecdotal” evidence as direct quotations from people about their experiences, beliefs and thoughts. Numerous literature sources on coaching (Lowman, 2007; Peterson, 2007; Rosinski, 2003b; Turner, 2007) advise that the coach must have an awareness and understanding of the coachee’s culture, however, there is a need for research that depicts a deeper understanding of the coach’s own cultural conditioning, i.e. his/her cultural self-awareness, and how it impacts on the coaching relationship.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following the problem statement, the current study’s research questions were formulated as:

- How did the coach’s cultural self-awareness develop or change?
- Which causes or strategies led to the coach’s current level of cultural self-awareness?
- If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what contributed to this change?
- How does the coach maintain cultural self-awareness?
- Which strategies does the coach apply in promoting cultural self-awareness?
- If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what are the consequences of such a change?
- What meaning do the different coaches attribute to cultural self-awareness in coaching?
- What other psychosocial processes can be observed?

However, it must be noted that the original research questions of the study went through a process of reformulation to produce the above research questions. The process of reformulating the research questions are discussed below.

The current study started with a set of research questions, as the grounded theory researcher is advised to use a general guiding question as a starting point for a research study (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). However, in qualitative research such a question does not have to remain fixed and is allowed to change as the study evolves (Boeije, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Flick, 2007; Gravetter & Forzano, 2011). Changing or reformulating a research question may even occur at various stages of a qualitative research study, including during research

design, data collection and interpretation stages (Flick, 2006). In grounded theory studies (which will be defined and discussed later in this chapter), the benefit of using a reformulated research question is that it can refocus and direct further data collection and analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Therefore as the research participants' accounts guide the research inquiry, the research questions cannot remain unaffected. Oktay (2012, p. 49) summarises it as: "What is important in grounded theory is to let the data structure the research question, and not vice versa".

In the current study, the researcher initially started the inquiry with the overarching question of: How culturally self-aware are South African coaches? This was further demarcated in the following sub-questions: What are the common experiences of the South African coaches during intercultural coaching?; what do the South African coaches already know or understand about themselves regarding intercultural interactions?; do the South African coaches perceive their intercultural coaching experiences as making them more aware of their own cultural background, and if so, how?; do the South African coaches perceive their intercultural experiences as influencing their perceptions of other cultural groups, and if so, how?; do South African coaches perceive their intercultural experiences as influencing their future coaching, and if so, how?; what defences of the South African coaches are operative during the exploration of cultural self-awareness?; and according to the perspectives and experiences of the South African coaches, what really takes place during a South African coaching session?

The above questions served as a starting point to develop interview questions that would explore and describe the experiences of coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. During the course of the study, two developments occurred that could not be foreseen during the development of the initial research questions. Firstly, the participants who volunteered tended to be open to talking about their own culturally-laden beliefs and prejudices, and how these manifested in their coaching approaches. Also, most were positive about their intercultural coaching experiences. Coaches who perceived their intercultural coaching experiences as negative or inhibiting probably did not volunteer for the study. This development caused a shift from investigating the cultural self-awareness of participants in general, vague terms, to concentrating its focus on coaches who perceive themselves to be culturally self-aware. Secondly, during the in-depth interviews the descriptions of these participants became increasingly focused on the importance of developing and maintaining cultural self-awareness.

The research inquiry then shifted its focus from cultural self-awareness as a state to cultural self-awareness as a process.

According to Flick (2009), a research question describing a state will focus on what type of knowledge exists about an issue, and how often that type of knowledge occurs in a population. This type of question ordinarily forms part of a quantitative research inquiry. In contrast, Flick (2009) states that a research question describing a process will aim to describe how a phenomenon develops or changes, focusing on causes, sub-processes, consequences, and/or strategies. The latter aligns with grounded theory methodology where identifying a basic social process is central (Glaser, 1978). Through exploring the processes that individuals communicated, the researcher endeavoured to explore their constructions of reality which is in alignment with the constructivist approach of the study (Glaser, 1978).

1.3 EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Contribution to industrial/organisational literature

It was thought that the current research study could contribute to the present theoretical body of knowledge available on intercultural coaching within South Africa. The value of the study lies in that it will allow exploration into and an increased understanding of intercultural coaching competence. The outcome of the study may provide a springboard to future researchers to further study the intercultural experiences of coaches.

1.3.2 Contribution to the individual and the organisation

The study explored and described how the coach experienced and perceived the intercultural coaching relationship. This may offer a solution to problems (i.e. misperceptions) among coaches and coachees involved in intercultural coaching. Coaches themselves will gain more information on how they can successfully manage and transcend their own cultural conditioning, which can be expected to have a positive impact on their coaching relationships and the companies involved. In addition, it could impact on the training and development of coaches. Through exploration and understanding of how cultural self-awareness develops in coaches, corresponding intervention strategies aimed at cultivating intercultural competent coaches can be developed.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 General objective

The main aim of the study was to explore and describe the intercultural experiences of South African coaches in terms of their levels of cultural self-awareness in order to develop intercultural competence.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research study included the following, namely to:

- Explore and describe how the coaches' cultural self-awareness develops or changes.
- Explore and describe causes or strategies that led to the coaches' current levels of cultural self-awareness.
- Explore if, and describe in what ways, the coaches perceived their cultural self-awareness to change, and what contributed to this change.
- Explore if, and describe in what ways, the coaches perceived their cultural self-awareness to change, and what the consequences of such changes are.
- Explore and describe how the coaches maintain cultural self-awareness.
- Explore and describe which strategies the coaches apply in promoting cultural self-awareness.
- Explore and describe which meaning the different coaches attribute to cultural self-awareness in coaching.
- Explore and describe which other psychosocial processes can be observed.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design can be compared to a blueprint of the study which serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution of the research study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005; Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). The research design consists of the study's research approach, research strategy, and research methodology. The following discussion investigates how the current study's research design addressed its research questions.

1.5.1 Research approach

The research study utilised a qualitative research approach. Qualitative researchers conduct their studies from a certain worldview or paradigm which forms a set of beliefs or assumptions that guide their inquiries (Creswell, 1994). These beliefs or assumptions refer to what the researcher assumes around knowledge and how it can be obtained, i.e. the researcher's epistemology (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The current study utilised an interpretive epistemology which assumes that while knowledge or meaning is co-constructed and emerging from interaction between individuals, it must be interpreted as it cannot be observed directly (Haverkamp & Young, 2007). However, to guard against subjectivity, the researcher examined her analysis, interpretation and conclusions for bias. The nature of the reality to be studied and what becomes evident from it is referred to as the researcher's ontology (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The current study held a relativist ontology which follows the existence of multiple, equally valid social realities (Haverkamp & Young, 2007). This was depicted in the current research study's focus of the various experiences and meanings of the participants, in terms of cultural self-awareness.

The researcher's ontological and epistemological view, therefore, culminated in a constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm suits the current research objectives as it offers the researcher ways of deriving conclusions from data (Whitman & Woszczyński, 2004); searches for understanding through the multiple realities constructed by participants; and creates knowledge through the interaction between the researcher and the data that is derived from participants' rich descriptions (Charmaz, 2006).

1.5.2 Research Strategy

A multiple case study strategy was used as the researcher extended an instrumental case study (i.e. when the researcher examines a particular case in order to illuminate an issue, or refine a construct) to cover several cases in order to learn more about the particular phenomenon. Additionally, a case study strategy tends to take an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) explain that with an inductive approach, the researcher is immersed in the details of the data to discover important categories, dimensions, and interrelationships that emerge across contexts. The current study utilised in-depth interviews to produce quality case study data which aligned with the goal of developing a rich description of the experiences connected to coaches' cultural self-awareness.

1.5.3 Research Method

1.5.3.1 Literature review

The current research study utilised grounded theory which, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), implies that the literature review is conducted after developing an independent analysis of the research data. Relevant articles published between 1990 and 2012 were consulted via the following databases; Academic Search Premier; APA PsycArticles; EbscoHost; Emerald; Metacrawler; Proquest; SACat; SAePublications; Science Direct; ProQuest and Nexus. Some of the journals consulted as a result of their relevance to the current topic were: International Journal of Coaching in Organisations, Global Business and Organizational Excellence; Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research; International Journal of Intercultural Relations; International Coaching Psychology Review Management Today; South African Journal for Industrial Psychology; International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology; Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice; International Journal of Coaching in Organisations; International Journal of Evidence-Based Coaching and Mentoring.

Key words that were used during literature searches were: coaching; culture; intercultural competence; cultural self-awareness; intercultural; cross-cultural.

1.5.3.2 Research setting

The setting of the current research study took place in a number of locations including organisational board rooms, offices, coffee shops, hotel lobbies and homes. Participants were given the opportunity to suggest a suitable location to undergo the research interviews. This was done to ensure that participants felt comfortable to speak openly and truthfully during the interviews (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005).

1.5.3.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Access to the group of participants was gained through personal contacts within the coaching field, and consequently through interactions with these contact persons, entrée was gained to new participants (Lohr, 2009). Potential participants were invited electronically to participate in the study (see Appendix A). The document explained, amongst others, the identity of the researcher, the purpose and duration of the study, the expected role of the participant and confidentiality. It also included the contact details of the researcher and research supervisor.

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2005), the role of the researcher, as an interviewer, is that of a facilitator. This entails that the researcher enables the interviewee to talk about his/her thoughts, feelings, views and experiences. However, the role of the facilitator is an active rather than a passive one. The interview process needs to be managed to ensure that the required subjects are covered to the appropriate depth, without influencing the actual views articulated (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005). Managing the qualitative researcher's subjectivity is an important element related to the researcher's role (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005). Ritchie and Lewis (2005) state that the researcher assumes varying interactive social roles when observing, interviewing and interacting with people in order to collect and capture data, interpret it, and finally reconstruct the social worlds. It was therefore imperative that the researcher understood her own cultural conditioning and how it affected her behaviour toward the research participants. The current study utilised reflexivity in striving for objectivity and neutrality. Reflexivity implied a critical self-examination of the roles of researcher for bias might creep into the research practice throughout the entire research process (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005). This critical self-examination involved inputs from peer debriefers, such as the research supervisor and colleagues.

1.5.3.4 Sampling

The research study utilised a sample of eight research participants ($N = 8$). The participants were selected based on the following main criteria: 1) Organisational coaches who coach within the South African context; and 2) Organisational coaches who coach within an intercultural setting. As the purpose of the study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness, purposive sampling was utilised to select cases that were information rich and typical of South African coaches. Purposive sampling is used when the researcher wants to discover, understand, and increase his/her insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned (Merriam, 2009). Snowball sampling (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Terre Blanche et al., 2006) was used initially to recruit research participants through utilising network connections (Lohr, 2009). Snowball sampling is defined as "the process of gradually accumulating a sufficiently large sample through contacts and references" (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 139). The current study used the help of an expert in the field of coaching who was familiar with the South African coaching field, to refer the researcher to coaches who could potentially participate in the study.

Possible bias of the use of a snowball sampling strategy may be that the sample is not representative of the population. The sample may for instance be limited to the people in the network of the initial contact person, excluding other members of the population (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008). Such network-selected individuals could hold a commonality that is not true of the total population (Seale, 2004). Basing inferences on such biased data might have had a detrimental effect on the outcome of the study (Seale, 2004). To limit the occurrence of this effect, the researcher chose to develop the sample from two different starting points (Lyon, Suanders, & Mollering, 2012), by contacting two different contact persons.

As certain concepts emerged from analyses of the initial sample data, theoretical sampling was used to select participants who would contribute to the evolving theory (Charmaz; 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and direct further data collection (Glaser, 1978). For example, the coaches in the initial sample referred to concepts such as 'supervision' and 'training' as methods to cope and understand the interplay between personal beliefs and coaching in an intercultural coaching setting.

To further understand the conditions, consequences, interactions, and strategies (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) related to cultural self-awareness in coaches, the researcher identified cases that represented the other-side-of-the coin, or atypical manifestations of coaches in intercultural coaching situations. This approach is called confirming and disconfirming case sampling as it seeks exceptions and test variations so as to deepen the initial analysis (Draucker, Martsof, Ross, & Rusk, 2007).

The purpose of seeking such cases was to ascertain if the researcher's interpretation would hold up under a variety of circumstances (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Atypical cases in this particular study were participants who: 1) were not at the time in coaching supervision; and 2) who did not hold a formal training qualification in coaching. To recruit these atypical cases, the researcher asked a practising coach (i.e. the second contact person) to direct the researcher to coaches that would possibly fulfil these requirements.

To examine whether or not the sample was representative of typical organisational coaches in South Africa, the profile of the research participants was compared to descriptions provided by Odendaal, Le Roux, and Steenkamp's (2011) profile of the coaching industry in South Africa. Overall, the profile of the coaches in this study matched well with the overall South African

coaching field in terms of age range, years of experience as a coach, coach specific qualification and main areas of specialisation.

The above discussion is reflected in Table 1 which illustrates the implementation of the current study's sampling techniques.

Table 1

Implementation of Sampling Techniques

Phase of data collection or data analyses	Sampling method	Type of participants selected
Initial recruitment	Purposive sampling: Snowball sampling strategy	Organisational coaches who coach inter-culturally within the South African context
Open coding	Theoretical sampling: Confirming and disconfirming case sampling strategy	Organisational coaches that coached inter-culturally, who:
Axial coding		1) were not in coaching supervision during the study; and/or
Theoretical coding		2) did not hold a formal training qualification in coaching.

1.5.3.5 Data collection method

Data was collected by means of 16 in-depth individual interviews with 8 research participants, 7 of whom were interviewed more than once. In-depth interviews were used to collect data that depict the meanings and experiences related to the participant's level of cultural self-awareness. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) state that the benefit of the interview method is that it permits rich and detailed observations of a few cases, and allows the researcher to accumulate an understanding of the phenomena through observing particular instances of the phenomena as they emerge in specific contexts. As the study entailed sensitive subject matter, in-depth interviews rather than focus groups, were utilised.

The current research entailed conducting a series of interviews with each of the research participants. The interviews lasted an estimated one hour and were conducted over a set period of time (Johnson, 2002). The interviews were recorded by audio tape recorder. Informed and voluntary consent was asked of the participant so as to provide permission for tape recordings.

According to Schurink (2004), with regard to in-depth interviewing, questions are not deliberately formulated beforehand, but develop spontaneously in the course of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewer encouraged the interviewee to speak as freely as possible during the first phase of their acquaintance, so as to understand the personal attitudes, feeling and experiences of interviewees. The researcher followed Schurink's (2004) recommendations that during in-depth interviewing the interviewer introduce the general theme for which information is required, and thereafter motivates the interviewee to freely disclose information. A list of possible interview questions utilised during the research study, is included as Appendix C. It should be noted that these questions are examples only and were not utilised as a list of predetermined formulated interview questions.

Data was collected and analysed based on grounded theory principles. Both the data collection and data analyses phases therefore occurred simultaneously. According to Smith, Harré, and Van Langenhove (1995), this means that the interviewer adapts her interview guide to add areas to explore and delete questions that have not been fruitful. The initial interviews were in-depth, while the subsequent interviews served to clarify certain concepts or expand on certain applicable aspects. Therefore, the data analyses phase drove the data collection phase.

Henning, Van Rensburg, and Smith (2004) state that while in-depth interviewing has the benefit of letting the researcher gain the same level of knowledge and understanding as the participants, it holds some dangers and warrant certain ethical considerations, such as retaining the participant's trust and accountability over time. However, the benefit of such extended in-depth interviews means that rapport is developed as the process continues and therefore the conversation ensues more naturally (Henning et al., 2004).

To ensure the quality of the data produced during the interviews, it was imperative that mutual trust was established (Richie & Lewis, 2005). As soon as interviewees begin to disclose information that they regard as highly confidential and interviewers respond by showing that they are worthy of this disclosure and do not condemn or oppose interviewees, a relationship of mutual trust develops (Henning et al., 2004). In addition to keeping an open and non-judgmental approach to the interviews, the study's participants also received copies of the interview transcripts to accept, change or reject after each interview. This member-check process which was discussed under the section titled "Strategies employed to ensure quality

data”, served to provide transparency to the research process, thus creating trust among the research participants.

1.5.3.6 Recording

The interviews conducted in the study were recorded by tape recorder and transcribed. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), the collected data is not always immediately available for analysis, but requires “processing”. Transcriptions of audio recordings began as soon as possible after the data collection event.

The researcher transcribed the first three interviews, while a professional transcriber transcribed the remaining interviews. According to Kvale (2007), novice researchers who personally transcribe interviews learn about their own interviewing style and mistakes, while starting data analysis by becoming aware of the meanings of participants’ words. To ensure consistency between transcriptions, a common format was kept for all transcripts. Delineation between the researcher and individual participants’ dialogue, the location, date, and type of data collection event were also indicated within each transcript. Additionally, all transcriptions were made verbatim, including pauses, ‘umm’-s and the like, as an indicator that a topic may be important or too sensitive to pursue (Kvale, 2007). The researcher reviewed and edited the transcripts received from the transcriber by listening to each interview audio recording. Editing in this context provided an ethical predicament that needed careful consideration (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher endeavoured to solve this dilemma by providing the participant with a copy of the transcription and then confirm with the participants that it truly reflected what had been said in the interview.

The audio tape recordings were safely stored on computer hard drive with a protected password. In addition, backups of these files were made to two different external hard drives. The backup copies were securely stored in a separate location from the original recordings. To ensure that the data was stored safely and confidentially, documents, tape recordings and the like were also stored in cupboards that were securely locked and inaccessible to others. Permission was obtained from the participants through a signed consent form as well as oral consent. A copy of the informed consent form written in a language that the participant understood, was offered to the participant. This document also contained the contact information of the research supervisor of this study. See Appendix A for the participant consent form and Appendix B for the current study’s introductory letter.

1.5.3.7 Data analyses

Following the constructivist approach, the analysis of data endeavoured to ‘stay close to the data’ (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that grounded theory methods can be utilised to develop constructivist studies derived from interpretive approaches. Grounded theory was used to rigorously analyse the data and to ascertain the patterns in the experiences of coaches that work inter-culturally; so as to build a sound analysis of cultural self-awareness. Through grounded theory the researcher could study the meanings and actions of the research participants in order to gain insight into the participants’ experience.

Ritchie and Lewis (2005) stated that rather than developing conceptual frameworks from pre-established assumptions (e.g. previous research, existing theories), grounded theory strives to develop conceptual frameworks directly from data. In other words, the inquiry into the research study was data driven instead of theory driven. This suits the current research context as there has been little research conducted on the cultural self-awareness of coaches.

Smith et al. (1995) claim that by employing a grounded theory approach, the researcher begins with individual cases, experiences or incidents and develop progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize, to explain and to understand his/her data and to identify patterned relationships within it. The authors state that the researcher should begin with the study area, where after he/she builds his/her theoretical analysis on what was discovered as relevant in the actual worlds that had been studied within this area.

Basic grounded theory strategies include theoretical sampling, systematic coding, and guidelines for achieving density, variation, and integration (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Data analyses in grounded theory takes place throughout the data collection phase. The researcher constantly reflects on the relationships, categories, themes and concepts from the data which form part of the continuous process (Henning et al., 2004). According to Lewins and Silver (2007), the grounded theory approach is an iterative and inductive process which distinguishes between open, axial and theoretical coding procedures.

Charmaz (1995) describes coding as the process of ‘breaking down’ the data so as to conceptualise and reconstruct it. Therefore once the data has been collected, for example through interviews, it must be coded. During the open coding phase, data segments such as a word, line, sentence or paragraph, are coded to fracture the data and provide an idea of what is happening in the data (Charmaz, 2006). In the axial or selective coding phase the codes that

were generated during the open coding phase are re-examined and merged into higher level codes (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The final coding phase, theoretical coding, re-examines the data to refine the categories and explicate their properties (Charmaz, 2006). Figure 1 reflects the above discussion and depicts the positioning of these coding procedures within the data analyses process. Figure 1 also reflects the work by Lewins and Silver (2007).

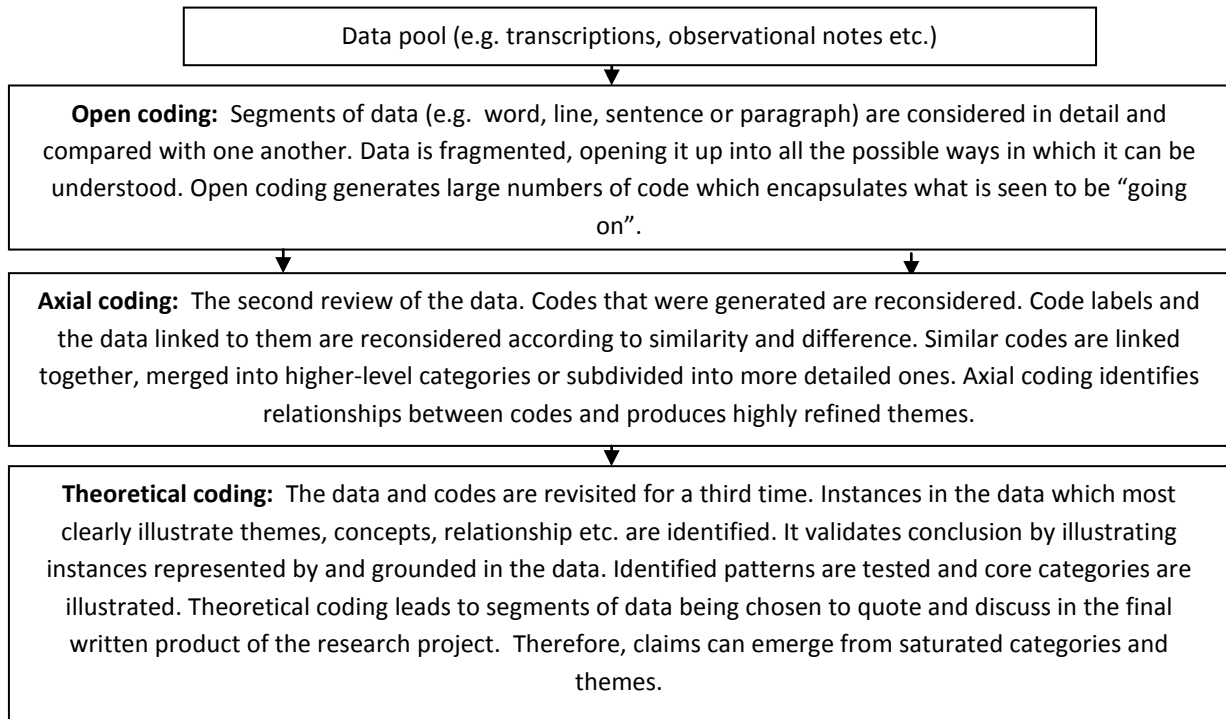


Figure 1. Coding within the data analysis process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

The data (e.g. transcribed interviews) captured in the data collection phase was analysed by using the Atlas.ti computer software programme (Atlas.ti 6.2.15, 1993-2012). The Atlas.ti programme is part of the range of CAQDAS programmes (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) available to support the qualitative data analysis process. Although the analytical processes of these software programmes are the same as manual coding and analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008), it has added benefits, such as ensuring secure data storage as well as immediate search and retrieval functions (Coffey, Holbrook, & Atkinson, 1996). In addition, the Atlas.ti programme provided the researcher with a systematic and useful way to organise, retrieve and produce the elements of the audit trail (Lewins & Silver, 2007).

Grounded theory is not without critique. Hovater (2007) warns that the essence and spirit of the research may be omitted if the researcher only conducts open and axial coding, making the selective coding process pivotal to reflect the perspective of the participants. In addition,

grounded theory guidelines may seem so complex to novice researchers that they may abandon their research study (Burden & Roodt, 2007). Taking this into account, the researcher feels that grounded theory provided a sufficient approach to explore the phenomenon of cultural self-awareness. As Terre Blanche et al. (2006) state, grounded theory as an interpretive analyses technique is useful as it does not collect bits and pieces of the phenomenon (i.e. cultural self-awareness), but places the real life descriptions, meanings and experiences of the participant into a perspective.

1.5.3.8 Strategies employed to ensure quality data

Marshall and Rossman (1995) argue that all research should adhere to the ‘canons’ that stand as criteria against which the trustworthiness of the research project is evaluated. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) state that while positivistic research is evaluated on the generalisability, validity, and reliability, good qualitative research adheres to the following:

Credibility (as opposed to validity)

It is of the utmost importance that qualitative research findings are accurate and credible (Beck 1993; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Guba, 1981). Moreover, the research findings should not only seem plausible to the researcher, but should be believable to the research participants and readers (Friese, 2011). To enhance credibility, the researcher took the following precautions: Firstly, the inquiry process was guided by the research participants as the initial interviews were started with an open-ended question to encourage the emergence of participants’ unanticipated statements and stories (Charmaz, 2006). Secondly, the research participants’ actual words were used in the inquiry of the evolving theory. As an example of how this was ensured, an excerpt from the data including highlighted key words, is provided below:

*“...say you are from one ethnic group and they are from another... you find there are certain stereotypes that pop up. You first notice your own as a coach...which **you manage**. Obviously as a coach you **manage yourself**. It’s not about you, it’s about the client”.*

As can be seen from the above passage, the key concept of “manage yourself” was introduced by the research participant. The code ‘managing self’ was created to represent these keywords. The code was used in its gerund form to focus the investigation on actions (i.e. social processes) and to remain close to the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978). To further explore the conditions, actions/interactions and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) of ‘managing

self', the key words were added to the interview guide of the participants' follow-up interviews: "*Please tell me more about how you manage yourself. What do you do?*" Constant comparison was also used to determine if the 'managing self' code was repeated in the interviews, and to delineate the different meanings that the participants connected to 'managing self' (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). Using single words or segments of interview data to represent the research topic would have been detrimental to the study (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Guba, 1981). This was avoided through the line-by-line coding of the first four initial interviews, as each line of the transcribed interviews was examined to identify key words and phrases (Charmaz, 2006; Goulding, 2002; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher again used constant comparison (Glaser, 1978) across interviews and participants to ascertain if concepts or codes were a once-off or a repeated occurrence.

Thirdly, the researcher's conceptualisation of the research topic was checked against participants' understanding of the research topic. The latter is called 'member checks' and "the process of member checks is the single most important action inquirers can take, for it goes to the heart of the credibility criterion" (Guba, 1981, p. 85). The researcher presented her conceptualisation of the research topic (up and until that point) to the research participants to ensure that they recognised and accepted the descriptions (Flick, 2007). All participants agreed with the direction of the theory, with some providing further elaboration on the researcher's conceptualisations. The research participants were also provided with copies of their transcribed interviews to accept or reject. In addition, the researcher discussed the evolving theory with her research supervisor who took on the role of peer debriefer, so as to test developing insights while exposing the evolving theory to scrutiny (Guba, 1981).

Finally, the researcher's personal views and insights about the phenomenon were investigated and articulated to boost credibility. The use of a reflexive journal helped the researcher to evaluate her own thoughts and views regarding the current research topic. The researcher also used a post interview comment sheet to explicate her thoughts after each interview. The reasons for conducting the literature review after the data collection and data analysis had been completed were also explained within this mini-dissertation (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003).

Transferability (as opposed to generalisability)

Transferability refers to the degree to which the research study can be applied or transferred to other contexts or populations (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Guba, 1981; Rogelberg, 2002). This

implies that the research study should be described in such a way that its findings can be applied to a similar context. To reach this goal, the current study created in-depth, rich and detailed description (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008) of the:

- Research questions' context, purpose and level of generalisation (Flick, 2009);
- Rationale for, and the manner in which strategies of purposeful sampling and theoretical sampling were used during the study (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Flick, 2009);
- Demographic characteristics of the research participants (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003);
- Research methodology used to collect and analyse the research;
- Literature connected to each of the theoretical categories that were explicated in the current study (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003).

Dependability (as opposed to reliability)

Dependability, the third strategy for quality of data refers to the degree to which research findings are consistent and dependable over time (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Guba, 1981). The current study aimed to ensure dependability through two processes. Firstly, a co-coder was used to independently review two of the initial four interview transcripts. The interview transcripts were specifically chosen because of the participant's demographics. One transcript held the responses of a participant with similar racial demographics to the co-coder, while the other held the responses of a participant with different racial demographics to the co-coder. This simulated the coding circumstances of the research study. The co-coder was provided with an information guide on coding and the pilot interview transcript to practice coding (see Appendix D) prior to the start of co-coding. Although coding was generally found to be consistent, there were certain instances where the co-coder had made some inferences that could not be fully supported by the data. In these cases, the researcher reviewed the data and reconciled differences in interpretations.

The use of inter-coder agreement in a constructivist grounded theory study is not without controversy. The advantages of inter-coder reliability are mentioned by numerous authors (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991; Morse, Swanson, & Kuzel, 2001; Neuendorf, 2002). This is based on the premise that if different observers make similar interpretations of the same phenomenon (e.g. a segment of text), then faith is enhanced in the research's interpretation (Seale, 1999). However, others believe that inter-coder reliability may not be applicable to a constructionist paradigm or a grounded theory study; both found in the current study. Firstly, the

Constructivists argue that a singular static reality does not exist, which means that different people will have different accounts of the world (Seale, 1999). Therefore, two coders may have different ways of looking at the same piece of data. Secondly, calculations of inter-coder reliability may not suit grounded theory as the approach does not occur within a predefined coding scheme (Burla et al., 2008). Bearing these arguments in mind, the researcher cautiously used inter-coder agreement as an opportunity to put the research data under some testing circumstances (Seale, 1999), so as to ascertain at least a degree of consensus on observed constructs.

Secondly, an audit trail was utilised (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). In the case of dependability, the audit trail was used to ensure consistency of the researcher-as-instrument (Guba, 1981). This implies that the researcher should keep a trail of the evolution of the researcher's thinking and rationale for all choices and decisions made during the research process. The audit trail was encapsulated through the research journal, as well as through memos which described how all the data was analysed and interpreted. The journal and memos were created in the Atlas.ti programme (Atlas.ti 6.2.15, 1993-2012).

Confirmability (as opposed to objectivity)

Guba argues that even though the research is not without the influence of the researcher (e.g. decisions in data collection and analysis strategies), it is pivotal that the research findings be certified as a result of the research rather than the subjectivity of the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2005). To ensure confirmability, the current study used the following strategies recommended by Guba (1981):

Firstly, the audit trail was again utilised. Different to its role in ensuring dependability, the audit trail enhances confirmability by showing that it is open to public scrutiny (Guba, 1981). A record that chronologically and systematically documents the unfolding steps and interpretations of the research was compiled for the current research study (Bowen, 2009). Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that an audit trail includes raw data; evidence of data reduction and analysis; evidence of data reconstruction and synthesis; process notes; descriptions of intentions and dispositions; and interview schedule development.

Secondly, the reflexive journal was useful to ensure confirmability. Amongst the reasons for keeping a daily journal was that the reader could track why and how certain methodological, process and logistical decisions were made that steered the study into a certain theoretical

direction (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, the journal illustrates how and when the researcher addressed her own assumptions and bias concerning the research topic and its context. The researcher's journal shows these decisions and reflections at various stages of the current study's evolution. This corresponds with Mruck and Mey (2010) who argue that reflexivity is important at all stages of a grounded theory study. The reflexive journal was produced as a memo and stored within the Atlas.ti Hermeneutical Unit (Atlas.ti 6.2.15, 1993-2012). The reflexive journal informs the audit process.

1.5.3.9 Reporting

The reporting style of a research report may be seen as the 'voice' of the research study (Giles, 2002). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), the research's voice reflects the voice of the author, the voices of the research participants, and the voice of the self. Balancing these voices by creating a sense of the participants' presence in the final report while providing a conceptual analysis of their stories, is a conundrum that many constructivist grounded theorists face (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006). The researcher's 'balancing act' is described below.

The voice of the researcher is conveyed in two ways. Firstly, the researcher is represented through the third person narrative form. While many authors (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Wolcott, 2009) suggest the use of the first person in qualitative research, the researcher felt it best to use the more traditional third person representation. This was mainly because the researcher held the opinion that using "I" would detract attention from the significant role and contribution of the research participants. Writing in the third person also helped the researcher bear in mind the perspective of the reader, and how the researcher's and the participants' voice could be interpreted by a third party. Secondly, the voice of the researcher was reflected in the report by showing how and why decisions were made during data collection and data analysis. This approach agrees with Charmaz (2006) who believes that constructivist grounded theorists must shift from merely stating facts through their writing, to producing writing that mirrors how they constructed the study's grounded theory.

In the current study, the researcher endeavoured to bring to the foreground the voice of the research participants. This was done by utilising verbatim quotations as participants' own words were used to portray their reality and produce 'thick description' (Fetterman, 1989). The researcher also made use of the participants' words during the study's data analysis and code construction (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). By using the participants' words in analysis and

textual representation, the researcher ensured that the emerging inferences and corresponding report stayed close to the data. ‘Staying close to the data’ is of paramount importance in conducting a grounded theory study as it means maintaining the presence of the research participants (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Finally, to show the researcher as a subject of inquiry, a section holding some of the researcher’s reflections on the current study was included within the research article. The purpose of such a section was to show how the researcher understood her own location of self within the research study (Hertz, 1997).

1.5.3.10 Ethical considerations

Mauthner, Mauthner, Birch, Jessop, and Miller (2002, p. 14) state: “Ethics concerns the morality of human conduct. In relation to social research, it refers to moral deliberation, choice and accountability on the part of researchers throughout the research process”. The above authors believe that the complexities of researching private lives and placing accounts in the public arena create various ethical issues for the researcher. Such issues include, amongst others, voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, consent, and being fully informed about the research objective.

Participation in the current study was voluntary and participants were afforded enough time and space to consider their participation. However, as any research has its own objective, participation can never be solely ‘voluntary’ (Mauthner et al., 2002). Therefore, participation raises the risk of coercion (real or perceived) as a possible ethical dilemma. For example, the participant might have felt that participating in the study might have damaged his/her reputation within the field. The researcher addressed this ethical dilemma by making participation anonymous and by coding participants’ responses in such a way that they were anonymous (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). According to Green and Thorogood (2004), interview studies may also lead to coercion. The authors state that those skills that encourage trust and disclosure may make it difficult for participants to withdraw or refuse to answer. The current study endeavoured to be grounded in trust and respect, while providing the participant with real opportunities to refuse to answer at any point of the interviews. Stringent precautions were taken to respect the privacy of the participant and to ensure confidentiality of the research information. Names and other details that could identify the participants were changed to

protect their privacy. Such issues were discussed fully with the participants at the outset of the study.

The above culminated in employing a consent form to obtain informed, voluntary consent from the participants. Green and Thorogood (2004) advocate that such a document describes the purpose of the research; background and role of the researcher; and the possible risks and benefits to those involved. This consent form declares if the results would be disclosed to those being studied, and if the findings would be confidential or anonymous so as to ensure that the participant is fully informed about the research objective (Green & Thorogood, 2004). A copy of the informed consent form used during the current study, which follows the above recommendations, is attached as Appendix A.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

The remaining chapters are organised as follows. In Chapter 2, the findings of the research objectives are discussed in the form of a research article. The chapter includes an introduction of the study and synthesis of literature, and a discussion on the study's research design and research methodology. This is followed by the findings section which presents the results obtained from the in-depth interviews. The discussion section will interpret and synthesise the findings and conclude Chapter 2. Chapter 3 will provide the conclusions, recommendations and possible limitations of the current research study. A final reflection of the researcher's experiences conducting the research study brings the chapter to conclusion.

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the problem statement, research questions, expected contribution of the study, and research objectives. The research design used in this study was explained, followed by a brief overview of the chapters to follow.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES OF SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS COACHES

ABSTRACT

If coaches are unaware of their own biased attitudes and beliefs towards coachees, it may negatively influence their perceptions of and interactions with that individual. The current study aimed to explore and describe the experiences of South African organisational coaches in terms of such cultural self-awareness; specifically, how coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and what the perceived consequences of such awareness were. Sixteen in-depth interviews were conducted with eight South African organisational coaches. The data was analysed using grounded theory methodology which yielded eight findings that are discussed within this research article. An interpretation of the findings revealed that various levels, developmental paths, and applications of cultural self-awareness exist amongst organisational coaches. Recommendations are offered for coaching training programmes, coaches, coaching clients, and for future research possibilities.

Key terms: Coaching, culture, intercultural competence, cultural self-awareness, intercultural, cross-cultural

Intercultural competence is imperative to sound coaching practice (Ting & Scisco, 2006). Coaches must be prepared to engage with a variety of clients who may come from different cultures, speak different languages, hold different sexual orientations, and have different religious affiliations to that of the coach. Coaching organisations both from abroad, such as the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC) and the locally-based Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA), call for coaches to provide culturally competent services to clients. According to Ting and Scisco (2006), coaches' intercultural competencies go beyond merely exhibiting culturally relevant knowledge and skill, to including cultural self-awareness. It is this concept of cultural self-awareness and its relevance to South African organisational coaches within an intercultural setting, which forms the primary focus of this study. Cultural self-awareness refers to the ability of a person to identify his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs and expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes. Despite growing research reflecting the critical importance of cultural self-awareness (Escallier & Fullerton, 2009; Hershey, 2007; Jenkins, 2007; Kraft, 2010), the researcher could trace no relevant international or South African research on cultural self-awareness of coaches with which to compare the present research. This study begins to address this critical gap by qualitatively exploring the cultural self-awareness of South African organisational coaches.

Various definitions exist for the term coaching (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006; Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh, & Parker, 2010; Palmer & Whybrow, 2005; Valerio & Lee, 2005; Whitmore, 2009). At the centre of these definitions seems to be a focus on the increased development of a person, i.e. the coachee, in a specific kind of relationship. Cox, Bachkirova, and Clutterbuck (2010, p. 1) capture this notion by stating that coaching “could be seen as a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the coachee”. However, coaching has its own controversies with debates about its professionalisation and differentiation from other disciplines. Controversies about accreditation, a need for a sound research base, and better educational and professional standards occur within both international (Grant et al., 2010), and South African coaching contexts (Odendaal, Le Roux, & Steenkamp, 2011). Additionally, the need for boundaries between coaching and other disciplines, such as counselling and therapy, is prominent (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). The differentiation between coaching, and therapy or counselling is widely debated (Hart, Blattner, & Leipsic, 2001;

Sperry, 1993) with confidentiality, the referral process, and supervision amongst the ethical concerns.

The coaching field holds various types of coaching, which include, but are not limited to executive coaching, workplace coaching, and life coaching. Executive coaching occurs in the leadership or management context, and is focused on the career and performance issues of the coachee, whilst being guided by both the executive's and the organisation's agenda (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006; Grant et al., 2010). Workplace coaching takes place in workplace settings with non-executive employees, and includes on-the-job coaching by line managers or supervisors with the aim of improving productivity and developing worker skills, and understanding of job requirements (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006; Hunt & Weintraub, 2002). Life coaching takes place outside of the workplace and has a holistic approach that helps the coachee examine his/her life, systematically implementing life-enhancing changes (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006).

Irrespective of the coaching style, the coach of today must be equipped to coach coachees from any culture around the world as a result of the world of work becoming more globalised, and technological innovation equipping organisations to conduct business beyond traditional geographical borders (Adler, 2002). In the South African context, the last two decades have seen the country undergo major political, economic and societal change (Cilliers, 2005; Motsoaledi & Cilliers, 2012; Stout Rostron, 2009). The changing social landscape has democratised the workplace (Motsoaledi & Cilliers, 2012) resulting in an intercultural work environment, thus increasing the chances for coaches to be coaching across cultures (Rosinski, 2003).

Culture is complex, especially in the South African context, and it should not be thought of in a linear manner as its nature cannot be reflected by one definition. However, many prominent authors (see Hofstede, 1997; Schein, 1999; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998) have attempted to define it. Amongst these are Ting, and Scisco (2006, p. 125) who state: "Culture is a term for describing how common experiences – history, physical climate, environment, language, and religion – shape the members of a society such that they develop common assumptions, values, and beliefs about core issues". To guide coaches within such intercultural settings, Ting and Scisco (2006) recommend Shalom Schwartz (1991), and Geert Hofstede's (2001) cultural frameworks. These frameworks are recommended to aid diagnosis of what might be occurring in the cultural encounter. This approach is also taken by Rosinski's (2003)

Cultural Orientation Framework. However, all of the above frameworks focus primarily on diagnosing differences, yet an assumption is made that the user of the framework, e.g. the coach, is ready or able to make the diagnosis of what is happening in the cultural interaction. In contrast to diagnosing behaviour as different or similar, Milton Bennett (1993) believes personal reactions to these cultural differences are far more important. Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) explains the reactions of people to cultural differences. The DMIS indicates that as an individual's experience of cultural differences becomes more complex, the individual's intercultural competence will increase. Intercultural competence refers to "the ability to think and act in intercultural appropriate ways" (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p. 422).

A review of various disciplines (Bennett & Bennett, 2003; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Deardorff, 2004, 2006; Pedersen, 1994) indicates that intercultural competence consists of both internal (e.g. attitude, knowledge) and external (e.g. actions, behaviour) elements. Bennett and Bennett (2003) believe that knowledge, attitude, and behaviour must work together for the development of intercultural competence. However, Hofstede (2003, p. 230) states: "Awareness is where it all starts". It is therefore imperative that one recognises and understands his/her own cultural conditioning (Hofstede, 2003). Such self-awareness, along with being willing to change, forms the foundation that supports intercultural competence (Okayama, Furuto, & Edmondson, 2001). Although these resources have provided useful information about effectively functioning in an intercultural setting, it is still not clear how coaches become aware of their cultural beliefs and prejudice, and how that awareness develops or is maintained.

The purpose of the current research study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. The study specifically investigated how South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and what the perceived consequences of such awareness were. This grounded theory research study endeavoured to explore the meanings and actions of the research participants in order to gain insight into the participants' experience.

Cultural self-awareness

Cultural self-awareness is defined as "an understanding of one's own cultural assumptions and patterns of behaviour" (Adler, 1997 p. 117). Kraft (2010), on the other hand, views cultural

self-awareness as the ability of a person to understand the influence of his/her specific culture or ethnicity on his/her “psychological, social, and emotional attributes” (p. 83). Such cultural self-awareness is produced through on-going self-examination and in-depth exploration (Brigatti, 2006). Exhibiting cultural self-awareness increases one’s ability to predict the effect of one’s behaviour on others, thus enabling the person to act in an appropriate manner in intercultural situations (Adler, 1997).

Various terms have been used to describe cultural self-awareness, such as cross cultural diversity awareness (Brown, 2004); cultural awareness (Hovater, 2007); cultural sensitivity (Hovater, 2007); cultural responsiveness (Hovater, 2007); constructive marginality (Bennett, 1993); and critical cultural awareness (Schuetz, 2005). However, these terms have been used interchangeably to refer to various constructs. For the purpose of the current study, the ability of a person to identify his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs, expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes, is referred to as cultural self-awareness.

As the literature on cultural self-awareness of coaches was limited, the researcher expanded her review to include the works of scholars in various disciplines outside of coaching. Domains that have studies on cultural self-awareness include nursing (Escallier & Fullerton, 2009; Samarasinghe, Fridlund, & Arvidsson, 2010), social work (Bender, Negi, & Fowler, 2010; Kraft, 2010), students (Extra & Yagmur, 2010; Hershey, 2007; Jenkins, 2007; Schuetz, 2005); teaching (Hovater, 2007), and business leadership (Clapp-Smith, 2009).

Some of these studies investigated the cultural self-awareness of clients that receive a service, as is the case with Kraft (2010). Kraft’s study focused on the cultural self-awareness of mental health care clients’ and its influence on the clients’ perceptions of the competence of mental health providers. It was found that clients with high cultural self-awareness, amongst other variables, will report high levels of client satisfaction with mental health providers (Kraft, 2010). However, most literature on cultural self-awareness explored the stance of the other party, that of the person who provides a service to another party. An overview of these studies reveals that it is crucial for service providing individuals to exhibit intercultural competence within multicultural situations, and that cultural self-awareness contributes to the development of such competence. Cultural self-awareness can help a person move away from preconceived ideas about the client’s and one’s own culture (Schuetz, 2005) towards demonstrating respect, knowledge and skills towards diverse clients (Bender et al., 2010; Brown, 2004; Clapp-Smith,

2009). These studies may be relevant to coaching, as within the coaching process the coach provides a service to the client, namely the coachee.

Studies such as Hovater (2007) and Bender, et al. (2010) provide some insight into the development of cultural self-awareness. Hovater (2007) found that the teaching experiences abroad, cultivated such awareness in teachers. In the social work field, Bender et al. (2010) explored the relationship between self-awareness and social work students' commitment to intercultural competent social work practices. It was found that providing the students with self-reflective exercises created cultural self-awareness in them. These reflective exercises required the students to describe their ethnic/racial background, ancestors' process of cultural assimilation, and to reflect on their ethnic and racial identity. Although the above studies have provided insight, more research is needed to explore to what extent, and under what circumstances, cultural self-awareness develops.

The majority of literature on cultural self-awareness was found within the counselling or therapeutic domain (Castillo, Brossart, Reyes, Conoley, & Phoummarath, 2007; Kraft, 2010; Roysircar, 2004; Tomlinson-Clarke, 2000). Intercultural competent counsellors and therapists are required to cultivate awareness of the impact of one's culture on the self, and on one's perceptions of the culturally diverse client (Roysircar, 2004). This is pivotal to avoid malpractice or unethical conduct (Brigatti, 2006). To stimulate such awareness and decrease racial prejudice, the intercultural counsellor is advised to attend intercultural competence training programmes (Castillo et al., 2007; Spears, 2004; Tomlinson-Clarke, 2000). As previously discussed, some believe that counselling overlaps with coaching (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Hart et al., 2001; Sperry, 1993). Given this overlap and the theoretical support that counsellors or therapists must have of cultural self-awareness, it may be justified to assume that coaches too require cultural self-awareness. However, the researcher could find no research that would support this assumption.

Conversely, a review of the current international and national coaching societies' policies shows the importance of intercultural competence when coaching diverse clients. South African based Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA) advocate self-awareness and self-management as core competencies, as well as ensuring non-maleficence towards culturally diverse coachees (COMENSA, 2010). The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) in turn, recommend engaging in activities that will develop and increase self-

awareness about diversity (EMCC, 2008). The Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC) requires having respect for and knowledge about cultural issues and diversity. The WABC recommends acquiring an understanding of potential preferences and biases that stem from personal racial and cultural identities and the effects on their delivery of services to coachees (Stout Rostron, 2009). Within the South African coaching context, the coach needs to show even more vigilance of his/her own limiting assumptions than the coachee (Jansen van Rensburg, 2009). Before the coach can help the coachee with his/her cultural identity, the coach needs to have developed an awareness of his/her own prejudices, biases and life conditioning (Jansen van Rensburg, 2009; Ting & Scisco, 2006).

Research problem and objectives

Research indicates that culture comes into play during intercultural interactions (Brigatti, 2006). If the coach differs culturally from his/her coachee, he/she may incorrectly use his/her own understanding of what is appropriate for a situation to make sense of the coachee's behaviour, possibly leading to the misinterpretation of the coachee's situation. In addition, the coach may also project his/her own cultural bias and stereotypes onto the coachee. This in turn may lead to barriers in communication, and ultimately to the inhibition of efficiency of the coaching process. Inefficient coaching may not allow for the achievement of the desired results, leading to financial losses for the company. Therefore, it is imperative that the coach is aware of his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs, expectations which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes held about the coachee, i.e. his/her cultural self-awareness.

There is however, little research to fully understand how organisational coaches develop or utilise cultural self-awareness. The current research focuses on the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in developing and utilising cultural self-awareness. Consequently, the following research questions are addressed: How did the coach's cultural self-awareness develop or change?; Which causes or strategies led to the coach's current level of cultural self-awareness?; If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what contributed to this change?; If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what are the consequences of such a change?; How does the coach maintain cultural self-awareness?; Which strategies do the coach apply in promoting cultural self-awareness?; What meaning do the different coaches attribute to cultural self-awareness in coaching?; What other psychosocial processes can be observed?

The potential value-add of the study

The value of the current study is that it will allow exploration and increased understanding in intercultural coaching competence. A better understanding of the issues, challenges and benefits of cultural self-awareness, experienced by intercultural coaches, may contribute to intercultural competence training, education, practice, and research. Through exploration and understanding of how cultural self-awareness develops in coaches, corresponding intervention strategies aimed at cultivating intercultural competent coaches can be developed. It is the researcher's hope that relaying the experiences and perceptions of coaches within intercultural settings will benefit and provide information to other coaches who wish to understand how their culture affects their own coaching process, so as to improve the quality of their intercultural coaching. In addition, the outcome of the study may provide a springboard to future researchers to further study the intercultural experiences of coaches.

Following the above introduction to the study, background, research purpose, synthesis of literature, research objective and contribution, a discussion on the study's research design is included. This is followed by the findings section which presents the results obtained from the in-depth interviews. Finally, the discussion section will interpret and synthesise the research findings.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of the current research study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. Specifically the study investigated how South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness and what the coaches felt the perceived consequences of such awareness were. In seeking to understand the phenomenon, the research study addressed eight research questions. The following discussion investigates how these research questions were addressed by employing the most appropriate research approach, research strategy and research methodology within the research setting. These interrelated elements combine to create the current study's research design.

Research approach and research strategy

The current research study took a qualitative research approach. In qualitative research, researchers attempt to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research is grounded within a predominantly constructivist philosophy which focuses on how people construct their realities (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Constructivist position in turn, is founded within a relativist ontology which presumes that people hold multiple, equally valid social realities (Haverkamp & Young, 2007). In other words, the way in which a person will construct his/her reality will be uniquely different to the reality someone else constructs under the same circumstances.

The constructivist paradigm suited the current research study's aim to explore the various experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches. The constructivist paradigm suits the current research objectives as it offers the researcher ways of deriving conclusions from data (Whitman & Woszczyński, 2004); searches for understanding through the multiple realities constructed by participants; and creates knowledge through the interaction between the researcher and the data that is derived from participants' rich descriptions (Charmaz, 2006).

Epistemologically, the researcher believed that the correct research methods should be used to ensure appropriate understanding of the participants' experiences of cultural self-awareness. To fulfil this requirement the researcher used a comparative case study as research strategy (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). Subsequently, this led to the use of grounded theory to fracture, compare and explicate how the participants perceived cultural self-awareness (Charmaz, 2006). The researcher also believed that a phenomenon should be understood in all its unique complexities (Badenhorst, 2008). While quantitative researchers advocate distance between the researcher and the research (Badenhorst, 2008), the researcher saw her role, as qualitative researcher, to immerse herself within the data so as to gain an appropriate understanding of the meaning participants connected to cultural self-awareness.

Research method

The following section will discuss the different methodological elements of the research study.

Research setting

The setting of this study took place in a number of locations. These locations included organisational board rooms, an office, coffee shop, hotel lobby and home. The setting of the study also depended on the preference of the participants. Participants were invited to suggest a location where they would feel comfortable (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). This was to ensure that the participant was unperturbed and comfortable to speak openly and truthfully. Conversely, the researcher was aware that some of the venues (e.g. country club's coffee shop) may have held historical meaning with reference to aspects such as class, race, age and educational level. Even though, venues were chosen by the research participants; the choice of venue may have had an indirect influence on the research. It may be beneficial for researchers doing future intercultural studies to bear this in mind.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Potential participants were invited electronically to participate in the study. The document explained, amongst others, the identity of the researcher, the purpose and duration of the study, the expected role of the participant and confidentiality. It also included the contact details of the researcher and research supervisor. During the interviews, the researcher clarified that her role was to ask questions to comprehend the phenomenon under study. She also explained to the participant that he/she was the expert and informed this understanding of the researcher by contributing unique knowledge of the research topic.

The researcher assured the participants that there were no right or wrong answers and that the participant's personal experiences and opinions were imperative to the study. Corbetta (2003) advises that the researcher maintains a balance between keeping the research participants on track, while simultaneously avoiding influencing the participants' thoughts and thereby directing their answers. The researcher heeded this advice and took care to emphasise the participant's perspective by treating the participant as the expert. The researcher also avoided asking leading questions by phrasing open-ended questions, asking one question at a time, verifying unclear responses, and using appropriate probes as advised by Mack et al. (2005).

In the constructivist paradigm, the interview is not only about collecting data, but is seen as a dynamic relationship which is co-constructed by the research participant as well as the interviewer (Corbetta, 2003). However, the researcher understood that she was not free from bias and did not attempt or claim to be completely objective (Creswell, 1994). The researcher acknowledged that her thoughts and assumptions played a part in the choices of questions and themes to be probed.

To address researcher bias, the researcher followed McMillan and Schumacher's (2001) recommendation that the researcher critically self-examines her own role as researcher throughout the duration of the research process. The researcher maintained critical self-examination by keeping a research journal and answering post-interview reflective questions, as well as through discussions with the research supervisor and colleagues. This helped her understand the influence she had on the current study's data collection and data analysis. In terms of interviewing as a data collection method, the researcher was vigilant to keep her tone and body language from conveying biases and emotional reactions, opting rather to demonstrate neutrality and show unconditional acceptance (Mack et al., 2005).

Sampling

The research study utilised a sample of 8 research participants ($N = 8$). The study was initially directed by purposeful sampling as "a point of departure" (Charmaz, 2006, p.100), but as it evolved, theoretical sampling was utilised to direct the researcher to participants who could contribute to the understanding of cultural self-awareness in coaches (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Snowball sampling (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Terre Blanche et al., 2006) was used to initially recruit research participants through utilising network connections (Lohr, 2009). An expert in the field of coaching who was familiar with the South African coaching field, referred the researcher to coaches who could potentially participate in the study.

As certain concepts emerged from analyses of the initial sample data, theoretical sampling was used to select participants who would contribute to the evolving theory (Charmaz; 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and direct further data collection (Glaser, 1978). The 8 participants were selected based on the following main criteria: 1) organisational coaches who coach within the South African context; and 2)

organisational coaches who coach within an intercultural setting. Table 2 depicts the demographic and/or behavioural profile of the research participants.

Table 2

Demographic and/or Behavioural Profile of the Research Participants (N=8)

Participant	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Language	Country of origin	Type of coach
1	49	F	White	English	South Africa	Executive coach
2	41	M	Coloured	English	South Africa	Life coach
3	44	M	African	IsiZulu	Undisclosed	Life coach
4	48	F	Coloured	IsiZulu	South Africa	Workplace coach
5	61	F	White	English	USA	Executive coach
6	56	M	White	Afrikaans	South Africa	Executive coach
7	58	F	White	English	South Africa	Executive coach
8	46	M	African	Tshivenda	South Africa	Workplace coach
TOTAL N = 8	Age range: 41 - 61	F: 4 M: 4	Black: 2 Coloured: 2 White: 4			

The research data was drawn from 16 in-depth interviews with 8 organisational coaches that coached within a South African intercultural setting. As depicted in Table 2, these coaches varied in age, gender, ethnicity, language, country of origin, training, and coaching style. The age range was from 41 to 61 years. An equal number of male and female coaches were included in the sample. The ethnicity of the coaches included Black, Coloured and White. There was 1 Afrikaans speaking participant; 3 English speaking participants; 1 Tshivenda speaking participant; and 2 IsiZulu speaking participants. To examine whether or not the sample was representative of typical organisational coaches in South Africa, the profile of the research participants was compared to descriptions from a profile of the coaching industry in South Africa (Odendaal et al., 2011). Overall, the profile of the coaches in this study matched well with the overall South African coaching field in terms of age range, years of experience as a coach, coach specific qualifications and main areas of specialisation.

Data collection methods

Data was collected by means of 16 in-depth individual interviews with 8 research participants, 7 of whom were interviewed more than once. The current study required rich or thick

descriptions from the work lives of the coaches; the interview was decided to be the most efficient way to obtain such descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 1998). As the research interview provides both parties with an opportunity to explore the meaning of questions and answers (Brenner, Brown, & Canter, 1985), it suits the co-constructing nature of the constructionist research design of the current study (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

Two other key grounded theory experts, Corbin and Strauss (2008), argue that training and practice are especially important when conducting interviews and making observations. In preparation for the current study, the researcher attended an interview training workshop which focused on key interview and communication skills (e.g. rapport-building, acquiring informed consent and avoiding leading questions). The researcher also developed a list of possible open-ended interview questions that were related to the research topic (See Appendix C). These possible questions were presented to and accepted by a committee of the supervising university's faculty members. However, the researcher was aware that the research participants should guide the interviewing process and that she should not force pre-determined questions upon the research participants (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goulding 2002). This meant that not all questions were used and not in the original sequence.

A pilot interview was conducted with an individual who held similar characteristics than the current study's sample. The benefits of conducting the pilot interview were multiple. Firstly, the pilot interview was done to ensure that the developed open-ended questions would render information about the current phenomenon. Secondly, the researcher gained exposure to a real-life interview while honing interview skills (e.g. probing and establishing rapport). Thirdly, the researcher acquainted herself with the logistics of an interview (e.g. travelling to the interview site and operating the voice recorder). The pilot interviewee was asked to provide feedback on areas in the interview to be improved, and to ascertain if the interview questions were clear, understandable and answered in a suitable time frame (Mack et al., 2005). Appropriate adjustments were made (e.g. the sequence of interview questions) following the pilot study. Even though the pilot interviewee was not a research participant in the current study, the purpose of the study was explained, and the rights of the interviewee were upheld by obtaining informed consent. See Appendix E to find a copy of the pilot interview consent form.

The first interview of each research participant was exploratory and the same open-ended question was asked at the start of each of the initial interviews, namely: “Please tell me about your experiences in coaching somebody from a different cultural background to your own”. The purpose of this open-ended question was to guide the research participant to describe and reflect on experiences regarding coaching and culture (Charmaz, 2006). The choice of follow up questions and probes thereafter depended on the direction and availability of significant themes in these descriptions and reflections. The above practices correspond with grounded theory methodology as it limits the influence of previous knowledge that the researcher has of cultural self-awareness on the current study (Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goulding, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

The researcher felt that the initial interviews opened up her thinking regarding cultural self-awareness in South African coaches, while she utilised the second interviews to affirm and elaborate on certain concepts and statements from the first interview (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). In grounded theory methodology, data collection is directed by data analysis and the process is referred to as theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1992, Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goulding 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The implications of theoretical sampling for the current study’s data collection methods meant: 1) that the conducted interviews were transcribed and analysed after each interview; 2) that the interview questions were adapted or added to gain specific information regarding significant statements or concepts from the first interview; and 3) interview questions were included to test the researcher’s conjectures and postulations at various stages of data collection.

Recording of data

The in-depth interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed with the participants’ consent. Permission was obtained from the participants by a signed consent form as well as oral consent. The first three interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher (Kvale, 2007), while a professional transcriber transcribed the remaining thirteen interviews. The researcher reviewed and edited the remaining transcripts received from the transcriber. A copy of the finalised transcript was sent to the research participant for member checking (Flick, 2007). A system of organisation and storage of the data was created, so as to ensure the security and integrity of the data (Mack et al., 2005). The ATLAS.ti software programme (Atlas.ti 6.2.15, 1993-2012) ensured efficient search and retrieval of data (Coffey, Holbrook, & Atkinson, 1996; Lewins & Silver, 2007). The organisation and identification of all data, both electronic

and in paper form were done according to archival numbers. The audio tape recordings and transcriptions were safely stored on computer hard drive with a protected password. In addition, backups of the research data were made to two different external hard drives, securely stored in a separate location from the original hard drive.

Data analyses

The research study's data analyses and data collection were interrelated and iterative (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Verbatim transcripts were analysed by means of open-, axial-, and theoretical coding. The Atlas.ti software programme (Atlas.ti 6.2.15, 1993-2012) was used during data analyses. The open coding phase fractured the data through a line-by-line coding process which microscopically analysed each line of the interview transcript (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978). Additionally, coding for gerunds enabled reflection on the processes and actions involved, reflecting how various individuals constructed reality (Glaser, 1978).

To make sense of the large amount of data and identify patterns, the 1649 codes were re-examined, initiating the axial coding phase. The data was checked for causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, action/interaction strategies, and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) of the cultural self-awareness of South African organisational coaches. Similar codes were merged or subdivided into theoretical categories (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Memo-writing was used throughout to define the category and explicate its properties. The theoretical coding phase integrated all categories to provide a description of the phenomenon under study. The analytical categories were: developmental paths of cultural self-awareness; application of cultural self-awareness; and levels of cultural self-awareness.

The data was re-examined until theoretical saturation was thought to have been achieved (Charmaz, 2006; 1967; Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2001; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparison was used throughout to compare interviews, codes, and categories (Glaser, 1978). The categories and concepts were then compared with the broader literature. The research questions were reformulated during the study to refocus and direct further data collection and analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A discussion on this reformulation is included in the first chapter of this mini-dissertation.

Strategies employed to ensure quality of data

Quality of data in qualitative research refers to issues of trustworthiness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Within the constructivist paradigm, the quantitative concepts reflecting quality of data (e.g. validity, generalisability, reliability, and objectivity) are replaced by concepts such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 2005; Patton, 1987). Credibility reflects the accuracy and plausibility of the research study's findings (Beck 1993; Guba, 1981). The following were used to ensure credibility: open-ended interview questions encouraged research participants to guide the inquiry process (Charmaz, 2006); participants' words were reflected in the interview guides of follow-up interviews; member checks were conducted (Flick, 2007; Guba, 1981); a reflexive journal and a post-interview comment sheet were kept to explicate the researcher's thoughts and views; and the utilisation of the literature review was monitored (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). Transferability refers to the research study's applicability to other contexts or populations (Guba, 1981; Rogelberg, 2002). The researcher included in-depth, detailed descriptions of the various stages of the research study to ensure transferability. Dependability refers to the degree to which research findings are consistent and dependable over time (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Guba, 1981). To ensure dependability, a co-coder was asked to code certain interviews for inter-coder agreement. In addition, an audit trail of the research study was compiled to provide method transparency (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Finally, the audit trail, in the reflexive journal, also served to enhance confirmability by showing that it is open to scrutiny through documenting the unfolding steps of the research (Bowen, 2009; Guba, 1981). Confirmability ensures that the research findings are a result of the research, rather than the subjectivity of the researcher, thus showing neutrality (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2005).

Reporting

Charmaz (2006) states that the grounded theory researcher must reflect his/her scientific beliefs and how the study was constructed, through his/her writing. Additionally, the view of the researcher should be woven into the text in such a manner that it persuades the reader while still staying in the background (Charmaz, 2006). In the current study, the researcher attempted to do this, in three ways. Firstly, the researcher utilised the third person narrative. Secondly, the voice of the researcher was reflected in the mini-dissertation by showing how and why decisions were made during data collection and data analysis. Finally, a section holding some of the researcher's reflections on the current study was included within the mini-dissertation.

FINDINGS

The purpose of the current research study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. Specifically, the study investigated how 8 South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and what the coaches felt the perceived consequences of such awareness were. A better understanding of the issues, challenges and benefits of cultural self-awareness, which intercultural coaches experience, may contribute to intercultural competence training, education, practice, and future research in coaching. Table 3 presents the eight major findings obtained from the in-depth interviews juxtaposed against the study's research questions.

Table 3

Research Questions and Corresponding Findings

Research Questions	Findings
How did the coach’s cultural self-awareness develop or change?	Participants indicated that the cultural self-awareness cultivated during coaching developed as part of a general process of cultural self-awareness, which in turn formed part of the participants’ personal development.
Which causes or strategies led to the coach’s current level of cultural self-awareness?	Participants indicated that both intentional strategies and happenstance led to the coaches’ cultural self-awareness.
If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what contributed to this change?	Participants referred to situational and internal factors as contributing to changes in their cultural self-awareness.
How does the coach maintain cultural self-awareness?	Participants maintained cultural self-awareness through self-management involving internal and external strategies.
Which strategies does the coach apply in promoting cultural self-awareness?	Participants referred to pursuing experiences that would cause them to question bias to promote future cultural self-awareness.
If the coach perceived his/her cultural self-awareness to change, what are the consequences of such a change?	The participants indicated that a change in cultural self-awareness held consequences for the personal developmental process, while creating a safe space for the coachee’s development, and keeping the coaching process free from bias.
What meaning do the different coaches attribute to cultural self-awareness in coaching?	Participants used metaphors to explain the meaning of cultural self-awareness. The most prominent metaphors the coaches used were ‘sight’, ‘the past’, ‘internal work’, and ‘managing’.
What other psychosocial processes can be observed?	Participants referred to additional psychosocial processes that occur during intercultural coaching, which can be grouped under macro, meso and micro issues. These issues contextualise the process of cultural self-awareness during intercultural coaching.

The following section includes a discussion on each of these findings and provides detail to support and explain the findings. These details are encapsulated in the participants' quotes. The language of the research participants was used in order to keep the study close to the data; this ensures that the researcher's interpretation closely reflects the perspectives and experiences of the research participants (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). To learn more about and better understand the participants' perceptions of the cultural self-awareness process, the researcher focused on including multiple experiences and views to attain "thick descriptions" (Franks, Schurink, & Fourie, 2006, p. 23). Furthermore, the quotations enclosed represent the complexity and richness of the participants' opinions. The researcher included only the clearest and most representative quotations within this section. In certain cases, the quotations were edited to ensure clarity and brevity.

Finding 1: Participants indicated that the cultural self-awareness cultivated during coaching developed as part of a personal process of cultural self-awareness, which in turn formed part of the participants' greater personal development.

The majority of participants (6 out of the 8) referred to a greater process of personal development and awareness when talking about their intercultural experiences. They perceived self-awareness to be an important requirement for coaches as it helped them during coaching. The participants used self-awareness to monitor how they presented themselves to the coachee. Some participants (3 out of the 8) referred to this as self-management during coaching. A quotation presented below shows how STIIEC06 uses self-awareness in conjunction with self-management while coaching:

If you draw the EQ (*Emotional Intelligence*) model.....If you look at self-awareness, the top left quadrant is....developing self-awareness. This is at the level of the individual and it's invisible because it is on the interior.....This is where coaches work with their clients; helping them to develop self-awareness.....If you look at self-management, this is on the exterior and at an individual level. Here you and I are talking; How do I manage my conversation with you, my behaviour, my impact? STIIEC06

Participants also referred to a process of doing "internal work" on raising awareness around their personal goals and issues. These personal issues often included work on emotional triggers that would stem from coaching, which point to the internal well-being of the coach. One candidate highlighted the importance of the coaches' psychological well-being, as: "...*intervention is dependent on the internal state of mind of the coach*" (SUIIEC07). In a similar vein, another participant said:

You have to continually be developing yourself. You can't expect other people to do that. The other thing is that you have to be in coaching yourself. In therapy, coaching, supervision... otherwise you can't help them. You have to be put on the spot too, so you know what it feels like. STIIEC06

As part of the personal development process, participants indicated the crucial process of engaging with their own culturally-laden values, beliefs, biases and prejudices. Examples of how participants framed the need for cultural self-awareness are depicted through the following:

Sitting in there, you are working with what you've grown up with, what you understand to have informed your worldview. What you understand to be, to have informed your coaching approach... MRIIEC04

There was always this a bit of above and she thought she was a bit above, so obviously it became part of my...kind of thinking...so I've had to work quite hard with that. AUCIIEC01

More than half of participants (5 out of the 8) felt that intercultural coaching stimulated their cultural self-awareness. The following quotations are an indication of how the participants engaged with their culturally-laden values or prejudices linked to coaching:

Um, I learnt a lot about the Chinese people and already its changed my views of China, just as an example and um, it's changed my views about if I coach people to do business in a global world, um, then I am going to bring up a lot of things I learnt about my experience in China. NCIIEC05

...I can link things back to where I think they originate from. TWIIC08

The first finding showed that participants perceived cultural self-awareness as part of other development processes. Participants emphasised the importance of personal development as a coach. Participants also indicated that personal development held a connection to cultural self-awareness experienced throughout their lives. Intercultural coaching experiences are situated within these general life events leading to cultural self-awareness. Through these accounts, participants indicated that they developed cultural self-awareness during coaching. Finding 2 elaborates on the ways in which participants developed cultural self-awareness during these processes.

Finding 2: Participants indicated that both happenstance and intentional strategies led to the coaches' cultural self-awareness

Given that the majority of coaches linked personal development with cultural self-awareness development throughout their lives, it is not surprising that the coaches described both happenstance and intentional strategies leading to cultural self-awareness.

Happenstance

Happenstance represents unplanned phenomena that include events, people, and training courses that had an unintentional or coincidental influence on the development of the coach's cultural self-awareness. Such phenomena had an impact, but were not utilised deliberately to increase the coach's awareness of his/her own culturally-laden prejudices and beliefs.

In talking about how general cultural self-awareness developed, all participants (8 out of the 8) referred to life events that challenged them to think about social rules; their role in the world, who the people were that were different to them, and what those differences meant. These life events were not limited to a particular age or life stage. Some of the ways in which participants conveyed the dynamism of such events are illustrated in the following quotes:

I had an experience of going to work in Australia...Again I think that was probably one of the key moments in my life, just in terms of changing my perspective of life and perceptions of people around me, culture and relevance of culture...TWIIC08

That was just being exposed to black South Africans in the townships. We would actually meet in Braamfontein on a Saturday and all the students would come through and we would sit and we would talk about different issues, relationships, whatever, and what it means to live in South Africa... (NCIIEC05)

...Somewhere in my growing up. I've seen Afrikaans as the persecutor, because of the Apartheid government...I was sent to a farm in Wepener to learn to upgrade my Afrikaans....we were at an Afrikaans family, but I remember feeling a great warmth.... so it was very much a learnt perspective, ja, which got broken down mostly in my adult life as I've been in business... (AUCIIEC01)

Some (3 out of the 8) coaches specifically referred to intercultural coaching as one of the life events that unintentionally led them to engage with their culturally-laden values and beliefs. One participant stated that *"In a Black group, as a White, middle-aged woman, I often wonder what projections are being put on to me by them as well as myself of them"* (AUCIIEC01). Another participant seemed enthused by the learning resulting from intercultural interactions, when he said: *"So I think for me that's been quite exciting learning, dealing with that situation, dealing with those cultural issues in a team coaching situation"* (SUIIEC07).

Individuals from diverse backgrounds, along with family members, friends or colleagues, formed part of the group of individuals that unintentionally led the participants to reflect on their culturally-laden views and beliefs. As stated by one of the participants, *"If I had one, if my prejudice was around class, and that was definitely a huge influence from my*

mother...”(AUCIIEC01), the influence of the views of the participants’ parents had a significant effect on the participants. Other participants (NCIIEC05, SUIIEC07) also mentioned being aware of their parents’ prejudiced views, as:

I’ve got a father who’s very explicit in how he thinks how other people are, he is changing a little bit. But it’s also from his upbringing, using of derogatory words of generalization, I grew up with that. SUIIEC07

He (*father*) was more racist than my mother in that he would have been more, um, Black people are not just different, they are also stupid. They can be incompetent. They are unreliable..... NCIIEC05

In addition, some (3 out of the 8) participants mentioned friends or colleagues who led to their perceiving cultural issues differently. It was often casual conversations on topical issues that would spark participants’ self-reflection on their personal beliefs and views. Some participants (3 out of the 8) talked about the influence of having friends from a different culture, race, or ethnicity. One participant (NCIIEC05) talked about her experience of being in interracial relationships and how it has led her to engage with her culturally-laden beliefs:

I dated a coloured man and I dated a Jewish man... And there were amazing people and I wanted to see them. But then it’s like, I’m going to have to introduce this person to my friends and my family, and is this going to create an issue for them? So I’ve had to sift through it...NCIIEC05.

Utilising previous training knowledge and skill was referred to by some participants (3 out of the 8) as an aid in dealing with intercultural issues. The training that participants referred to varied from psychology, theology, emotional intelligence, social-anthropology, to coaching training. An example of this is highlighted below:

Besides the training, and the weeks, months, years of training around emotional intelligence, Gestalt and culture and that...I was trained as a sociologist and then as a socio-anthropologist.... so that brought me, and made me aware at an early age of my life, about the other. MRIIEC04

In addition to happenstance, all participants (8 out of the 8) referred to intentional or planned strategies that the participants took to develop cultural self-awareness.

Intentional Strategies

The intentional strategies participants took ranged from solitary reflection to utilising structured reflective spaces that are shared with others. All the participants (8 out of the 8) mentioned the primary focus of the coachee’s development as a main reason for developing cultural self-awareness during coaching. Some participants (3 out of the 8) used solitary reflection to aid them

in making sense of what they experienced during intercultural coaching. Solitary reflection referred to reflective processes that were unstructured and performed without the help of others. Similarly, these participants would use solitary reflection to engage with their culturally-laden beliefs and prejudices that would surface during intercultural coaching. The quotations below support the notion that cultural self-awareness develops during, as well as after coaching:

...you're aware of it during coaching, that there's the obvious differences in that belief, but if there's a challenge there, it could be again really only after the coaching session that you might think about it and...wonder if you maybe could or should, from your belief system, do things differently. PrtIIEC03

Ok. The drive home is quite long....So that is my time ... which is so nice because then I can think back about what happened today...and how I could have handled certain situations differently. If I was the one sitting in that chair...how would I have felt if these were the responses that were given to me? BCIIC09

The majority of participants (6 out of the 8) described using reflective spaces that involved other people, to invoke cultural self-awareness. The term 'reflective spaces' was used by AUCIIEC01 and refers to a structured formal process that would stimulate self-reflection. These structured processes happened with the help of other professionals. Not all coaches used the same reflective spaces and similar individuals to stimulate self-reflection. The methods involved would vary from supervision, to therapy, to coaching. Among the descriptions of these spaces were those by NCIIEC05, who said:

So I honestly believe that good coaches should either be in coaching or therapy themselves or be in supervision, or be in a structured support group where they look at their own biases and prejudices. NCIIEC05

More than half of the participants (5 out of the 8) believed that coaching supervision (e.g. one-to-one and/or peer supervision) was instrumental in helping them become aware and understand their own culturally-laden beliefs and prejudices. In his explanation of the importance of supervision, one participant said:

You've got to have supervised coaching....and structured supervision that helps you grow as a coach. It's vital for all coaches to have that; otherwise it is easy to go off track. They think they're doing something right when you in fact could possibly be doing damage...MRIIEC04

Two participants (NCIIEC05, STIIEC06) referred to undergoing therapy as effective in coping with issues resulting from intercultural coaching. These two participants and one other participant (AUCIIEC01) are involved in the supervision of other coaches. NCIIEC05 and

SUIIEC07 said that they use therapy in conjunction with other structured reflective processes such as coaching or supervision. While AUCIIEC01 also utilised a combination of processes, this participant, in contrast to the above participants, preferred using mentoring and coaching to therapy as reflective processes. However, AUCIIEC01 did not deny the usefulness of therapy, opting to use the different processes for different issues.

So when I need, I have two coaches who I will use for different things...And then I have a mentor, who I work with. So I utilise different people for their competencies. AUCIIEC01

Although not involved in supervision of coaches, TWIIC08 corroborated AUCIIEC01's sentiments, and highlighted the importance of being in coaching as an intercultural coach:

...but you just reflect back on the various interactions that you have had with different coaches, um where they've shared some of the techniques of dealing with some of the issues that we are confronted with from time to time in the work environment.

The second finding indicated that the types of phenomena leading to cultural self-awareness varied from happenstance which may have coincidentally led the participants to develop cultural self-awareness, to intentional strategies which the participants consciously and deliberately took. However, participants also indicated that there may be intervening conditions for developing cultural self-awareness. These intervening conditions are discussed as situational and internal factors in Finding 3.

Finding 3: Situational and internal factors contribute to changes in cultural self-awareness.

Situational factors refer to the opportunity to develop cultural self-awareness. This means being in contexts or situations that will stimulate awareness of culturally-laden beliefs and/or prejudices. Such situations were perceived to hold complexity, uncertainty, or an opportunity for learning that would confront the coach on some or other level. More than half of the coaches (5 out of the 8) talked about moving outside their own cultural or racial group to experience a new or previously taboo culture. With 'previously taboo culture' it is meant that the participant had been influenced or raised to believe that a particular culture was taboo, bad or inferior. 'New culture' in turn refers to cultural groups that are unfamiliar to the coach and of which the coach held no negative association. One participant argued that staying within a monoculture held implications:

If I choose that I'm going to deliberately stay in the group area that I grew up in you're saying... 'I'm comfortable with people like me'. You're not questioning if that assumption is even correct. SUIIEC07

Regarding other situations that would challenge culturally-laden beliefs or views, the majority of participants (6 out of the 8) referred to being in a reflective process to challenge their thinking and beliefs. As STIIEC06 said:

You have to help them to be aware of blind spots which mean your blind spots can get in the way of seeing their blind spots. You have to continually be developing yourself...You have to be put on the spot too, so you know what it feels like. STIIEC06

Some of these challenging situations, made participants aware that the coachee may also hold biased opinions of the coach (AUCIIEC01, NCIIEC05):

There was a recent incident where the attack was blatant in terms of authority, in terms of my philosophy...in terms of my background as a psychologist...and it was religious-based. Am I Christian or am I...one of these airy-fairy esoteric people? AUCIIEC01

It can be all sorts. It can be totally different. So, it could be you work at the University so you must be very intelligent...Or, you're a woman, so you must understand child rearing, or you wouldn't understand what it must be like to be a black male. NCIIEC05

Aside from situations that challenge, certain internal factors such as personality characteristics, maturity and abilities were described as contributing to cultural self-awareness. The personality factors referred to attributes like curiosity and openness to learning about the self and others. Two participants (PrtIIEC03, NCIIEC05) talked about curiosity or an inquisitive nature as forming a foundation for cultural self-awareness. All participants (8 out of the 8) talked about themselves and others as being open to learning. In addition to personality factors, more than half of the participants (5 out of the 8) cited being mature or having life experience as contributing towards cultural self-awareness. One participant stated that *"it's a whole ...maybe to use the word maturity that you've acquired by working with people..."* (PrtIIEC03). While another said: *"It was like in my adulthood in my work life that it changed and ja, I look at a Sangoma differently now than what I did"* (BCIIEC09).

All participants (8 out of the 8) described dealing with complexity involving cultural issues. One participant suggested that *"it's working with complexity, and understanding all the many levels, and layers of it..."*(AUCIIEC01). Another suggested:

So I think that when you are able to say, this is me in my complexity, in sitting in a situation of coaching, that other person has got eighteen or twenty identities as well, one might be playing out to you now. That's not who they are only. They are many things. SUIIEC07

Finding 3 showed that participants believed being put in a context or situation that will confront personal beliefs is helpful in stimulating awareness of culturally-laden beliefs and/or prejudices. In addition, it was found that existing personal characteristics may contribute to cultural self-awareness. However, being culturally self-aware may not be enough as is discussed in Finding 4.

Finding 4: The majority of participants maintained cultural self-awareness through self-management, involving internal and external strategies.

In the discussions on the maintenance of cultural self-awareness, the participants identified certain individual factors that collectively refer to a process of self-management. This process implies that they continuously managed their thoughts and behaviour during coaching. This self-management process involved actions taken in the internal and external worlds of the participants, and would especially be used when faced with the coachee's differences. Half of the participants (4 out of the 8) indicated that they would become aware of the impact of their cultural values and stereotypes as the differences between themselves and the coachee arose. However, half of the participants (4 out of the 8) emphasised that even though the coachee's cultural background played a role in the coaching conversation, differences in cultural background were not the main focus of coaching. One participant said that "*I don't sit down with somebody who is Indian for example and we immediately start talking about that, but it very much plays an important part in the conversation*" (STIIEC06). Another said:

...when you are addressing the cultural difference you have to address how do we communicate....it might have its roots in the fact that I am Black and Xhosa and you are Black and Xhosa and I'm White and English, but what the real problem is, the way we talk to each other..... NCIIEC05

Other differences that caused participants to reflect on culturally-laden beliefs and values included sexual orientation, gender, philosophy, worldviews and religion. The quotation below highlights how differences in sexual orientation may similarly cause cultural self-awareness:

If I'm in a situation with a person who is a homosexual, what does that do to me? What I have seen it do to me, it makes me feel very uncomfortable...because of my beliefs and stereotype and stuff. SUIIEC07

To manage reactions to such differences, participants would within themselves try and make sense of what had occurred. All participants (8 out of the 8) believed one should stay critical of one's perception of another. Half of the participants (4 out of the 8) stayed critical through questioning the meaning that these differences held. Two participants (AUCIIEC01 and SUIIEC07) believed that being objective through "stepping back" would aid one in questioning the meaning of differences. Others stayed critical of their cultural beliefs by comparing what they had learnt about persons who were different to them with the actual experience with such a person. Staying critical of personal beliefs is highlighted within the following quotations:

When I was still a youngster...you still believed that these people (*Sangomas*) were dangerous, but now you know, you see they're not really what we were told. BCIIIC09

We look at somebody in front of us. There's five or six things that we...take down and we react to that. Now I think the skill of a good coach is to step behind that and say, 'Ok I'm assuming that'...SUIIEC07

I try very much to be aware... my reality should be tempered with the reality of the other. What I think I know what is triggered within me, I prefer to check it in with the other person. MRIIEC04

One participant made reference to the difficulty of going through such an internal self-evaluation process, as:

I mean the scary thing about that sort of internal work is how far you are willing to go. How far are you willing to question your upbringing, your religion, your racial profiling, your cultural identity? SUIIEC07

While internal management seemed pivotal for cultural self-awareness, all participants (8 out of the 8) were of the opinion that cultural self-awareness should be applied to the coaching relationship. The external application of cultural self-awareness differed between participants. As discussed in the first finding, one participant viewed cultural self-awareness as necessary to manage how one presents oneself to the coachee. Another used cultural self-awareness to aid self-disclosure to the coachee, when she said: "*Because I share who I am, I think they start to relate to the authenticity...*" (NCIIEC05). Others believed when an assumption is identified, it should be checked with the coachee. One participant suggested that "*if you've got a thought, put the thought in and check it out, whether it's a shared thought, and then have a conversation about it. These are crucial conversations*" (AUCIIEC01). Half of the participants (4 out of the 8) indicated the need for calling out assumptions within in the coaching relationship, thus involving the coachee's cultural self-awareness:

We always make an observation of it in our very first chemistry meeting. So I will ask them what are the assumptions that you will make about me that we need to clarify before we can ever work together? And we'll explore what assumptions I may have about you. STIIEC06

Keeping a primary focus on the coachee proved to be a significant reason for participants to maintain cultural self-awareness. One participant said: *"It's not about me. It's about them"* (STIIEC06); while another focused on unconditional acceptance of the coachee, by stating: *"There's that whole thing in the coaching theory about um, unconditional, positive regard"* (SUIIEC07). Participants would keep the focus on the coachee in a variety of ways, such as: starting coaching with the challenges the coachee faced, accompanying the coachee on their developmental journey, letting the coachee decide what to share and where to go during the first coaching contact session, and adjusting the coaching approach to suit the coachee. This focus on the coachee emphasised the reason for the coach to be culturally self-aware:

As coaches we cannot impose our worldviews on our clients. We, it's very important for us to understand who our clients are. Who our particular client is as the client shows up, not to feed our frame, not to feed our worldview, but to understand that the client is the client, is the client, as they are and whatever they bring to the table, that's what we work with. MRIIEC04

Finding 4 showed that participants believed cultural self-awareness as an internal process may not be sufficient. To be helpful in coaching, participants believed cultural self-awareness should be applied to the external environment. Therefore, cultural self-awareness is maintained through internal and external strategies. In addition to Finding 4, participants also indicated the importance of pursuing certain experiences to promote future cultural self-awareness. These experiences are discussed in Finding 5.

Finding 5: Participants referred to pursuing experiences that had caused them to question beliefs, to promote future cultural self-awareness.

The strategies used to maintain cultural self-awareness, were also perceived to aid participants in promoting future cultural self-awareness. To review, participants used internal strategies (e.g. questioning cultural beliefs), and external strategies (e.g. clarifying assumptions between coaching parties) to maintain cultural self-awareness and manage themselves. In addition, half of the participants (4 out of the 8) believed pursuing experiences characterised by different cultural perspectives would stimulate cultural self-awareness. These experiences would inevitably require internal strategies such as comparisons between cultural beliefs and stereotypes and the

participant's current reality. The quotations presented below are a substantiation of the viewpoints that coaches should pursue experiences that cause the questioning of cultural beliefs:

If I think that there are sixteen black people in Soweto that are killing goats all the time and eating raw chicken... it becomes a reality for me, if I don't meet them. If I meet someone and say, 'how often are you killing goats?' and they say 'well, maybe once every three years when there's something significant'...I now know, so it's no longer an assumption. So, by experiencing people you can directly or indirectly check out your assumptions... NCIIEC05

Some participants (3 out of the 8) compared their current reality with what they had been taught, which resulted in their replacing old views with new experiences. Half of the participants saw these 'replacing experiences' as positive. One participant said: "...*I always get so charged when I'm aware of the difference.*" Another participant felt pursuing new cultural experiences will help during intercultural coaching, by saying:

...I think it can help to generate more trust between me and the coachee, especially if I can demonstrate from my side that I appreciate who they are and I've got an understanding of who they are. TWIIC08

PrtIIEC03 supported this notion of cultural appreciation when he said:

...if somebody knowing that we are not sharing the same culture is prepared to share some personal beliefs also, and some personal...then it's something to appreciate, because that person is opening up to you, so, it is all about that. It's how you prioritize that. PrtIIEC03

However, some participants (3 out of the 8) warned about the dangers of using such experiences as a foundation on which to base their views, or to change perceptions with. This notion is emphasised in the following quotes:

It might disadvantage me as well, because sometimes one has preconceived ideas based on ...the limited cultural knowledge that we have or sometimes you have sub-cultures within cultures and what is true for a group of Indian people does not necessarily mean it's true for every Indian person...and you make the mistake of confusing the different religious groups and you just get it all wrong. TWIIC08

It's all about what goes on in me and what I am projecting on to you. I don't even really see you... I mean in an immature state, we are not even seeing, we are processing the other as either an affirmation or...a kind of negation of who I am and what I am and are you like me or not like me. And then I do all the ticks internally, very fast, and you're either my friend or not my friend. But then...we use the other in order to support us. AUCIIEC01

Finding 5 showed that participants felt certain experiences were pursued to promote cultural self-awareness. Additionally, participants also indicated how they would use experiences characterised by different cultural perspectives to stimulate cultural self-awareness. However, participants also warned against the use of such experiences for the purpose of creating new beliefs and perceptions. Similarly to creating new beliefs and perceptions, the process of developing cultural self-awareness may hold additional consequences for the coach. These consequences are discussed in Finding 6.

Finding 6: Participants indicated that a change in cultural self-awareness held consequences not only for the personal developmental process, but also for the coachee and the coaching process.

Changes in cultural self-awareness held consequences for both the coaches' personal development as well as for the coaching process. The overwhelming majority of participants (7 out of the 8) talked about contributing a better understanding of self as consequences for cultural self-awareness. The focus on self is illustrated by the following participant comments:

It's a very important thing for a coach to understand their roots and their culture. But, I don't think it's just about understanding your culture, I think it's about understanding your values and identity...you have to honour who you are, and when you honour who you are, you honour who influenced you. NCIIEC05

If you are going to take up a position of support to other people, you need to have an idea of who you are. Otherwise it is going to be exposed...in the worst kind of possible way. SUIIEC07

Related to understanding self, the participants also expressed consequences for the coaching relationship. As the focus on the coachee was non-negotiable, most of the participants (6 out of the 8) utilised cultural self-awareness to ensure that their perceptions of the coachee stay free from bias. This was explained as:

The idea is that as coaches...especially coaches in our part of the world, we need to take and see people as they show up. Not as we would like them, have them show up. It's very important that we see people as...people. MRIIEC04

In addition to describing a better focus on the coachee, participants indicated the creation of a safe coaching space as a consequence of cultural self-awareness. MRIIEC04 called it "*a sacred coaching space*". Participants indicated that such a significant interrelation space should be protected and honoured by both coaching parties (AUCIIEC01), resulting in the coachee feeling safe and without fear of judgment (MRIIEC04, NCIIEC05, PrtIIEC03). It was believed that this

will allow the coachee to have the freedom to do intimate developmental work. Following are illustrations of participants' comments regarding creating a sacred coaching space:

We'll call it the competitive edge, or the value add of coaching, that it is a safe space, and safe spaces do not have judgment on them, and they do not have labelling. They do not have the boxing or the name calling, because that's what it is. MRIIEC04

A coach creates a space that is safe and that is trusting and a space where you can be who you are, without fear of judgment...you have a relationship of being authentic; a relationship of "I respect who you are"; and "I go where you go". I bring my knowledge with me, but I go where you want to go, so I treat you as an equal partner. NCIIEC05

...as I say, I look at them and I respect them because that is part of tradition. BCIIC09

Ja, and that is with him/her with whatever that beliefs a person has and, and lifestyle, life-practice or whatever else, but you can make an impact or contribute...but you do it in a way that... that always respects the person where he or she is at that point...It's first the person and then whatever else the beliefs or the values, or the whatever else might be part of that person, but it's first, you know, the importance of that individual, respect for that person, yes. PrtIIEC03

To create such a coaching space, some participants (3 out of the 8) talked about extending cultural self-awareness further towards the coaching relationship, by challenging assumptions from both parties. MRIIEC04 perceived it as:

I ask for permission to challenge them and to bring up something and when I do that, it opens a very good space for them to explore and say, 'in the last session on this day, I recall you said something like this.....I'm hearing you say this. Something may have changed in the meantime, or you might be thinking something else, different. Please clarify it for me what your stance is on this'. That gives the person a chance. You allow them the way out safely for them to re-say their position, without hammering and judging them, because a coaching relationship is a relationship of non-judgment. MRIIEC04

Finding 6 revealed which consequences the participants felt stemmed from the cultural self-awareness process. It was found that participants believed a change in cultural self-awareness held consequences for the participants' personal developmental process as it contributed to self-knowledge. Conversely, implications for the coachee and the coaching relationship were identified as additional consequences of becoming culturally self-aware. The participants indicated that a change in cultural self-awareness held consequences for the personal developmental process, while creating a safe space for the coachee's development, and keeping the coaching process free from bias. Similarly to all the findings, Finding 6 stemmed from the

personal accounts of the participants. Participants' constructed tails held various meanings. Finding 7 explores the meanings that participants constructed around cultural self-awareness.

Finding 7: By using metaphors, the meaning of cultural self-awareness was explained. The most prominent metaphors the coaches used were 'sight', 'the past', 'internal work', and 'managing'

Participants attached certain names to objects, events, persons, roles, and settings to explain the meaning of cultural self-awareness. The most prominent metaphors the coaches used, were 'sight', 'the past', 'internal work', and 'managing' respectively.

All participants (8 out of the 8) referred to a form of, or action involving sight, to describe cultural self-awareness. One participant stated, "*I'm blind to the issues of colour...*" (TWIIC08). In contrast, another participant suggested, "*I'm watching my reaction to people's body language to the way they talk, to colour, to race*" (AUCIIEC01). The following quotations highlight cultural self-awareness in the following sight metaphors:

I think the best metaphor would be someone with their eyes wide open. You know. And, and who's also... and who's looking, because your eyes can be open, but you could not be looking. SUIIEC07

...and watching myself. They're holding a mirror up to me, to see myself and I'm, 'Wow, Ok!' When I raise my awareness of that, sometimes I see even more from what they share. MRIIEC04

The overwhelming majority of participants (7 out of the 8) referred to an internal developmental process to describe cultural self-awareness. One participant referred to this internal development as "*You know we're all working towards our own consciousness*" (AUCIIEC01). Some of the ways in which participants used internal work to describe cultural self-awareness, were as follows:

...that you've gotta watch very carefully from a discipline point of view, but also from your internal. What's the work you're doing internally? Are you also buying into the fact these are going to happen? SUIIEC07

So, my self-awareness is in that I am able to accurately self-assess. That's my self-awareness. It's accurate self-assessment in the moment....So my self-awareness is in that I'm able to articulate how I'm feeling, how my thought patterns and trends, my feelings, my emotions. MRIIEC04

More than half of the participants (5 out of the 8) talked about dealing with the past when describing cultural self-awareness and the reasons for becoming culturally self-aware. One participant stated, "*...you are definitely influenced by your past and you need to take that with*

you, you need to take...what worked and also what didn't" (NCIIEC05). The following quotations show the complexity involved in dealing with the influence of past experiences on current culturally-laden beliefs and biases:

My mother was very influential, actually, she was quite prejudiced...she's been cared for by mostly coloured carers and she still sees them in a servant position, which is horrific, but it's not going to change....ja, so I think she influenced me a lot in terms of being quite prejudiced and judgmental, and I had to break that down. AUCIIEC01

What I know is that I need to hold very lightly to my truth and what that means is that what I think I know has another side to it; that I may not yet be aware of, even about myself. MRIIEC04

So my, so my consciousness as I studied came out, you know, what I had kind of, sort of embedded I guess, as a young person started to come out in my studying. So, hence I feel pretty comfortable here in terms of diversity of work and you know. STIIEC06

More than half of the participants (5 out of the 8) used the word 'self-managing' to describe how they applied cultural self-awareness during coaching. Self-management is discussed earlier in the finding section. The link between cultural self-awareness and self-management is best illustrated by the comment of one participant who said:

Self-awareness for me on its own means very little. It's you are aware, then what? For me self-awareness is linked to self-management. If I'm self-aware, I'm better able to self-manage, so it's one end of the same. I have to be deeply self-aware for me to be very efficient in managing myself and my life. MRIIEC04

Finding 7 revealed that in describing how they experienced and perceived cultural self-awareness, participants used certain metaphors. 'Sight' metaphors were used to describe the process of interpreting the actions and thoughts of the coach, as well as describing perceptions of the coachee. 'The past' metaphors were related to individuals and events and making sense of the implications they held for current intercultural experiences. 'Internal work' metaphors referred to the personal development process - so many participants emphasised - while 'managing' referred to the internal and external application of cultural self-awareness. The above metaphors depict how rich and thick the participants' descriptions were. Similarly, the participants' accounts revealed that the process of cultural self-awareness did not develop in isolation. Finding 8 reveals the complex context in which the cultural self-awareness process is embedded.

Finding 8: The participants referred to additional psychosocial processes that occur during intercultural coaching. These processes can be grouped under macro, meso and micro

issues, which contextualise the process of cultural self-awareness during intercultural coaching.

Development of the coaches' cultural self-awareness did not happen in isolation. Various issues around culture and coaching form a dynamic context for the coaches' cultural self-awareness process. These issues were grouped under the micro, meso, and macro contexts of the coaches' cultural self-awareness.

The micro issues that contextualised the cultural self-awareness of coaches referred to other psychological processes participants indicated. Participants described the process of personal identity development (NCIIEC05, SUIIEC07) and developing emotional intelligence (MRIIEC04, STIIEC06). Regarding identity struggles, one participant said, "*I think one of the big challenges for me has been to...to come to terms with my own identity*" (SUIIEC07). Another participant linked developing emotional intelligence with self-observation by suggesting that:

There are many tricks or tips that you can use, to grow your self-observation skills and that emotional intelligence part was one....The good thing about emotional intelligence is that it can be learnt at any stage in one's life. With emotional intelligence you can grow it, and it's constantly growing. MRIIEC04

The meso level includes the context that holds the coaching relationship. The participants referred to various issues around the coaching relationship. Among these were debates around coaching regulations (STIIEC06) with one participant suggesting that "*the main issue right now is that in the constitution for COMENSA, coaches cannot credential themselves. We have to solve that... otherwise we will lose our standing internationally*" (STIIEC06). Half of the participants (4 out of the 8) talked about the advantages and disadvantages of using different coaching models and frameworks. In addition, issues such as who the real client is, the coachee or the organisation, were discussed. Additional ways in which culture and the coaching relationship intercede were also discussed. For example, helping the coachee fit into a different culture to the coachee's own seemed to be a frequent predicament (5 out of the 8), as illustrated by the quotations below:

He worked in a predominantly historically White, English organisation and Christian, British roots; the organisation. So I could have tried to coach him like the white British organisation, which I think many coaches do, because they are employed by the white British company.... But for me it is saying; this is your culture, you are Muslim and Indian and you grew up in apartheid South Africa, how does this work for you in this organisation? NCIIEC05

...somebody who is working at an organisation where she is an African...she is on a pretty pale male, dominated board. There is somebody who is of mixed race; she is having a really difficult time, because the culture that she works with is a collective culture, not an individualistic culture. STIIEC06

The expert role of the coach seemed significant to the coaching relationship. One participant was of the opinion that “...it’s moving from I’m the expert to how can we have a shared conversation where I can use your expertise and my expertise to create something that is more empowering” (AUCIIEC01). Another participant believed the coach should show restraint regarding the expert role when she said:

I try to downplay it. I think you need to have a lot of knowledge and be an expert, but not play it in the role. You come with it, but the face that you present is that of an equal partner. NCIIEC05

While the micro context referred to additional psychological processes that affected the coachee, the meso context held processes that affected the coaching relationship. Moreover, issues relating to the international and societal influence on coaching represent the macro context of the coaches’ cultural self-awareness. With regard to the international issues, one coach described a critical need for African research on coaching:

And understanding that requires a different frame and most books that do not, are not emerging from or do not use examples that illustrate that from the point of view of the South African context, will not give you enough of that. This is why we need to write. There are quite a number of books written now, not many, but a few are written on the South African context, and it’s always very, very helpful to read those. MRIIEC04

Similarly, another highlighted a need for alignment with international coaching standards:

I think the cross cultural one is that of South Africa versus what is happening internationally and in the rest of the world. And the cultural challenge is quite frankly one of education and professionalisation.South Africa is behind the rest of the world.They have just avoided that issue....South Africa has operated in a silo mentality for so long under the years of Apartheid...it is difficult for them to see the importance of international alignment... STIIEC06

Half of the participants (4 out of the 8) tried to differentiate between coaching and counselling, which is also an international debate (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Hart et al., 2001; Sperry, 1993). The following quotations showcase some of the ways the participants differentiated between coaching and psychology:

... the person is well, is whole, he or she is integrated and well, and I cannot assume that the person needs fixing. That's a different modality all together. That's a modality such as...maybe psychology, or therapy, or others, that work a different way. MRIIEC04

It's easy to go into people's worlds, it's not so easy to withdraw yourself and leave the person... intact again. I do see coaches messing with areas that they shouldn't be going to and in our training we make it very clear that how would you know when a conversation is not working...The capacity for a coach to hold somebody in crises is very important. But...Coaching is about exploring the ground with you. It's not about digging, going in to dig the hole and going into the hole with you.' AUCIIEC01

The macro issues also referred to the influence of society, in its past and current form, on the coach, the coachee and the coaching relationship. All participants, except the American-born coach, talked about growing up against the backdrop of Apartheid. However, the American-born coach also mentioned the influence of her own society and her experience of living in South Africa on herself. The participants talked about how society had changed; what meaning it had for them, and how the societal transformation was translated within organisations, and ultimately the coaching relationship. The following are some of the ways participants talked about the societal transformation:

Immediately, we were talking about ethnicity issues, cultural issues around the transformation of society in South Africa, what that meant to this particular client, how he was dealing with it and as we continued our coaching, those issues would come back because they impacted on him so deeply. STIIEC06

...and I think barriers have been broken down in many ways. I'm seeing English and Afrikaans break down their barriers...in business anyway. They've worked together as teams and they've got to know each other, and they've got to appreciate each other....AUCIIEC01

One participant (BCIIC09) spoke poignantly about the deeply rooted and personal effect that Apartheid had on her:

Remember, we grew up in Apartheid. So you know, we always bought at the window, you never went into the shop. So you know, it was part of us. When you walk on the pavement and the Whites come on the one side, you get off the pavement and you make way for them. So ja, it was part of me. BCIIC09

Societal issues were not limited to past experiences as two of the participants discussed the need to be aware of current societal issues as:

....and when you have politicians or political figures playing that, like the Youth League or the AWB, or Steve Hofmeyer says something, it's sparked up again. Then all your growth...is back down again and then

there's the World Cup. We were all excited sitting next to each other, and the Blou Bulle playing in Orlando, and that's great...then we just don't know as a nation. To be fair we grew up grappling with it. I don't think it's all doom and gloom. We're kind of figuring it out and I think we'll get there. SUIIEC07

It's because of this xenophobic thing we saw and people killing each other. Did you know that almost a third of the people that were killed during the xenophobia in April, 2008, were South African because they were darker than the others, and because maybe they did not speak the language or had an accent slightly different from others? MRIIEC04

Finding 8 revealed that participants indicated additional psychosocial processes that occur parallel to the process of cultural self-awareness. Processes at the micro, meso, and macro levels serve to contextualise the process of cultural self-awareness during intercultural coaching. The above finding section presented the eight findings uncovered by the study. The findings were organised to address the research questions. The purpose of this section was to summarise all the collected data in an accurate and comprehensive manner (Bloomberg & Volpe; 2008). The researcher pursued this goal by including finding statements which are supported by participant quotations. Each finding revealed an aspect of the cultural self-awareness process which together formed an interconnected and holistic representation of how South African organisational coaches perceived the process of cultural self-awareness. The section to follow holds a discussion of the study's findings. The purpose of the discussion is to explore and reveal what deeper meaning may exist in these findings. The researcher hopes to achieve this by conducting comparisons between the findings and with past and current research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). These comparisons produced three analytical categories which lay the foundation for the discussion on findings.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this grounded theory research study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches regarding cultural self-awareness. This study intended to research how South African coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness, and which perceived consequences such awareness held for the participants. Eight major findings were extracted from the data and were discussed in the previous section. The section to follow analyses, interprets, and synthesises these findings through a comparison with relevant research and literature culminating in three analytical categories (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

Analytic categories lie at the heart of a grounded theory approach. As part of data analyses, categories are built from codes; additional interviews are conducted to refine categories; while a final coherent view of the research is produced through linking categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Based on the present study's research questions, in-depth interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data. The research data was analysed through a grounded theory approach, which included three analytical phases, namely open coding, axial coding and theoretical coding. Open coding fragmented the data to reveal 'what was going on' in the research (Charmaz, 2006). Axial coding re-examined the data and grouped codes into higher-level analytical categories (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Theoretical coding explicated and refined these categories by returning to the data for a third time and exploring instances in the data that best illustrate the phenomenon under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Ultimately, the grounded theory data analysis synthesised the research study's findings into three analytical categories, which are named developmental paths of cultural self-awareness; application of cultural self-awareness; and levels of cultural self-awareness.

Analytic category 1: Developmental paths of cultural self-awareness

The developmental paths of cultural self-awareness refer to the different ways in which one develops the ability to identify culturally-laden values, beliefs, expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes. Intentional strategies and happenstance phenomena were identified to have led to cultural self-awareness, with situational and internal factors serving as intervening conditions to cultural self-awareness development.

Intentional strategies that led to cultural self-awareness and helped participants during intercultural coaching ranged from solitary reflection to structured reflective spaces that may be shared with others. 'Internal work', along with 'dealing with the past', were metaphors used by participants to help them explain how they developed cultural self-awareness. These findings corroborate with Mezirow (1990) who indicates that critical self-reflection can serve as transformative learning through which intercultural experiences can be better understood. If self-reflection is not done, one may continue to hold an incorrect view of the culturally diverse person (Bhawuk, Sakuda, & Munusamy, 2008). Self-reflective logs, along with coaching supervision, peer coaching, group supervision and the like, are some of the recommended methods to aid the coach in his/her personal development (Gray, 2011; Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Moyes, 2009). Therefore, intentional strategies taken to stimulate self-awareness of culturally-laden beliefs may contribute to the coach's personal development of self.

Happenstance phenomena referred to events, people and training that had an unintentional influence on the development of the coach's cultural self-awareness. These phenomena unintentionally led to self-reflection and align with what is called 'critical incidents' (Landreman, Rasumussen, King, & Xinquan Jiang, 2007). Within such 'critical incidents', the individual is forced to confront cultural values and beliefs, which may result in the identification of prejudices and biases (Landreman et al., 2007). Therefore, reflecting on cultural values and beliefs may mean confronting what has been learnt, as well as from whom or how it was learnt. This confrontation of cultural values may lead to 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957), which refers to a conflict between an individual's personal values, beliefs, and actions, and those of the individuals around him/her, such as prejudiced family members. Conflicting values may occur within periods of 'cultural disequilibrium' where the individual's perspectives are confronted, requiring new ways of bringing balance to their values (Taylor, 1994).

Finally, the self-reflection that stems from such confronting situations may motivate the person to seek continued and additional experiences characterised by diversity (Landreman et al., 2007; Taylor, 1994). The study's participants also indicated the importance of pursuing and being in contexts or situations that will stimulate and promote awareness of culturally-laden beliefs and/or prejudices. Therefore, once a coach has become aware of the existence and impact of his/her culturally-laden values and beliefs, he/she may pursue experiences with people from new or previously taboo cultures. Similarly, internal factors such as curiosity,

openness to learning about the self and other, maturity and the ability to deal with complexity and change, were described as contributing to cultural self-awareness. This corresponds with Deardorff (2004) who identified respect, openness and curiosity as pivotal characteristics for intercultural competence.

Analytic category 2: Application of cultural self-awareness

Participants' accounts indicated that they applied their current cultural self-awareness to stimulate, maintain and promote greater cultural self-awareness. From the findings it can be inferred that participants used cultural self-awareness purposefully during coaching, as well as motivation to pursue experiences with people from other cultures outside of coaching. Future cultural self-awareness is promoted through pursuing experiences that would cause questioning of bias. The latter is discussed in the preceding analytical category, namely the developmental paths of culturally self-awareness.

Participants maintained cultural self-awareness through self-management that included the internal and external worlds of the coach. The participants continually used the concept of 'managing' to explain the meaning cultural self-awareness held to them. The concept of self-management is in alignment with the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC, 2008) which supports self-regulation as part of the coach's self-awareness. They advise coaches to: "Monitor and contain distressing emotions and regulate them so they don't keep you from doing the things you need to do" (Stout Rostron, 2009, p. 216). Considering a primary aim of coaching is the development of the coachee (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006; Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh, & Parker, 2010); the coach needs to ensure that he/she manages how he/she influences the coaching situation. The latter was reflected in participants' use of the metaphor of sight, which they used to explain the reasons for and the manner in which one must keep an unbiased perspective of the coachee.

Participants indicated that observations during a coaching session would serve as a catalyst for actions that would go back-and-forth between the internal world of the coach to his/her external world, that of the coaching relationship. This corresponds with Bennett and Bennett's (2003) belief that intercultural appropriate behaviour is interrelated with thought and emotion. Participants said that they often observed differences between the coach and the coachee during coaching. This supports the view of Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) who believe that

the ability to identify relevant cultural differences, along with a willingness to modify behaviour, is pivotal when interacting with people of other cultures.

To decipher the meaning of these differences, participants referred to the internal process of staying critical of personal assumptions. Hamel, Chikamori, Ono, and Williams (2010) referred to this process of staying critical as the practice of 'reframing'. Hamel et al. (2010) believe reframing would involve becoming aware of an unproductive assumption, stepping back from this assumption, and deciding to work on a new perspective in order to move forward. Bhawuk et al. (2008) provide a different perspective to making sense of assumptions by proposing that intercultural situations are interpreted through three steps. Step 1 consists of scanning the environment to gather information so as to decipher the situation. Step 2 involves comparing this information against cultural norms. Based on these values and beliefs, the social situation is then deciphered. Step 3 produces a set of strategies for intercultural interaction, in other words; decisions are made on which actions are appropriate within the situation. After the three steps, a person may either repeat the steps again which involve questioning the beliefs that they base their actions on, or in contrast, abandon the cultural endeavour. Bhawuk et al. (2008) also mention that a person might have to complete this process several times to determine culturally appropriate behaviour. The internal-external process of applying cultural self-awareness is thus repeated continuously.

Analytic category 3: Levels of cultural self-awareness

The findings indicated that cultural self-awareness cultivated during coaching developed as part of cultural self-awareness in general, which in turn formed part of the participants' greater personal development. The coaching literature recommends that coaches promote continued personal and professional development and learning (COMENSA, 2009; Cox et al., 2009; Passmore & McGoldrick, 2009). Participants indicated the process of engaging with their own culturally-laden values, beliefs, biases and prejudices is situated within personal development. Even though participants of the current study did not directly describe this process of cultural self-awareness in levels, from their accounts it can be inferred that cultural self-awareness is not a static trait. Cultural self-awareness has degrees or shading which can develop and change. Such changes of cultural self-awareness can be compared to 'levels of competence' developed by William Howell (1982). Howell's theory advocates that people move through different stages of competence.

Howell's (1982) unconscious incompetence corresponds with participants' descriptions of coaches who coach from a prejudiced stance, without being aware that one's behaviour, advice or perspectives hold stereotypes or bias towards the coachee (Bhawuk et al., 2008). In contrast, Howell's (1982) conscious incompetence aligns with participants' descriptions of being aware of stereotypes and prejudices, but not knowing how to reconcile the situation or being willing to modify cultural stereotypes. Moreover, Howell's (1982) conscious competence level corresponds with the emphasis from participants that having the motivation and ability to change culturally-laden beliefs and making an effort to eradicate stereotypes and bias from their view of the coachee, are pivotal. As participants indicated, these efforts may occur during coaching through the coach's on going self-management, or it may happen after the coaching session during solitary and structured reflective processes. Howell's (1982) unconscious competence is reflected in the importance participants placed on introspection and self-reflection to identify, understand and modify their culturally-laden beliefs. During intercultural coaching, these coaches may be able to keep a clear focus on the coachee so as to gain a true understanding of who the coachee is in all his/her complexity. Conversely, a coach at the super competence level of cultural self-awareness has internalized the competencies of all of the subsequent levels to such an extent that it has become automatic (Howell, 1982). In addition, such a coach can transfer this learning to a variety of other coaching situations which involve alternative differences between people, as well as transfer the learning to intercultural interactions during life experiences.

The findings also showed that these changes do not happen in isolation. Additional psychosocial issues were identified and grouped under macro, meso and micro issues. The micro issues that contextualised the cultural self-awareness of coaches referred to additional psychological processes. Shaw and Linnecar (2007) argue that to be a good coach extends beyond the coaching training toward the process of being open to learning about him/herself and how he/she is acting in any particular situation. In addition, it is recommended by coaching associations that the coach is engaged in a process of reflecting on his/her thoughts, feelings and behaviour (WABC, 2008; COMENSA, 2007). The Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC) and the Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA) form part of the coaching field that in turn influences the meso level context of cultural self-awareness; that of the coaching relationship. Grant et al. (2010) highlight accreditation controversies, in addition to requests for sound theoretical and research base regarding coaching, better practice, elevated

educational and professional standards, and a need for boundaries between other disciplines, as current issues within the coaching field.

Participants also indicated other social processes that may contextualise cultural self-awareness. These were grouped as macro issues and referred to issues relating to the international and societal influence. This aligns with the sentiments of Price (2006, p.60), who in his appraisal of coaching in South Africa states: “Africa will develop a context specific model that will make us as Africans proud. We will not have to look to the West for our affirmation of who we are anymore. We will be proudly South African and African”. The participants also talked about how the South African society had changed; what meaning it had for them, and how the societal transformation was translated within organisations, and ultimately the coaching relationship. Stout Rostron (2009) elaborates on this and highlights two cultural factors that may influence coaching. The first is the common experiences which form the culture of a society, and the second is the commonly shared values, beliefs and assumptions held about, amongst others, leadership, management and experience. Stout Rostron (2009) believes that a combination of both the organisation’s culture and society’s culture will influence coaching.

The aim of the above discussion section was to provide a coherent view of the findings, while raising the analysis to a higher level of abstraction. This was done through the inclusion of three analytical categories, namely developmental paths of cultural self-awareness; application of cultural self-awareness; and levels of cultural self-awareness. The analytical categories were the product of a comparison of findings both within and between participants, and comparing findings with current and past research and literature (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Although the categories differ in nature, they are interrelated. For example, one may become culturally self-aware through various life events, reaching a certain degree of cultural self-awareness. During coaching one might apply his/her cultural self-awareness in various ways to aid the intercultural coaching relationship, which may or may not lead to the development of a greater level of cultural self-awareness.

In conclusion, this research article depicted the experiences and perceptions of a sample of 8 South African organisational coaches regarding cultural self-awareness. The study was conducted within the constructivist research paradigm and utilised a qualitative research approach. To summarise, the prior discussion emphasised the relevance of cultural self-

awareness to South African organisational coaches. It indicated that different levels, developmental paths, and applications of cultural self-awareness exist amongst South African organisational coaches. In particular, the article illustrated how the various South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness and what consequences this may hold for the coach, the coachee and the coaching relationship within an intercultural setting. It offered an explanation of what coaches feel is required to develop cultural self-awareness within and outside intercultural coaching experiences. It also described the application of cultural self-awareness and its consequences for greater cultural self-awareness, and described phenomena that might hamper or support the development of cultural self-awareness. As a final point, the possibility of different levels of cultural self-awareness and their implications for the intercultural competent coach, was explored.

It is recommended that future researchers continue to study intercultural experiences of coaches, with specific reference to cultural self-awareness. Current and prospective coaches are advised to use cultural self-awareness to successfully manage and transcend their own cultural conditioning to ensure successful interaction during intercultural coaching. This may result in a positive impact on coaching relationships and the different coaching parties involved. Institutions that train and develop coaches are recommended to identify, explore, and understand how cultural self-awareness develops in coaches, so as to develop corresponding intervention strategies aimed at cultivating intercultural competent coaches.

Presenting a discussion of the findings uncovered in the research study warrants reflection on the limitations that such a study may hold. First, the study did not reflect the complete diversity of South Africa, as not all language, ethnicity and race groups in South Africa were represented in the study. For this reason, it must be emphasised that the inferences made in the study are specific to the experiences and perceptions of the sample group of participants under study. It is recommended that future studies include participants from other races, ethnicities and language groups. Second, participant reactivity may have occurred as a result of the emotive nature of the research topic (Maxwell, 1996). The researcher attempted to address this reactivity by keeping the interview focused on the topic under study, providing participants' opportunities to air grievances, and engaging in open and honest discussions with participants on the researcher's intentions. Utilising interviewers from diverse cultural groups is recommended to counter participant reactivity in future studies. Third, the researcher understood the subjective nature of the claims made within this research article. To support the

researcher's claims (Marshall & Rossman, 1995), and to address her possible subjectivity, the researcher conducted member checking, calculated inter-coder reliability, and kept a reflexive journal, amongst others. Finally, as qualitative, grounded theory studies are context specific, generalizability of findings is limited (Locke, 2001). Therefore, the researcher aimed to adhere to the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, to ensure that the current study is a true reflection of the perceptions and experiences of South African organisational coaches with regard to cultural self-awareness.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the current research study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of South African organisational coaches in terms of cultural self-awareness. Specifically, the study investigated how South African organisational coaches develop, maintain and promote cultural self-awareness and what the coaches felt the perceived consequences of such an awareness were. The conclusions of this study follow the research questions and the findings and therefore address three areas: a) the developmental paths of cultural self-awareness; b) applications of cultural self-awareness; c) levels of cultural self-awareness. The following is a discussion of the major findings and conclusions drawn from this research. The conclusion section is followed by a discussion on acknowledged limitations of the research study, the researcher's recommendations, with the chapter culminating in a final reflection of the researcher's experiences whilst conducting the research study.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

3.1.1 Developmental paths of cultural self-awareness

The first finding revealed that participants indicated that the cultural self-awareness cultivated during coaching developed as part of a general process of cultural self-awareness, which in turn formed part of the participants' personal development. A conclusion drawn from this finding is that cultural self-awareness may develop outside of the coaching sphere, as a result of general life experiences. However, this finding also revealed that participants felt intercultural coaching is suitable for the development of cultural self-awareness, which provides scope for the inference that an intercultural coaching context may be used to develop cultural self-awareness in coaches. The difference between general life experiences and the coaching spheres' development of cultural self-awareness may lie with the focus on the coachee.

Considering a primary aim of coaching is the development of the coachee; the coach needs to ensure that he/she has a clear and honest view of the coachee. The latter was encapsulated in participants' use of the metaphor of sight, which they used to explain the meaning that they connected to cultural self-awareness. One way to attain this focus on the coachee, may mean that the coach develops, maintains and stimulates a constant awareness of his/her own culturally-laden beliefs or prejudices that might impact on the intercultural coaching situation.

Therefore, it may be concluded that coaches are motivated to develop cultural self-awareness because of the purpose of coaching, namely that of the development of the coachee.

However, a clearer focus on the coachee may not be the only reason for developing cultural self-awareness, as the findings indicated that the coaches saw cultural self-awareness as part of personal development. The participants used metaphors regarding the past and internal work to help them explain how they developed cultural self-awareness. A conclusion drawn from this finding may be that an awareness of culturally-laden beliefs produces knowledge of self. Exploring the concept of the self whilst interacting with another person may contribute to a deeper understanding of the self.

For example, by reflecting on the meaning of intercultural experiences or differences, other internal processes may be stimulated. However, reflecting on culturally-laden beliefs, values, or prejudices and stereotypes may mean confronting what has been learnt, as well as from whom or how it was learnt. It may open an internal dialogue that explores where the belief comes from and what meaning it held for the individuals and the events involved that had led to the belief in the first place. For example, if a person perceives that he/she holds a prejudice about language, he/she may need to ask where that belief originates from. If he/she finds that a parent advocated those beliefs, it may mean that thoughts and feelings connected to the parent may also need to be explicated. That in turn, may lead to understanding why the parent acted in such a way, which may point to his/her parents' parents, and so on. Parent-child dynamics and cross-generational evaluation are just some of the multiple issues and levels of complexity that may be involved. Therefore, examining culturally-laden beliefs may be a springboard for the exploration of many other personal issues.

In addition, participants indicated that while some utilised solitary self-reflection, others referred to undergoing structured reflective processes to stimulate self-reflection. Given the complex nature and manner in which cultural issues are embedded in other issues, it can be concluded that a process that is objective, safe and reflexive may also be of benefit to stimulate cultural self-awareness. However, this implies that the reflective processes' supervisors, therapists, counsellors and coaches involved in helping coaches with cultural self-awareness, hold expertise to deal with such complex issues.

With regard to intervening conditions of cultural self-awareness as a developing process, the findings revealed that situational and internal factors contributed to changes in cultural self-awareness. Internal factors such as curiosity, openness to learning about the self and other, maturity, and the ability to deal with complexity and change were described as contributing to cultural self-awareness. A conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the coach needs to be emotionally ready, as well as hold the ability to undergo the process of self-examination. The findings also indicated the need to have an opportunity to develop cultural self-awareness. This means moving outside of the cultural 'comfort zone' to being in contexts or situations that will stimulate awareness of culturally-laden beliefs and/or prejudices. The study revealed such situations were characterised by either complexity, uncertainty, or an opportunity for learning which would confront the coach on some or other personal level. Therefore, the coach may need to experience situations that will stimulate and create cultural self-awareness.

3.1.2 Application of cultural self-awareness

In addition to the developmental paths of cultural self-awareness, participants' accounts indicated that they used and applied their current cultural self-awareness to stimulate, maintain and promote greater cultural self-awareness. The coaches also continually used the concept of 'managing' to explain the meaning of cultural self-awareness to them. From the study's findings, a primary conclusion can be drawn that cultural self-awareness is not a static condition that can be reached in one attempt, rather, it is a recursive process that requires continued effort and attention. A related conclusion that can be made from the findings is that cultural self-awareness, as an internal process of the coach, needs to be applied in the external context of the coaching relationship to develop further.

The transfer between the internal the coach's cultural self-awareness to the external the coach's behaviour may need to happen repeatedly during the coaching process. For example, the coach becomes aware of a difference (e.g. the coachee's orientation towards time) within the coaching relationship. The coach realises this makes him or her uncomfortable. The coach perceives the discomfort as an indicator to initiate self-reflection or introspection. The coach reflects on this discomfort through an internal process of cultural self-awareness that includes various internal acts, such as confronting a stereotypical belief that he/she had been taught. Through the process, the coach decides which decisions to make and applies them to the external sphere of the coaching relationship, for example by opening an honest dialogue about

what meaning the concept of time has for both the coach and the coachee. The coaching process continues until the coach notices his/her discomfort around another issue, for example, the male coachee's treatment of female colleagues. Therefore, the internal-external process may be repeated continuously.

Conversely, the study's findings showed that application of cultural self-awareness extends beyond the intercultural coaching relationship, to general experiences with people from new or previously taboo cultures. From these findings, it can be concluded that once a coach has, to some degree, become aware of the existence and impact of his/her culturally-laden values and beliefs, he/she may pursue experiences with people from new or previously taboo cultures. This may be because of a need to replace old values, beliefs or prejudices with the coach's own personal experience of a certain cultural group. A possible conclusion may be that these individuals are repeating the original process, where what the person sees as true is determined by an external party. However, the risk exists that the experience is negative or even harmful to the individual, which may then in return influence the internal belief held about the cultural group. A possible alternative approach to pursuing these experiences may be to use these events, not as providing a 'truth' about others, but rather as an opportunity to reflect on the manner in which one constructs the 'truth' about another.

3.1.3 Levels of cultural self-awareness

The results of the current study may be best represented as an object in a dark room. The room is too dark to see the detail of the object clearly, but the viewer can make out the outline of its shape. The same can be said of the phenomenon of cultural self-awareness. Although the study may not have been able to identify the specific nature of cultural self-awareness in each of the coaches, the experiences and perspectives of participants provided insight into how cultural self-awareness develops and shifts in the life of a coach. The findings led the researcher to conclude that there were different manifestations of cultural self-awareness. The researcher compared these manifestations of cultural self-awareness to Howell's levels of competence which include: unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence, unconscious competence, and finally super competence. Based on the findings that indicated that participants applied their cultural self-awareness to stimulate, maintain and promote greater cultural self-awareness, a conclusion can be drawn about the different manifestations of

cultural self-awareness. The intercultural coach at different levels of competence may, through an application of cultural self-awareness, reach a greater level of cultural self-awareness.

Findings also indicated that participants referred to additional psychosocial processes that occur during intercultural coaching. These processes could be grouped under macro, meso and micro issues which were discussed under the findings. The macro, meso and micro issues serve to contextualise the process of cultural self-awareness during intercultural coaching. A conclusion derived from this is that cultural self-awareness forms but one part of a group of other processes and issues that the coach within the intercultural coaching setting will be confronted with. Future research and exploration of these issues may reveal new insights into the context in which the coach, the coachee and the coaching relationship occurs.

A final conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the coach's cultural self-awareness forms part of a bigger question of "Who am I?". There may be various sides to this overarching question. It may point to how the coach understands his role as a coach, through adhering to coaching regulations; determining who the real client is; or addressing the power dynamics involved in the coaching relationship. Conversely, it may show the coach's understanding of and grappling with issues related to being South African, including how we interact with each other within our society, and what we were taught about these interactions. Alternatively, it may indicate how to manage the self within the context of another, through issues such as emotional intelligence. The process of cultural self-awareness may draw from all these avenues to provide the coach with an understanding of how and why he/she constructs his/her identity. Finally, a conclusion can be made that the cultural self-awareness process may contribute knowledge about who the coach perceives himself/herself to be within the context of another, which in turn may ultimately provide knowledge of the self.

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

The researcher acknowledges that the current study contains certain limiting conditions, some of which are connected to qualitative inquiry and some are connected to the use of grounded theory. Locke (2001) suggests that a qualitative, grounded theory study is specific to its context which means generalizability of findings is limited. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) acknowledge this tendency of qualitative research to be context bound, advising that the reader can decide about its usefulness for other settings. The researcher of the current study has given

careful thought to accounting for the limitations, and has aimed to adhere to the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to ensure the quality of the study.

The researcher's bias and subjectivity may represent a possible limitation. The researcher tried to acknowledge bias and subjectivity by doing member checking, calculating inter-coder reliability and keeping a reflexive journal. This was done to support the interpretations made from the data (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). A related limitation was that the research sample was restricted. The study did not include all the possible language, ethnicity and race groups in South Africa. It took a long time to get the sample; this may be because of the taboo research topic. Therefore, it is recommended that further studies include other races, ethnicities and language groups.

Another acknowledged limitation was participant reactivity (Maxwell, 1996). The researcher noticed that many of the participants took their previous knowledge and experience of self-awareness concepts, and projected it onto the concept of cultural self-awareness. The researcher made a conscious attempt to keep the interview focused on the topic at hand, i.e. cultural self-awareness. Also, the researcher could pick up that some participants were uncomfortable talking about the issue; they seemed to be talking around the issue rather than about the issue. This might be explained by the personal nature of the content and that they did not know the researcher and her intentions. Reactivity was further addressed by taking time to listen to participants' grievances and to discuss what the researcher's intentions were in an open and honest manner. Also, some participants questioned the motivation of the researcher to conduct the particular research study, and were suspicious about her intentions (e.g. using the study to discriminate between races and language groups). According to Maxwell (1996), participant reactivity can never be eliminated completely. Possible recommendations for future studies to counter reactivity might be to have interviewers from various cultural groups; not only White, Afrikaans female researchers.

The researcher recognised these limitations and made an attempt to account for them. She acknowledged her assumptions around the research topic and kept a reflexive journal to explore her own cultural assumptions. Two interviews were coded by an individual who held a different cultural profile to her own. To address the problem of participant reactivity, the researcher continued to reflect on how and in what way she might be influencing the individual participants, in addition to having discussions on such issues with her research supervisor.

Furthermore, she made a deliberate attempt to create a dialogue that was honest and open with the participants.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher offers recommendations based on the findings, analysis, and conclusions of this study. The following recommendations are made on the basis of the results obtained from the research study: a) recommendations for further research; b) coaching education and training programmes; c) coaching clients; and d) current and prospective coaches.

3.3.1 Recommendations for future research

Future research that engages participants on a more personal level, for example personal diaries, may minimize the influence of the interviewer, and may provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on their thoughts and feelings in an honest and truthful manner. Studies investigating if coachees experience coaches as prejudiced, and how this affects their experience of coaching, may contribute to understanding the cultural self-awareness of coaches; while research on coaches from countries different to South Africa is recommended to determine if the phenomenon of cultural self-awareness occurs within other coaching contexts.

Future research on the nature of cultural self-awareness as a phenomenon is warranted. The current study found coaching to be an appropriate space for developing cultural self-awareness. It is recommended that future research explore the phenomenon of cultural self-awareness within other occupations. One of the internal factors contributing to cultural self-awareness was found to be maturity. Based on the assumption that maturity is not always present within young individuals, it would add knowledge to determine how cultural self-awareness manifests within a younger age group of coaches.

3.3.2 Recommendations for coaching education

Coaching education and training programmes should consider including a training module that focuses on intercultural competence, so as to teach new coaches to tap into their cultural self-awareness. Having a component of self-management that focuses on the looping process of cultural self-awareness may be beneficial. In addition, the current research may provide useful information to coaching education programmes to connect the levels of the coaching courses to levels of competence. It is recommended that reflexive exercises regarding cultural self-

awareness be attributed to each educational level. For example, at first level, exercises will explore conscious competence of cultural self-awareness; the levels that follow, might in turn, include exercises linked to foster unconscious competence. Trainers and faculty should highlight personal development with these courses to teach prospective coaches how to conduct in-the-moment reflection and/or solitary self-reflection after coaching. In addition, the emphasis on on-going self-reflective processes through the duration of the coach's career should be emphasised.

3.3.3 Recommendations for coaching clients

The coaching client may include the organisation and/or the coachee. Possible recommendations for each type of client are delineated as follow.

3.3.3.1 The organisation

Organisations may use this study to understand what effect the coach may have on the coaching relationship, and then provide training to in-house coaches on intercultural competence. If the coach is an external consultant, the organisation can use the level of cultural self-awareness as possible selection criteria to recruit the most competent coach for the job.

3.3.3.2 The coachee

Through this study, the coachee may become aware that coaches differ with regard to reactions to intercultural situations. This may help the coachee to make an informed decision regarding the choice of coach. A possible solution might be to have clarification sessions about culture and how the different coaching parties perceive it prior to the start of coaching. Although conversations such as these may be difficult, it might still be in the best interest of the coachee, as underlying issues that affect the dynamics of the coaching process may be identified and negotiated before the coaching process begins.

3.3.4. Recommendations for current or prospective coaches

Based on information revealed through the current study, individuals contemplating or currently involved in coaching should:

- engage in a continues process of cultural self-awareness and personal development;
- utilise solitary and professional reflective mechanisms to gain self-knowledge;

- be exposed to intercultural situations or situations involving human differences which contain/cause a degree of internal discomfort. The discomfort should be used to stimulate self-reflection and introspection sparking cultural self-awareness.

3.4 Researcher personal reflections

As we come to the close of this study, I would like to share with you some thoughts on the research journey. I found myself being immersed in an ocean of line-by-line codes, trying to drill down to the core of what participants thought cultural self-awareness was, and then moving up again through axial coding and theoretical coding to provide a general view of the data. It was a long journey with peaks and valleys, but ultimately, the learning I experienced was beyond value.

I have had the great pleasure to sit with and listen to the personal stories of the research participants. Each individual held great wisdom, depth and knowledge, and I was honoured that they had shared their thoughts and experiences with me. From these tales, I learnt that there is a need to talk about culture in all its complexities. I also learnt that we, as South Africans, don't only need to work together across race, language, national and cultural differences; but more importantly, that we want to work together beyond our differences. However, I also understand that not all South Africans hold this view. Similarly, I realised that culture was not a singular concept that you can predict with a formula or construct with a recipe. I now know it is a concept that is embedded within other concepts, and that is not easily and quickly understood. Also, I realise my humble view or perception of cultural self-awareness is but one, and that others may disagree and contribute their own perspective to the 'dialogue' about culture.

That being said, through the experiences I had during interviews, I realised that just because an individual believes that he/she is aware, does not mean complete awareness has been attained. I believe some of the jokes and examples used by participants may have offended other individuals in my position. If I could use a metaphor here to explain: Cultural self-awareness may be represented by a bright light hanging in the middle of the ceiling of a dark room. The light illuminates what falls directly under the light. However, the room is expansive and the light cannot reach the corners of the room. Those corners remain enclosed in obscurity and darkness. Cultural self-awareness is like that light bulb, it clarifies the assumption that it is shown. Biased jokes or small talk grounded in assumptions may represent the coach's personal 'darkened corners'. In the dark room, you would need to move the light to illuminate the

darkened corners. Similarly, the intercultural coach needs a deliberate and on-going process that will confront his/her cultural beliefs, values, prejudices and assumptions. Through exploring the darkened corners, the content of the room is revealed. Similarly, through the process of cultural self-awareness, the ultimate goal of knowing one's self may be realised. It is this self-knowledge that may empower the individual to become an intercultural competent coach.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900

Tel: (016) 910-3111
Fax: (016) 910-3116
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Intercultural experiences of South African business coaches

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this grounded theory qualitative study is to explore the intercultural experiences of South African organisational coaches. The study will specifically attempt to discover the cultural self-awareness of South African organisational coaches when immersed in coaching individuals with different cultural backgrounds to their own. As a South African coach working within a cross cultural setting, you are being invited to participate in this study. The benefit of this research to you and to future coaches lies in contributing a deeper understanding of how cultural self-awareness affects the coach and the coaching relationship.

Participation in this study will require three hours of your time at the most (three one hour interviews) and will consist of answering a set of interview questions posed by the researcher. Interviews will take approximately one hour to complete and a second or third interview will occur if any follow-up questions are deemed necessary by the researcher. No one will be asked to do more than three interviews. All interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed and then submitted to you for review, verification and comment. The audiotapes will be erased after transcription.

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. The data from the interviews will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator during the study and for two years after the study has been completed. The information obtained in this study will be used primarily for the principle researcher's mini-dissertation thesis, but parts may also later be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the principle researcher at 071 39 22 444 or you may contact the supervisor, Dr Danie du Toit at 016 910 3410. There are no known risks or discomfort associated with this research. Participants will not be compensated. Finally, you are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time before the data is analysed, without adversely affecting your relationship with the principle researcher or the North-West University.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to participate, having read and understood the information presented. A copy of this consent form has been provided to you to keep.

Printed Name of Research Participant

Signature of Research Participant

Date

APPENDIX B: INTRODUCTORY LETTER



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900

Tel: (016) 910-3111
Fax: (016) 910-3116
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Dear Sir/Madam

Investigating the intercultural experiences of South African business coaches

I am a Masters student in Industrial Psychology at the North-West University. As part of this degree, I am undertaking a research project that will explore the cultural self-awareness of South African business coaches. Simply put, cultural self-awareness is the ability of a person to identify their own culturally-laden values, beliefs, expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes held towards a person from a different cultural heritage to their own.

The benefit of this research to the field of coaching is that it will contribute a deeper understanding of how cultural self-awareness affects the coach and the coaching relationship within a cross cultural coaching session. I am inviting South African coaches that work with coachees from different cultural backgrounds to their own, to participate in this study. As an experienced South African business coach, you are invited to participate in this study.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It will require taking part in three interviews that will consist of answering a set of interview questions. No interview will take more than one hour to complete and a second or third interview will occur only if follow-up questions are deemed necessary. No one will be asked to participate in more than three interviews.

It is very important for participants to speak as freely as possible as I would like to understand the unique experiences of South African business coaches. All interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed and then submitted to you for review, verification and comment. The interview responses collected will form the basis of my research project and results will be combined on an anonymous basis. It will not be possible for you to be identified. All material collected will be kept confidential. No other person besides my supervisor, Dr Danie du Toit, and I will have access to the collected information. The mini-dissertation will be submitted for marking to the School of Human Resource Sciences at the North-West University. An article may be submitted for publication in scholarly journals or presented at scientific meetings. Audio tape recordings will be destroyed after transcription.

Should a candidate feel the need to withdraw from the project, he/she may do so by notification at any time before the data is analysed.

If you would like to participate in this study or have any questions regarding the project, please contact me at yolande_coetzee@yahoo.com or 071 39 22 444, or my supervisor, Dr Danie du Toit, at danie.dutoit@nwu.ac.za or 016 910 3410.

Kind regards,
Yolandé Coetzee

APPENDIX C: INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Initial open-ended question

Please tell me about your experiences with Coaching someone from a different cultural background to your own?

Initial interview questions utilised during the first interviews:

- What really takes place during a South African coaching session?
- What are the difficulties and challenges of a cross-cultural mentoring relationship?
- What characteristics impact on the coaching relationship?
- Does your intercultural coaching experiences make you more aware of your own cultural background? And if so, how?
- Tell me about your background.
- What does your cultural group mean to you?
- What do you like and dislike about your cultural group?
- Where did you grow up and what other cultural groups resided there?
- What are your earliest images of people from other cultural groups? What information were you given as a child about them?
- Do your intercultural coaching experiences influence your perceptions of other cultural groups? And if so, how?
- Will your intercultural coaching experiences influence your future coaching? And if so, how?
- What do you already know or understand about yourself regarding interacting with someone from a different cultural background?

APPENDIX D: Excerpt from Co-Coder Information Guide

CO-CODER GUIDE

1. WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT?

The purpose of this grounded theory qualitative study is to explore the intercultural experiences of South African organisational coaches. The study will specifically attempt to discover the cultural self-awareness of South African coaches when immersed in coaching individuals with different cultural backgrounds to their own. Simply put, cultural self-awareness is the ability of a person to identify his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs, and expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes held towards a person from a different cultural heritage to their own. The research will attempt to contribute a deeper understanding of how cultural self-awareness affects the coach and the coaching relationship.

3. THE OPEN CODING PROCESS

In grounded theory we don't start with ideas or theories that already exist, so we don't try and squash the data into pre-determined boxes. We examine the data with an open mind and fresh eyes, asking: *What is going on here?* Open coding involves taking segments of data (e.g. word, line, sentence or paragraph) and considering it in detail and comparing it with each other (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Data is fragmented, opening it up into all the possible ways in which it can be understood. So in the end; open coding generates large numbers of code which give us a picture of what is going on.

4. ETHICS

Before we start with what and how to code, I have to discuss the ethical implications. I endeavour to uphold ethics and confidentiality throughout my study. Please note that you, as the co-coder, will be asked to complete a document stating your commitment to upholding ethical standards and confidentiality set out in my research proposal. I enclose these standards at the end of this co-coder guide.

5. STRATEGIES FOR CODING

- Very important: Read the photocopy by Charmaz (2006)!!!
- Take each text segment and reflect on it = break it open.
- Read what the interviewer's question is, but code only the respondent's text.
- Analyse and write what you see by coding the text segment.

APPENDIX E: PILOT INTERVIEW'S INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PILOT STUDY

Intercultural experiences of South African business coaches

You are invited to participate in a pilot study to test the feasibility of an interview guide which will be used to conduct a research study exploring the cultural self-awareness of South African business and executive coaches, when coaching individuals with different cultural backgrounds to their own. Simply put, cultural self-awareness is the ability of a person to identify his/her own culturally-laden values, beliefs, and expectations, which may include biases, prejudices and stereotypes held towards a person from a different cultural heritage to their own. The benefit of this research to you and to future coaches is contributing a deeper understanding of how cultural self-awareness affects the coach and the coaching relationship. The interview guide will be used to conduct in-depth, open ended interviews exploring this topic.

If you agree to partake in this study, you will be asked to:

- participate in a taped, interactive interview designed to provide answers to open ended questions;
- provide detailed feedback identifying any questions or areas of the interview which may be confusing, upsetting, or raise concerns. You will be asked to provide any feedback which you feel would improve the interview guide and the interviewing process;
- this feedback may be positive, negative or both. It is important to share honest feedback in order to ensure the interview guide and process are appropriate for conducting this study. Specifically, it is important that the guide and process are clear, understandable and completed within a suitable timeframe. All information conducted during the pilot study will remain strictly confidential and any identifying information will be destroyed upon completion of the interviews.
- The interview is expected to take approximately an hour to complete.

There are no known risks or discomfort associated with this research. Participants will not be compensated. Your participation in this pilot study is voluntary. Finally, you are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time during the study without adversely affecting your relationship with the principle researcher or the North-West University. If you feel stressed during the study you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel may be uncomfortable to answer.

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. The data from the interviews will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator during the study and for two years after the study has been completed. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside this research project. The researcher will not include any identifying information in reports of the study. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the principle researcher at 071 39 22 444 or you may contact the supervisor, Dr Danie du Toit at 016 910 3410. There are no known risks or discomfort associated with this research. Participants will not be compensated.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to participate, having read and understood the information presented. A copy of this consent form has been provided to you to keep.

Printed Name of Research Participant

Signature of Research Participant

Date