COLOUR AS COMMUNICATION IN SELECTED CORPORATE VISUAL IDENTITIES

ELIZMA FOUCHé (B.BK)

Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Magister Artium

in Business Communication

in the School of Communication Studies
at the Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys

Supervisor: Me H. E. de la Harpe
Co-supervisor: Dr D.L.R. van der Waldt

2003
Potchefstroom

PREFACE

I would like to thank the following people and organisations:

- My parents, for their continuous support, their endless patience and trust, who continued to encourage me.
- My supervisor, Me. Hanri de la Harpe, for her patience, support and guidance. Also my co-supervisor, Dr. De La Rey van der Waldt, for his advice.
- My friends, who were always there when I needed them.
- The personnel of the Ferdinand Postma Library, especially Marlene Wiggle, for the article searches and support.
- The three cell phone organisations, Vodacom, Cell C and MTN and the respondents for their willingness to participate in this study and taking the time to complete questionnaires.
- Jabulile Khumalo for the provision of contact information and Vivian Le Roux for her valuable insight.
- Lana Faasen, who assisted me in locating the graphic designers and respondents.

ABSTRACT

A logo lies central in an organisation's visual identity system and it is a way of communicating fundamental aspects about the organisation, such as the organisation personality or the organisation's mission and vision. The logo, or corporate visual identity, could be seen as the organisation's visual shorthand that summarises these fundamental aspects. A design element such as colour can be an expressive tool in terms of visual identity. The use of a particular colour in the logo of an organisation conveys a specific message about that company's identity and personality through the meaning and symbolism that is attached to the colour. The corporate colour scheme of an organisation can also aid in communication without being displayed in context of the visual identity. The combination of both verbal communication such as text, and visual communication such as images, through a design element like colour, could provide an effective method of conveying information.

The nature of this study is descriptive. It examined the role played by colour in an organisation's visual identity as a communication tool. The study followed a qualitative approach, making use of a literature study and a case study approach. In the literature study, the role of the graphic designer, the visual identity and a design element like colour in the context of corporate communication were examined. The sources of evidence used for the case study approach, were questionnaires, as well as a colour analysis of the corporate colour schemes of each of the selected case organisations as utilised in their visual identities.

The research project attempted to determine the role of colour as communication, as well as the motivation behind the use of a particular colour, should such a motivation exist, and the communication intended behind each colour. The project also attempted to determine the target markets at which the communication is aimed; the research done by each of the case organisations regarding colour symbolism and the suitability of the colour regarding the target markets; and the importance attached to colour as a communication tool. These questions were investigated through the use of

the questionnaires. The colour analysis was done to function as a control mechanism to, for example, determine whether the intended message behind colour correlated to the perceived message as determined by the colour analysis.

The results from the questionnaires and colour analysis used in the study showed that colour does play an important role in the selected case organisation's visual identities. The results of the study also found, however, that regardless of how important colour was viewed as a method of communication by the respondents, certain factors exist which influence the effectiveness of colour as a communication tool.

Keywords: Logo, colour, visual identity, colour research, colour symbolism, colour preference, corporate communication, corporate identity, corporate image.

OPSOMMING

'n Logo lê sentraal in 'n organisasie se visuele identiteitstelsel en is 'n manier om fundamentele aspekte van die organisasie, soos die organisasie se persoonlikheid, of die organisasie se missie en visie, te kommunikeer. Die logo, ook genoem korporatiewe visuele identiteit, kan gesien word as die organisasie se visuele snelskrif wat die fundamentele aspekte opsom. 'n Ontwerp element soos kleur, kan 'n veelseggende werktuig wees in terme van die visuele identiteit. Die gebruik van 'n sekere kleur in die visuele identiteit van 'n organisasie se logo, dra 'n spesifieke boodskap omtrent die organisasie se identiteit en persoonlikheid oor deur die betekenis en simbolisme wat aan die kleur geheg kan word. Die korporatiewe kleurskema van die organisasie kan ook bydra tot kommunikasie sonder dat dit in konteks met die visuele identiteit gesien word. Die kombinasie van beide verbale kommunikasie soos teks, en visuele kommunikasie soos byvoorbeeld 'n visuele beeld, deur 'n ontwerpelement, soos kleur, kan 'n effektiewe metode voorsien om inligting oor te dra.

Die aard van die studie is beskrywend. Dit ondersoek die rol wat deur kleur gespeel word as 'n kommunikasiemetode in die organisasie se visuele identiteit. Die studie volg 'n kwalitatiewe benadering, en maak gebruik van 'n literatuurstudie sowel as 'n gevallestudie benadering. In die literatuurstudie word die rol van die grafiese ontwerper, die visuele identiteit en die ontwerp element – kleur – ondersoek in konteks met korporatiewe kommunikasie. Die bronne wat gebruik is vir die gevallestudie, was vraelyste, sowel as 'n kleuranalise van die korporatiewe kleurskemas van die geselekteerde gevallestudie organisasies, soos gebruik in hul visuele identiteite.

Die navorsings projek het gepoog om die rol van kleur as kommunikasie, sowel as die motivering agter die gebruik van 'n spesifieke kleur, indien so 'n motivering bestaan, sowel as die beoogde kommunikasie agter elke kleur, te bepaal. Die projek het ook gepoog om die teikenmarkte op wie die kommunikasie gerig is, die navorsing wat gedoen is omtrent kleursimbolisme en gepastheid van kleur wat betref die teikenmarkte, sowel as die

belangrikheid wat aan kleur as 'n metode van kommunikasie geheg word, te bepaal. Dié vrae is ondersoek deur die gebruik van die vraelyste. Die kleuranalise is gedoen as 'n metode van kontrole, om byvoorbeeld te bepaal of die bedoelde boodskap agter die kleur gebruik, ooreenstem met die waargeneemde boodskap in die kleuranalise.

Die resultate van die vraelyste en kleuranalise het getoon dat kleur wel 'n belangrike rol in die visuele identiteite van die geselekteerde gevallestudie - organisasies speel. Die resultate van die studie het egter ook getoon dat ten spyte van die waarde wat deur respondente aan kleur as 'n metode van kommunikasie geheg word, daar sekere faktore is wat die effektiwiteit van kleur as 'n metode van kommunikasie beïnvloed.

Sleutelwoorde: Logo, kleur, visuele identiteit, kleur navorsing, kleur simbolisme, kleur voorkeur, korporatiewe kommunikasie, korporatiewe identiteit, korporatiewe beeld.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the problem statement, the research questions that can be formulated from the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research design and the aims of each chapter. In chapter four, the focus of the study, as well as the methodological approach and procedures will be discussed in greater detail.

1.1 Problem statement and orientation

According to Argenti (1998:74) a logo lies central to an organisation's visual identity system and is a way of communicating fundamental aspects of the organisation. Colour plays an important role in the design of such a logo since it is associated with meaning and because of this, serves as an important image cue.

The value of colour is then more than just a method to attract attention or to facilitate recall, because by functioning as an image cue, it speeds up information processing (Edell & Staelin, in Lohse & Rosen, 2001). Colour can be an expressive tool in terms of visual identity and the use of a particular colour in the logo of an organisation could potentially convey a specific message about that company's identity and personality.

While graphic designers are generally aware of the meaning of colour and the fact that it has the potential to communicate a particular message, the same might not always be true for the management of an organisation or company. It would therefore be important to determine and highlight the meaning or symbolism of colour with regard to the communication of the organisation's identity.

Compared to the research done on colour the field of corporate communications is relatively young. The need for corporate communications grew out of the field of public relations during the 1970's, when organisations had to start adapting to a changing environment (Argenti, 1998:50). A Nexus

search also indicates that very little research has been done to determine the relationship between the fields of graphic design and corporate communication. A need therefore also exists to investigate the way in which the two fields complement each other and the role that is played by design and design elements in the communication process. The two fields should not be separated completely, because graphic design, although it could be considered the more practical side of communication, can contribute greatly to an organisation's success when successfully incorporated into the organisations communications strategy.

From the above-mentioned background, the following question can be formulated and needs to be addressed: *What is the communicative role of colour in the logos of selected organisations?*

1.2 Research questions

The formulated question above can be expanded into the following research questions:

a) What is the motivation behind the selected case organisations' use of a particular colour scheme in their visual identities?

b) What does the organisation want to communicate through the colour/s used in the visual identity?

c) At which target markets are the colour schemes of the visual identities of the selected case organisations, aimed?

d) What research was done by the selected organisations determine the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets?

e) How important is colour as a communication tool to the selected case organisations?

1.3 Objectives of the study

When the research questions listed above are investigated, the following objectives can be formulated:

a) The selected case organisations' motivation behind the use of the particular colours.

2

b) The intended communication behind each case organisation's colour scheme as used in the visual identity.

c) The target markets at which the colour schemes of the visual identities of the selected case organisations are aimed.

d) The research done by the selected case organisations on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets.

e) The importance of colour as a communication tool to the organisation.

1.4 Research design

Two approaches to find answers to the research problem posed above were used in this study, namely a literature study and a case study approach. In this section, the research design will be discussed briefly and in chapter four it will be investigated it in greater depth to illustrate the relationship between the research design and the research problem, questions and objectives.

1.4.1 Literature study

The first aim of the literature study was to examine the role of graphic design and specifically a design element such as colour, in the field of corporate communication and to examine its place within the corporate communication function. It secondly aimed to examine the importance of the corporate colour scheme in the organisations' overall visual communications and furthermore aimed to provide background information on corporate communications, as well as on colour and certain aspects of colour that influences its communication potential.

The literature review of this study investigated corporate communication, the role of corporate image and identity, and the position of the visual identity within the corporate identity. The study focused on colour, with specific reference to colour as communication, colour-conditioning, factors that influence reaction to colour, research done on colour, and the meanings or symbolism that could be attached to colour. The following sources were used during 2002 and 2003 for this literature study:

- journal articles found online (Internet): MCB Emerald, and EbscoHost (Business Source Premier and Academic Search Premier)
- the Internet
- literature sources (books).

1.4.2 Research procedure

The other research method employed in this study was a qualitative case study approach where self-administered questionnaires and a colour analysis were used. Self-administered questionnaires were forwarded to the selected organisations and their graphic designers in order to determine the answers to the research questions described above. The respondents selected were the designers responsible for the development of the logos and the marketing managers of each of the organisations. Qualitative colour analyses were done on the selected logos and their application to printed media, which included handouts, brochures, flyers and booklets. The colour analysis involved an investigation into symbolism and meaning attached to the colours. It investigated what the colours used by each of the selected case organisations could potentially communicate about the organisation and to whom it could potentially communicate. The aim of the colour analysis was to determine the level of consistency between the intended communication through the organisation's colour scheme and the message that perceived by the viewer or target markets.

1.5 Aims of each chapter

This study, which has been approached from both a graphic design and a corporate communication perspective, consists of seven chapters. This chapter is intended as an orientation and contains the basic concepts and motivations for this study. Chapters two and three investigate via the literature study, the visual identity in context of corporate communication. Colour is investigated with specific reference to colour as communication, colour conditioning, factors that influence reaction to colour, research done pertaining to colour and meanings or symbolism of colour. The research design and methodology used in this study are discussed in greater depth in chapter four. The results of the colour analysis of the visual identities and the

questionnaires are discussed in chapters five and six, while the recommendations and conclusions are given in chapter seven.

1.6 Terminology

1. *Stakeholders*: the stakeholders are the different groups of people, audiences and target markets, internal and external, with which the organisation wants to communicate.

2. *Corporate colour scheme*: this refers to the colours of the organisation, as used in their visual identity and throughout the organisation's visual communication.

3. *Visual identity* (also referred to as 'logo' in graphic design): the term logo is used to collectively refer to the elements of the visual identity – corporate name, symbol, font type, colour and slogan, when integrated into one unified symbolic image (see section 2.7).

4. *Mother brand:* in the context of this study, this refers to the main visual identity of the organisation.

5. *Competitive colour scheme:* in the context of this study, competitive colour scheme refers to a colour scheme that competes with that of the organisations competitors regarding for example recognition and differentiation from competitors.

CHAPTER 2
VISUAL IDENTITY IN THE ORGANISATION

In this chapter, corporate communication and the place of corporate image and corporate identity within corporate communication will be discussed. Corporate identity systems, stakeholder audits and corporate branding will also be examined, as well as the visual identity and the design element colour. Before corporate communication and the place of the visual identity within the context of corporate communication are discussed, however, it is important to have an understanding of visual communication, as well as graphic design and corporate communication. This understanding will enable one to place graphic design, visual communication and corporate communication in context of one another and to understand how they work in conjunction to contribute to the success of an organisation's overall communication. Visual communication could be seen as the sharing of information through a purely visual means. A great deal of information is contained in the visual object. It provides new ways to persuade, describe, depict, and characterise, as well as new ways to envision patterns of behaviour and the flow of information (Lindstrom, 1999).

According to Zimmer and Zimmer (1978:13), people get 80% of their information from what they see and many kinds of information can be communicated visually without words. Lindstrom (1999) states that the average person is exposed to more than 3000 visual images per day. This means that for the average person, visual overload is just as real as information overload. Lindstrom (1999) also states that this visual overload is caused by the rapid development of technology and that people in the business community are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that information and ideas must be communicated quickly and with the maximum understanding. Visual communication is also receiving an increasing amount of attention from organisation's audiences. According to Argenti (1998:79) this is due to people's increasingly visual focus and exposure to visual

communication shorthand in television, magazines, brochures and other forms of marketing.

According to Argenti (1998:76) the main method of differentiation for consumers between different organisations, are their respective corporate image and identity. He states that this is due to factors like an increasingly aggressive industry, competition coming from all over the world, and organisations having to manage with limited resources. According to English (1998:8) each area of commerce is in itself a culture. This makes it important for each organisation or company to clearly define their identity and to convey a unique message, and through this, distinguish themselves from the competition found in that particular "culture". This is paramount to the success and survival of a business.

Lindstrom (1999) concurs with both Argenti and English, and further states that an organisation's visual message is no longer secondary to the written or spoken message. It is no longer simply an image; it is a method of communication. Visuals start to play an increasingly important role in defining a brand and creating an image. This means that an organisation's ability to sustain itself starts to depend on its ability to differentiate itself. Colour could potentially be a powerful tool in this process of differentiation. Consumers often make distinctions about generic products based on the organisation's image and identity, rather than the product itself.

From the above, one can conclude that the graphic designer is therefore not only involved in production of an image, but also in the development of the intended communication and the translation of this communication into a visual message. An organisation hires a designer when they need advice on how to get their message across in the best possible way. This means that the graphic designer plays an important role in an organisation's overall communications, especially corporate communication and the development of the organisation's visual identity.

Litt (1998) defines graphic design as follows: it is a visual communication design with an emphasis on conveying information with meaning and significance. It aims to communicate a message. It is therefore the process and art of combining text and graphics and communicating an effective message in the design of logos (visual identity), graphics, brochures, newsletters, posters, signs, and any other type of visual communication. It is also the integration of the technical and aesthetic aspects of colour, type, illustration, photography, and media to develop a creative solution for a customer's communication needs. Graphic design, and specifically the visual identity and elements like corporate colour scheme, play an important role in an organisations communication strategy.

To communicate effectively on a visual level, the various groups involved in the communication (the designer, organisation, the target markets of the organisation, etc.) need to be visually literate to a certain extent. Visual literacy is the ability to understand a given visual statement and being able to express oneself in at least on visual medium. Wilde (1991:3) defines this visual statement as an object or collection of objects assembled for the purpose of being seen. Wilde (1991:1) also states that the visually literate person understands two vocabularies: the marks, symbols and visual elements that are used to make a visual statement in any medium and the words that are used to describe our perceptions and our efforts.

This visual statement involves five elements: the maker (the designer), a receiver (the audience), intent, content and form (Wilde, 1999:1). Intent is having in mind something to be done or brought about. What is intended in a message, however, is not necessarily always what is received. Visual communication is not a precise form of communication and factual information is not always conveyed. The fourth element, content, is the subject, information, story, and meaning of the visual statement. It is the message that the organisation or designer is trying to communicate. The receiver can modify the content of a visual statement and it is subject to the receiver's interpretations and perceptions. The fifth element, form, is the structure of the visual statement. According to Wilde (1999:2) form consists out of both

physical and theoretical concepts, where the physical concepts are the format, medium and technique, and the theoretical components are the visual elements, for example, line, shape, colour, and composition of the statement. Form includes the idea behind the shape, style and structure of the elements, which supports and communicates the content of the visual statement.

It thus can be concluded that the visual statement, specifically graphic design, has a dual existence. Aside from being an optical phenomenon with visual properties, it is a communicative signal that functions with other signals, like words, to form a message. The ability of the audience to decode and understand a design can become an obstacle in the development of a design's form and content. Design related work assumes that the audience has a prior understanding of the vocabulary, and the design conveys information based on that understanding. The audiences' skill in comprehending, decoding and using visual form, meaning their language and level of visual literacy, must be taken into account if the visual communication is to be successful.

The creation of this visual statement, also called a visual communications gestalt (Meggs, 1992:1), is the responsibility of the graphic designer. The designer combines graphic materials (form, colour, shapes, lines, etc.) to construct a visual message that can be understood by the targeted audience. He or she is also responsible for the medium – how the information will be communicated. The forms of communication can be printed, video, film or electronic. The graphic designer is also concerned with how communication is transferred and received. He or she needs to choose the appropriate mechanism that will allow for optimum distinctness, clarity of information and appearance of the communication (Litt, 1988).

In the design of visual identity, colour plays an important role. According to Price (2003) most people have a visual mindset – they tend to notice colours and the differences among them. They also notice when colour is used in similar ways. When one thinks of a brand or a corporate identity, the logo or brand's particular colour or colour combinations comes to mind. When one

thinks of the Coca-Cola Company, for example, the colours that immediately come to mind are red and white. The opposite is also true: often when seeing the two colours used in combination, the company comes to mind.

From this example, one can see that when graphic design and corporate communication work together, a much more successful and effective message can be communicated to the various stakeholders. Graphic design, and various elements like colour, lies central to the organisation's visual identity. It cannot be seen as separate from the corporate communication function of an organisation.

This chapter will investigate the place of the visual identity (also referred to as logo) and the role that it plays within the organisation's corporate communications. The importance of visual communication to the organisation, corporate communication, and corporate image and identity as part of corporate communication will also be investigated. The chapter will also investigate the way in which these aspects interact and the way that corporate visual identity systems are used as a means of creating and maintaining effective visual identities. Finally, the corporate colour scheme, as part of the visual identity, will be investigated.

2.1 Corporate Communication

All forms of communication by the organisation, whether visual or verbal, fall under the corporate communication function. When the communicator understands the function of corporate communication and what the organisation intends to achieve with its communication strategy, it is easier to understand the role of the visual identity and the corporate colour scheme, which forms part of corporate communication. The aim of this section, as well as the following sections of this chapter, is to provide a background of corporate communication and all the various elements within it. Once one understands the background, it is easier to place the visual identity and the organisation's corporate colour scheme within context of corporate communication.

According to Argenti (1998:50), corporate communication grew out of the public relations function. Public relations developed out of necessity; organisations had no specific communications strategy, but they had to respond to their internal and external stakeholders. This need for response increased after the 1970's when corporations and industries came under increasing public scrutiny and they had to answer to a more sophisticated group of journalists. There was also a rise in importance and an increase in power of special interest groups (Argenti, 1998:50). Companies needed to increase their communications activities, and Public Relations were no longer adequate. This led to an increased investment in developing effective corporate communication departments.

According to Van Riel (1995:114) corporate communication has three focal responsibilities, namely to develop initiatives aimed at narrowing the gap between the organisation's desired image and its actual image, the establishment of common starting points to enable the organisation to flesh out a consistent profile of the "organisation behind the brand", and the organisation of communication, which includes the developing and implementing guidelines for the co-ordination of all internal and external communication and to control and regulate communication in practice.

Van Riel (1995:1) also states that the organisation's corporate communication is directed from within the "corporate strategy – corporate identity – corporate image triangle". According to Knecht (Van Riel, 1995:18) this is necessary for the "creation of coherence in the total communication of the organisation, and can be achieved by integration of form and content of all commercial messages of the company". Common starting points are developed through the consultation of all the communication specialities. They are derived directly from the chosen communications strategy. Common starting points are the central values, which function as the basis for undertaking any kind of communication envisaged by an organisation. They are directly linked to the agreed communications strategy for implementing the actual and desired corporate identity, for example, corporate colour strategy, and supporting the organisation's image. The following figure illustrates the relationship of the

common starting points with corporate communications triangle, and the three forms of communication integrated in corporate communication.
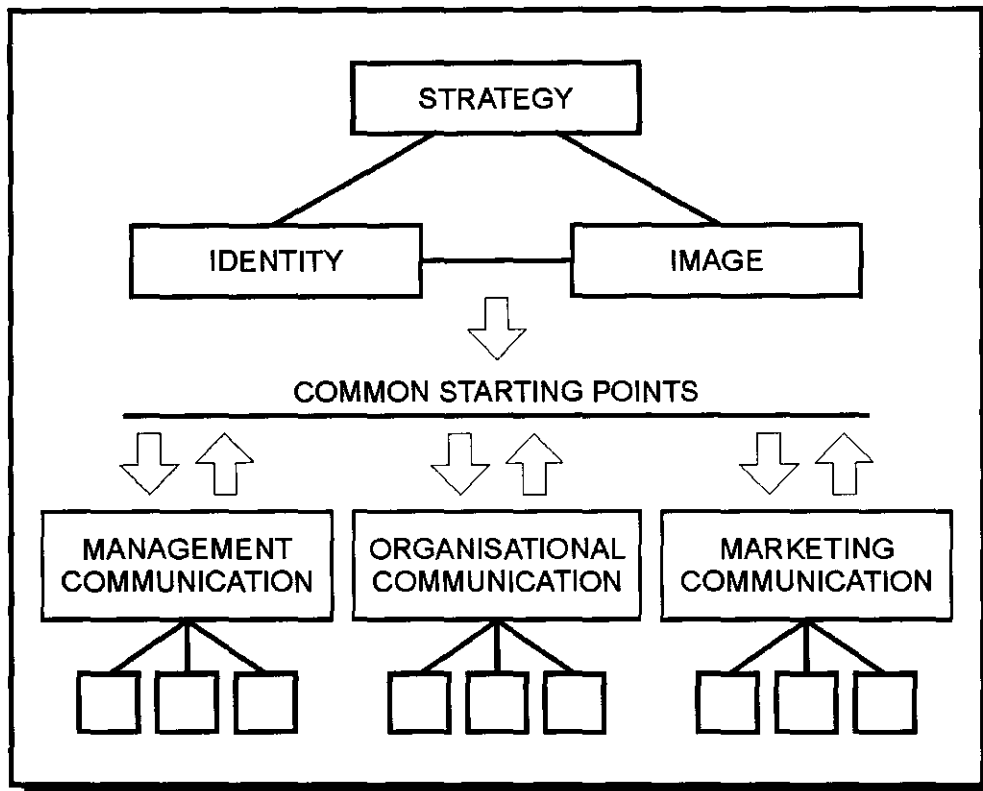
Figure 1.1: Direction of the communications activity through CSP's
(Van Riel, 1995 :19).

Corporate communication integrates three forms of communication to fulfil these responsibilities (Van Riel, 1995:1), as can be seen in figure 1.1. These forms of communication are management communication, marketing communication, and organisational communication. Management communication involves the communication from management with the target groups (stakeholders) of the organisation, both internal and external. Marketing communication involves advertising, direct mail, personal selling, sponsorship, etc. In the third form of communication, organisational communication, a range of communication can be identified – public relations (PR), public affairs, investor relations, environmental communication, corporate advertising, internal communication, etc. The range of communication depends on the size, diversity of and the sensitivity to interdependent relationships with specific target groups.

Within the corporate communication are ten other sub-functions (Argenti, 1998:55). These functions play a role in determining how the various target markets of the organisations perceive the organisation. They are included in the three different forms of communication integrated in corporate communication. The most important of these functions with regards to this study, are those of corporate image and identity. Corporate communications project the elements, for example the corporate colour scheme, of the organisation's identity to produce a corporate image that people have of the organisation (Melewar & Saunders, 2000). Corporate image and identity will be discussed in detail in the following section. The other nine functions deal with corporate advertising and advocacy, media relations, marketing communications, financial communications, employee communications, community relations, corporate philanthropy, government affairs, and crisis communication.

According to Argenti (1995:55), the organisation's image and identity constitute the most critical part of the corporate communication function – it is how the organisation wants to be perceived by its stakeholders and how it wants to identify itself. In this section, both of these elements will be discussed, as well as their interaction with one another. Considering the focus of this study, the more important of these two elements is the corporate identity, and the place of the visual identity and corporate colour scheme within corporate identity.

2.2 Corporate image

An organisation's image is a reflection of the organisation's reality (Argenti, 1998:56); how its various stakeholders or audiences perceive the organisation. This means that an organisation could have many different images depending on which constituency is involved. The different perceptions that might be held by an organisation's stakeholders are not always obvious. The corporate communication function needs to conduct marketing research or audits to understand each constituency's needs and attitudes. (Stakeholders audits will be discussed later in section 2.5)

According to Howard (2003) an organisation has an image whether it wants one or not. The image that the consumer or member of a constituency holds about the organisation, is heavily influenced about what is already there and everything that the organisation does, or doesn't do, affects their perceptions. The organisation's stakeholders subjectively interpret everything that the organisation does whether it is good or bad (Ayotte, 2003). According to Howard (2003), this leads to two prominent concerns for any organisation in the 21st century. The first of these is that the organisation has to understand that the corporate image is a major strategic concern that can have a direct impact on the organisation's level of success. Secondly, an understanding of a coherent corporate image, as well as identity, needs to be integrated into the organisation on all levels. This coherence is achieved through the corporate identity system, which in has an influence on the corporate image. The corporate identity system will be discussed later in this chapter.

Various elements contribute to establish an image of the organisation in the minds of its stakeholders. One of these elements, for example, is the organisation's visual identity and the corporate colour scheme. A clothing store catering to a young audience might use fashionable colour to create a hip and trendy image for their organisation in the minds of their stakeholders, to influence their perception. According to Ayotte (2003), when all the elements do not communicate the same message, the organisation starts to suffer from "image blur". This blur is caused by failure to recognise the number of messages sent out to stakeholders and failing to co-ordinate all these messages. These again, could be the result of a poorly defined communications and marketing goals, or a lack of control – communications are not monitored, there is no standard colour use, or there is no established corporate identity system (discussed later in this section).

2.3 Corporate identity

In the literature on corporate identity there are two streams, or schools of thought, when it comes to defining the term, namely the practitioner literature and academic literature (Allessandri, 2001). The practitioner literature,

contained mostly in graphic design periodicals, public relations journals and advertising magazines, defines corporate identity by focusing on the visual arrangement of elements that are put forth by the organisation. Academics in both the marketing and management disciplines are complementing the tactical nature of practitioner literature with discussions of how corporate identity can be used as a strategic management tool. They focus on the intangible, from an organisation's behaviour to its reputation, and they take the concept of corporate identity to a higher level of abstraction (Allessandri, 2001).

Allessandri (2001) presents two definitions of corporate identity, one conceptual and the other operational:

- Conceptual definition – corporate identity is an organisation's strategically planned and purposeful presentation of itself in order to gain a positive corporate image in the minds of the public. A corporate identity is established in order to gain a favourable corporate reputation over time
- Operational definition – all of the observable and measurable elements of an organisation's identity manifest in its comprehensive visual presentation of itself, including, but not limited to its name, logo, tag line, **colour palette** and architecture. Corporate identity also includes the firm's public behaviour, for example, reception of employees, customers, shareholders and suppliers.

According to Melewar and Saunders (2000) the corporate identity mix includes corporate culture, corporate behaviour, market conditions, strategy, products, services, communications and design. Corporate identity embraces all the facets of and organisation that influences the way people see and think about them. Unlike the image, the identity should not change from one constituency to another. It can be updated periodically (for example if the image gets outdated or the organisation undergoes a structural change that necessitates a new identity), but it must also be monitored constantly for consistency. The corporate colour scheme should not differ from one application to another, for example.

The identity is conveyed through the organisation's logo, products, services, buildings, stationery, uniforms and all other tangible objects, which form messages that help to shape a constituency's perception. Consistent exposure of an organisation's identity as part of messages, in all forms of marketing and advertising, is believed to aid the public's learning about the organisation. Over the long term, the organisation's corporate identity is believed to affect the public's perception of the organisation (Allessandri, 2001), or in other words, affect the organisation's image. This means that the identity should be an accurate representation of the organisation's reality. If it is accurate, the organisation's identity programme is considered a success (Argenti, 1998:74). Very simply put, the corporate identity is what the organisation is, while the corporate image is what the organisation is perceived to be.

2.3.1 Lambert's model of corporate identity

According to Lambert (1989) it is important that attention is paid to corporate identity in all aspects of an organisation's presentation and he is of the opinion that it should be incorporated into every element of an organisation. The author (Lambert, 1989) gives two definitions of corporate identity: "all those manifestations of an organisation that enable it to be distinctive" and "projecting who you are, what you do and how you do it". Lambert (1989) developed a model of corporate identity, which he called the "iceberg of corporate identity". This model depicts corporate identity as having two levels: that which is below the surface and that which is above. Below the surface are the written communications, corporate structure and behaviour. According to Lambert (1989) these are equal to the visual elements, but are not visible to the public. These elements are the natural forces of the firm that manifest in the visible elements of the corporate identity. Above the surface are the visual elements, or visual style – the organisation's name, logo and corporate colour scheme. This is the only part of the corporate identity that is visible to the organisation's public. This means that the organisation's visual communication, especially an element like the corporate colour scheme, is of

great importance when trying to effectively and successfully communicate with the various stakeholders of the organisation.

2.3.2 *Allessandri's model of corporate identity*

Allessandri (2001) developed a model that illustrates the relation of the corporate identity to corporate mission, corporate image and corporate reputation. Corporate mission in this model is the organisation's philosophy. The model assumes that every organisation has a philosophy. This philosophy is personified through the behaviour of the organisation, as well as the visual presentation of the organisation. The behaviour and visual presentation together form the corporate identity. The corporate identity and the corporate mission form the lower half of the model, which is the part that is within the organisation's control. It can be manipulated or altered according to the whim of the organisation. The upper half of the model is the area of public perception of the organisation. This is where the concept of corporate image lies.

CORPORATE REPUTATION

HOW
THE
PUBLIC
PERCEIVES
THE
ORG.

CORPORATE IMAGE

HOW
THE
ORG.
PRESENTS
ITSELF

CORPORATE IDENTITY

VISUAL
PRESENTATION

CORPORATE
BEHAVIOUR

CORPORATE MISSION
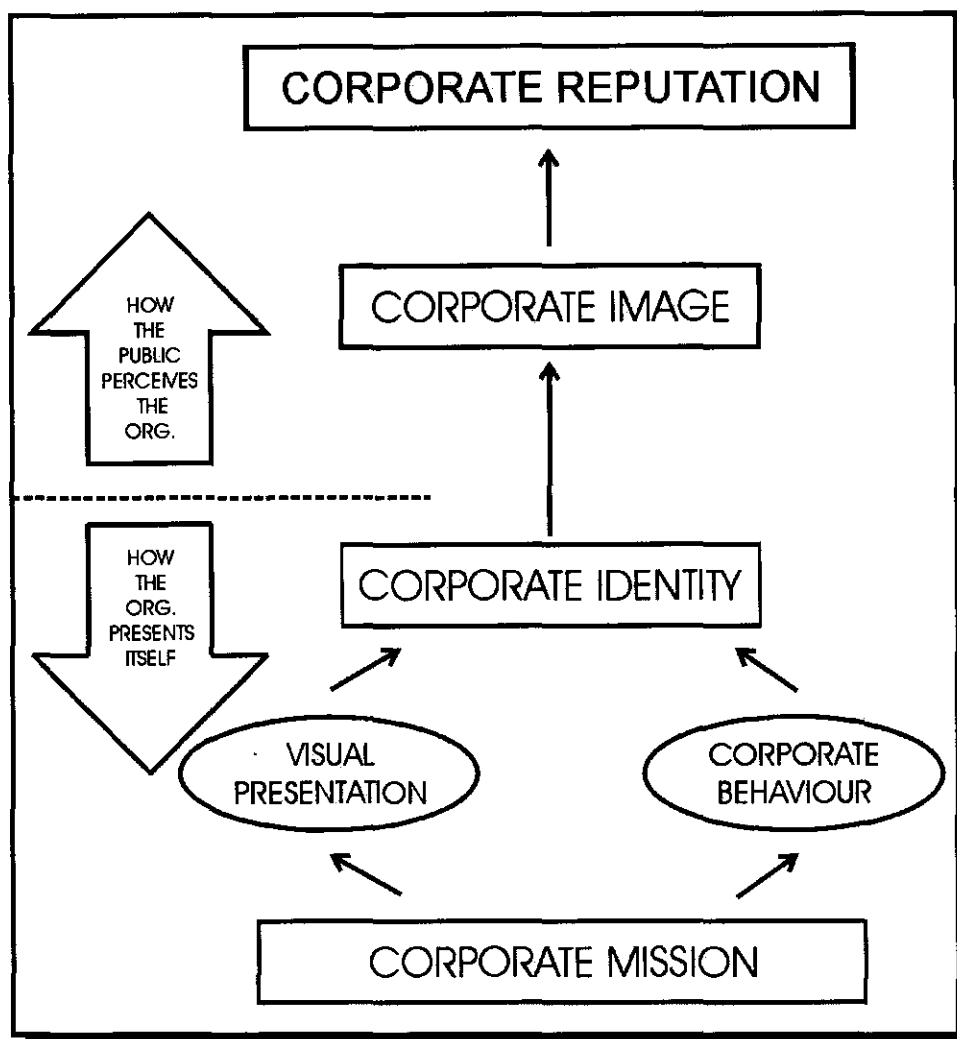
Figure 1.2: Allessandri's model of how corporate identity works

Interaction with a corporate identity produces the corporate image in the minds of the public. The organisation has no direct control over this area. Corporate reputation and image are formed over time by repeated impressions of the corporate identity, whether positive or negative. This means that the top half of the model is ultimately within the control of the public. Exposure of the corporate identity must occur, either through interpersonal contact or formal mass communication, so that the identity can move upwards into the domain of the consumer. How perceptions is then formed, are the key to understanding and explaining why corporate identity has the power to produce positive or negative results. Unlike corporate image, the corporate identity is in the control of the organisation, and the

organisation can use it to influence the image of the organisation. Allessandri (2001) states that the learning of perception takes place in two phases:

- At a low involvement level (an explanation follows).
- And after an image has been formed through classical conditioning (see section 3.3).

How perceptions are formed is important to the corporate communicator, as well as the graphic designer. If the communicator (or designer) knows how the formation of perception takes place, active steps can be taken to control perception through design elements like colour, for example. Getting the stakeholders to form the perception the communicator / designer wants them to have, can greatly aid effective communication.

2.3.3 Low involvement and corporate identity

Low involvement is useful in explaining how a consumer may actually come to recognise the corporate identity of a firm. Krugman (in Allessandri, 2001) developed the theory of low involvement, asserting that a behavioural trigger may activate an awareness that has been generated through a repetition of a message. The repetition of a message will move some information from the short-term to the long-term memory, and a change in the perception of the brand might occur. Melewar and Saunders (2000) state that is it's the names and images that are repeated the most that will dominate. The authors also advocate projecting a consistent corporate identity, and the visual elements in particular. Projecting a consistent corporate identity is important when trying to establish positive corporate identity classical conditioning.

2.3.4 Classical conditioning and corporate identity

Traditionally, classical conditioning researchers examined physiological responses in which a conditioned stimulus and an unconditioned stimulus were paired and then used to elicit a conditioned response. The most well know study of classical conditioning, is that of Pavlov, where he used the presence of food as the unconditioned response, the conditioned stimulus was the sound of a metronome and the conditioned response was salivation.

19

When the food and the sound were paired, the sound came to cause salivation, even in the absence of food (Grossman and Wisenblit, 1999).

The concept of classical conditioning can further be expanded to the conditioned stimulus being a product, brand, or corporate identity and the unconditioned stimulus pleasant scenes or images. In the case of corporate identity, the conditioned stimulus would be the presentation thereof. The unconditioned stimulus would be the association (either positive or negative) paired with the corporate identity. A positive association could be an aesthetically pleasing visual presentation of the organisation's logo or colour scheme, or a positive interpersonal experience. Examples of the use of colour related classical conditioning are discussed in the section on *Colour conditioning and associative learning.*

According to Grossman & Till (in Allessandri, 2001) attitudes formed through classical conditioning are enduring. The authors found that positive attitudes persisted for up to three weeks. They do, however, warn that repeated exposure to unconditioned stimulus could erode the favourable attitude gained through classical conditioning. Over-exposure can lead to over-saturation and the consumer or stakeholders could begin to ignore a message.

Aside from creating a perception in the minds of an organisation's stakeholders, the image and identity can also lead to either a strong or a weak reputation. According to Fombrun (Argenti, 1998:78) organisations to which a strong and positive reputation is important, take great pains to build, sustain, and defend a reputation by following practices that shape a unique identity and project a coherent and consistent set of images to the public. As can be seen from the following, organisations will resort to legal action to defend their reputations, images, and identities.

In 1942, the United States Supreme Court recognised the psychological nature of corporate symbols in a landmark trademark decision:

> The protection or trademarks is the law's recognition of the psychological function of symbols. If it is true that we live by symbols, it

is no less true that we purchase goods by them. A trademark is a merchandising short cut, which induces a purchaser to select what he wants, or what he has been led to believe he wants (Allessandri, 2001).

The infamous *McLibel* case in Britain between *McDonalds* and Helen Steel and Dave Morris lasted for two and a half years, after the accused distributed anti-*McDonalds* literature (Anon, 2003a). The court finally ruled in favour of *McDonalds* in 1997, and Steel and Morris had to pay £60 000 in damages.

In South Africa, *Carling Black Label*, a local beer brand manufactured by *South African Breweries (SAB)*, was recently engaged in a trademark infringement lawsuit with Justin Nurse, owner of *Laugh It Off T-shirts* (Koenderman, 2002). Nurse is selling T-shirts featuring a visual identity similar to that of *Black Label*, but changing the words from "Black Label" to "Black Labour – White Guilt" and replacing the slogan "Africa's lusty, lively beer" with "Africa's lusty, lively exploitation since 1652". Nurse has admitted that the aim of the T-shirt is to focus attention the fact that Black Label is a beer targeted at South Africa's large black working class, as well as to focus attention on South Africa's legacy of Apartheid. Spokespersons for *SAB* argue that *Laugh It Off* is acting like a parasite and that they are misusing the property of *SAB* for financial gain since the T-shirts are sold for profit – using *SAB's* trademark. Senior Counsel for SAB also stated that the T-shirt took unfair advantage of, or was detrimental to, the distinctive character and reputation of *Black Label* trademarks, and that Nurse was wrong if he thought that freedom of speech gave him the right to degrade an organisations trademarks (Koenderman, 2002). Nurse has also faced litigation from *Standard Bank*, *Red Bull Energy Drink* and Danish toy manufacturer, *Lego*, in the past.

An organisation's trademark and visual identity influences its corporate image, which in turn influence consumer perception of the organisation. Organisations invest huge amounts of money, sometimes millions, in the development and maintenance of their corporate identity. Although Nurse wants to "turn strategic corporate elements back on themselves in a manner which is in itself invisible" and "direct the public viewer to a consideration of

the original corporate strategy in the context of a thoughtful reaction", organisations have the right to defend themselves against defamatory actions (Anon, 2003a). Organisations also have the right to defend themselves against infringements of the Trademark Act.

The scope of organisations have changed – there is often a bigger supply than there is a demand; there are several organisation's competing in the same product or service category; and the more informed consumer now more often "buys" the organisation, rather than the product or service. This means that it is vital for the organisation and its marketing and communications strategy to establish its corporate image within the minds of its various stakeholders – a strong and memorable corporate identity helps to avoid confusion with competition. The same goes for an organisation that develops a strong, memorable and competitive colour scheme which could be immediately associated with the organisation. To accomplish this, many organisations develop corporate identity systems.

2.4 Corporate identity systems

The organisation's stakeholders often make immediate value judgements based on the visual message sent out by the organisation. When the corporate identity is consistent and co-ordinated, its different elements reinforce each other and stand out from the competition, as well as create an impression of efficiency and implying a concern for quality (Ayotte, 2003). This can be achieved through the use of a well-structured corporate identity system.

The corporate identity system integrates every aspect of the organisation's graphic design in order to assure continuity (Landa, 2003). This includes typography, colour, imagery, and its application to communication forms and media like print and television. The organisation's corporate identity is an aspect of the organisation's corporate communication that must remain constant – a certain level of variety can be allowed, according to marketing needs, but a visual unity must be maintained.

There are certain objectives to be kept in mind when creating a corporate identity system (Landa, 2003 & Ayotte, 2003). These objectives are:

- Co-ordinating all of the organisation's graphic material.
- Establishing an image for the organisation.
- Expressing the personality of the organisation.
- Creating an appropriate design.
- Creating a system that is flexible so that it will be able to work in a variety of applications and accommodate the change that will be inevitable.
- Creating a system with a long life span – it should have a minimum useful life of five years.
- Creating a system immediately identified with the organisation.
- Creating a system that will stand up to that of the competition.

These objectives should be applied to all the elements of the visual identity. With an element like colour, a strategy should be developed to monitor the use of colour, to ensure consistency. It should reflect the personality of organisation, as well as the products or services that it provides. Colour, when used consistently, is also an effective means of co-coordinating all the graphic and communication material of the organisation.

When these objectives are attained, the organisation can benefit in various ways (Melewar & Saunders, 1998). These benefits point to the importance of visual communication, and the strong role that elements of the corporate identity, like visual identity and colour, play in communication. Some of these benefits are the following:

- It creates a consistent identity and image that provides a powerful means of increasing sales – the impact of the image filters through to investment ratings, and the value of the organisation's stock.
- It makes consumers familiar with the organisation and its products or services.
- It establishes a uniform corporate image.

- Consumers learn to recognise the organisation and a perception of the organisation as a high quality manufacturer, a good investment, a good corporate citizen, and a reliable supplier, is established.
- Identity programmes help to raise morale of employees and helps in the recruitment of high calibre staff.

A key in the success of the corporate identity system is a graphic standards manual (also referred to as a corporate identity manual). The manual is a management tool to co-ordinate the efforts of everyone involved in the identity programme (Ayotte, 2003). It is a style-guide that promotes standardisation to all the applications of the corporate identity, and contains important information about the corporate-symbol, the colour palette, stationery, etc. It can, for example, contain guidelines for the use of colour, not only on printed media, but also on buildings, vehicles, uniforms, and tangibles like gift pens. It provides guidance for the maintenance of the corporate identity system, as the corporate identity manual and the corporate identity system must be seen as being in a state of continual evolution.

When designing the corporate identity system, it is important to know the stakeholders at which it will be aimed. It is also important that it is rooted in the mission, vision and goals of the organisation. This requires a co-ordinated involvement between all the people involved in the process – from the highest level of management to the graphic designer.

2.5 Stakeholders audits

To create a perception in the minds of an organisation's stakeholders of audiences the organisation needs to know who their audiences are, as well as what their needs are. The organisation should conduct a survey of the current or prospective stakeholders to determine their perspectives and opinions (Roger, 1997). The organisation needs to get a sense of the image that the audiences already hold in their minds about the organisation. When selecting colours for the organisation's colour scheme, perceptions held about the particular colour or colour combination should be determined.

According to Argenti (1998:37), analysing stakeholders is similar to analysing an audience when delivering a speech. The communicator first needs to determine who the organisation's stakeholders are. Secondly, he or she needs to determine what each constituency thinks about the organisation and finally, what each constituency knows about the communication in particular. Ayotte (2003) states that when developing a corporate identity, the organisation should do a needs-analysis. This involves informal interviews with all the internal stakeholders of the organisation, as well as examining the image and identity of the organisation from the outside.

Analysis and audits are not only done to develop a corporate identity, but also to monitor the corporate identity and to prevent any problems that might arise. An audit can be done to determine whether any identity-related problems exist. An audit can also be done to determine how consistent the identity is across all the different stakeholder groups. The image audit takes the concept of needs-analysis further. According to Argenti (1998:74) this research should be of a both qualitative and quantitative nature. All the stakeholders of the organisation, internal and external, should be polled for their perceptions of the organisation, as well as that of the competition. The information gathered, is then tabulated and analysed in such a way to give the organisation insights into the state of the identity, as well as provide possible solutions to the problem (Ayotte, 2003). The audit will help to point out discrepancies between the goals of the corporate identity system and the actual performance of the organisation.

The demographic and psychographic makeup of an organisation's target market will influence decisions made about the corporate identity or messages containing the corporate identity, for example, which colours to use (Geboy, 1996). In the case of colour, for example, when deciding which colour palette to use for the logo, it is important that the organisation should avoid using stereotypical colours. The organisation should use creative ways to widen the colour scope and build or enhance the colours of the organisation that are immediately recognisable in conjunction with other topics.

25

2.6 Corporate branding

In the literature on branding, there is interchangeable use of the terms corporate brand and visual identity. This makes it necessary to clearly define the concept of branding and to understand its relationship with the organisation's visual identity, before discussing the function of corporate branding.

According to Abraham (2001) brands in marketing are the names, symbols or identifying marks that are used by a company, or on a product, to add cohesiveness to communications. In its most basic form, it is the application of a recognisable visual symbol, which is applied to everything that the organisation does. Some companies have gone further than the traditional visual medium – Intel, for example, have their own sound that they use to identify their processors.

Strydom, Jooste and Cant (2000:203) define a brand as a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies a product as different from those of the competition. Simões and Dibb (2001:217) state that in literature on branding, there is general agreement that brand is more than just a name given to a product. A brand embodies a set of physical and social-psychological attributes and beliefs. The brand is built around the organisation's reputation and it impacts on the consumer's perceptions and the meaning that they attribute to the brand. These perceptions ultimately affect the consumer's buying decisions.

The corporate brand, according to Balmer (2001), consists out of cultural, intricate, tangible, ethereal elements and commitment. Commitment is of utmost importance. The corporate brand requires commitment from all the organisation's staff, as well as commitment from senior management and in financial support. Knox and Maklan (Bickerton, 2000:44) state that the corporate brand consists out of four variables: reputation, product and service performances, product brand and customer portfolio, and networks. The mix

26

of these four elements creates the organisational or corporate brand, as well as the means by which it is differentiated from its competitors.

2.6.1 Corporate brand and corporate identity

According to Balmer and Grey (2003:975) a trait of early writing on corporate brand still manifests in contemporary literature on the subject. This trait is the interchangeable use of the terms corporate branding and corporate identity. This makes it necessary to investigate the relationship between corporate branding and corporate identity.

The two terms – branding and corporate identify – are closely related to one another. They must not, however be confused with one another or used interchangeably. The concept of identity embraces the characteristics that distinguish one person or object from another (Simões & Dibb, 2001:217). When one applies this abstract idea to organisations, it suggests that each has its own personality, uniqueness and individuality. According to Van Riel and Balmer (Simões & Dibb, 2001:219) the concept of corporate identity is holistic:

> It articulates the corporate ethos, aims, and values, and presents a sense of individuality that can help to differentiate the organisation within its competitive environment.

Corporate identity (discussed in more detail in the previous section on Corporate Identity, page...) relates to the identifying marks of an organisation, while branding is the process of creating and disseminating the brand name (Abraham, 2001). Branding can be applied to the entire corporate identity as well as to individual product and service names (Samii, 2001). Balmer and Grey (2003:979) state that the corporate identity concept refers to the distinct attributes of the organisation; it addresses the organisational questions of "what are we" and "who are we". It looks as issues such as business scope and organisational culture. The identity concept is applicable to all entities, but not all entities need or want a corporate brand (Balmer & Grey, 2003:979). As such, the corporate identity is a necessary concept, while the corporate brand is a contingent. In a market where there is a monopoly, for example, a corporate brand is redundant, while a corporate identity is a necessity.

According to Samii (2001), organisations strive to align their outward and inward visual appearance and presentation according to their corporate design – the attempt to get all printed and online materials in visual synchronisation – and try to establish their own name and logo as a brand, thus creating a corporate identity. The goal of the corporate identity is to communicate a carefully shaped image and can be used as a channel to express corporate culture (Samii, 2001). Brand building involves reducing the gap between brand identity and brand reputation (Hutch & Schultz, 2001:1043). Organisational culture and corporate image can serve to identify key problem areas for corporate brands.

According to Balmer (2001) the acquisition of a favourable corporate brand is the objective of the business identity. Its proposition should be derived from the organisation's identity. The concept of corporate brand is related to the concepts of corporate image, reputation and identity. All of these concepts are again concerned with constituency perception.

2.6.2 Branding and the organisation

Corporate branding influences the perceptions held by all of the organisation's stakeholders: employees, customers, investors, suppliers, partners, regulators, special interest groups, and local communities (Hutch & Schultz, 2001:1042). According to Hutch and Schultz (2001:1042), employees play a vital role in corporate branding – they are the key to building relationships with all the organisations stakeholders as well as contributing to the meaning of the brand. The organisation needs to understand the behaviour of employees, and they need to help the employees understand the important role that they play in corporate branding.

Ownership plays an important role in branding. The corporate brand attracts and orients the organisation's stakeholders around the recognisable symbols and values. It is, however, not only about differentiation, but also about belonging (Hutch & Schultz, 2001:1046). A brand works when it expresses

the values and sources of desire that attract the stakeholders and encourage them to feel a sense of belonging to it. It is this attraction and sense of belonging that affects the stakeholders' decisions and behaviours. This means that the corporate brand plays an important role in the construction of consumer identity (Simões and Dibb, 2001:217).

Another purpose of the corporate brand, and all the visual stimuli that it includes, is to create identity and recognisability (Abraham, 2001) – corporate brands can increase an organisation's visibility, recognition and reputation. Branding also provides strategic direction for the organisation's activities and it provides consistency through the connection between positioning, communication and staff behaviour (Simões and Dibb, 2001:218).

The benefit of a corporate brand lies in the fact that it is difficult to imitate (Balmer & Grey, 2003:989). The reason for this lies in the fact that band signifiers can be patented by the organisations. These signifiers are for example the logo, name, and **colours** of the organisation. Another reason, and the more important according to Balmer & Grey (2003:989), is the underlying substance of the corporate brand, which is intangible and, because of this, difficult to replicate.

Corporate branding can enhance an organisation's competitiveness. According to Hutch & Schultz (2001:1041), in the age of globalisation, corporate branding helps the organisation to maintain credible product and service differentiation when faced with increasing homogenisation and the fragmentation of traditional target markets. Customers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and the markets increasingly complex. This makes it necessary for the organisation to create unique features that distinguish their products from those of their competitors. The organisation needs to make a statement to its stakeholders about what they can expect, and what the organisation stands for (Simões and Dibb, 2001:217). The uniqueness of the brand needs to be communicated.

Effective branding goes beyond marketing communication (Rubenstein in Simões and Dibb, 2001:218). The focus of the corporate brand is on all internal and external stakeholders and networks – it is based on a broader mix than the traditional marketing mix, and it is experienced and communicated through total corporate communication, not just marketing communications. Corporate branding needs to be integrated in the entire business process and embedded in the entire organisation. It should not simply be seen as another function of the marketing department. The complete corporate communications mix should be utilized. Ind (Simões and Dibb, 2001:218) agrees with this and further states that branding should be applied to corporate level:

> A corporate brand is more that just the outward manifestation of an organisation – its name, logo, visual presentation. Rather, it is the core values that define it (Ind, in Simões and Dibb, 2001:218).

A successful corporate brand requires interplay between strategic vision, organisational culture and corporate images held by stakeholders (Hutch and Schultz, 2001:1045). The strategic vision is the central idea behind the company that embodies and expresses top management's aspiration for what the organisation will achieve in the future. The organisational culture is the internal values, beliefs and basic assumptions that embody the heritage of the organisation and communicate its meanings to its members. Culture manifests itself in the ways that all the employees feel about the organisation that they work for. An alignment between the perceived corporate image and actual organisational culture magnifies awareness among all stakeholders about who the corporation is and what it stands for, and enhances organisation attractiveness and reputation (Hutch and Schultz, 2001:1049). This forms the link between the corporate brand, the corporate image and corporate culture.

It is important to note that there is a difference between product branding and corporate branding, as well as a difference between product branding and service branding. In the case of services, the company is being branded, not a tangible product (Simões and Dibb, 2001:219). Brand image is developed based on the organisation itself. Product brand and corporate brand are

related in the sense that the corporate brand adds economic value to the products and services offered by the organisation (Hutch and Schultz, 2001:1044).

Corporate branding, however, has a wider scope. It focuses attention on the organisation in ways that product branding cannot. It exposes the organisation as well as its members, behaviour, and daily interactions, to greater scrutiny, which means that the organisation becomes more transparent. This transparency increases the importance of having a healthy organisational culture (Hutch & Schultz, 2001:1044). Product and corporate branding also differ in terms of whom the brand relates to when it comes to attraction and support. Product brands mainly target customers or consumers, while the corporate brand contributes to the images held by the all the organisation's stakeholders (Hutch & Schultz, 2001:1045).

Branding involves a long-term marketing investment, especially in terms of advertising (Strydom, Jooste & Cant, 2000:203). The most successful brands are the outcome of several years of investment and strategic planning. The more often a brand is reinforced in the minds of the stakeholders, the greater brand awareness is achieved by the organisation (Abraham, 2001). Brand awareness is the brand's presence in the minds of prospective customers. When people hear a brand's name, they should immediately recognise the organisation and its product or services (Anon, 2003a). The same goes for the colours of the organisation. When one sees the colours red and white, one of the first organisations that comes to mind, is Coca-cola.

2.6.3 Visual branding

According to Samii (2003), visual branding is an important part of the creation and maintenance of the brand. The reason for its importance is the fact that a single image has the potential to deliver large amounts of information in a short time. Visuals can easily invoke feelings and emotions associated with a certain material (Samii, 2003). Images can be used to stimulate positive feelings in the minds of the stakeholders. Although the viewer never deciphers all the information immediately, the dominant shapes, **colours**, and

31

general mood are noticed quickly, whether it is a picture, logo or certain character that is portrayed. An image is also perceived at once and it takes place without any special "effort" on the viewer's part. This means that a visual could communicate a message similar to one that is heard or read, only faster. Hearing and reading are sequential activities. It takes time and attention.

The main goal of visual branding is to assure that the brand's appearance delivers the desired emotional reaction and to avoid unwanted, negative effects (Samii, 2003). This makes visual branding extremely complex. One has to, for example, take into consideration the **multicultural aspects of colour.** Diverse target groups have different visual tastes. Visual branding also has to pay attention to technical requirements, restrictions to standard media, and adaptation to new technologies within a reasonable timeframe. It also has to deal with changing visual trends.

The translation of an organisation's brand into visuals requires knowledge of the basic effects of shape, colour and composition (Samii, 2003). It is the work of the graphic designer to find the most suitable basic elements and attributes to express the characteristics of the brand and to find a unique, effective and flexible combination of these elements. The strong, symbolic associations of the logo need to come across, and the main branding colours need to communicate a clear message.

It is important that the organisation's brand establishes a unique visual identity. It must, however, be adaptable to all kinds of media, while retaining the same look, character and emotional message (Samii, 2003). The logo, for example, must look good when printed on stationery or packaging; it must work in colour combinations, as well as single colours or black and white. Consistency is extremely important when it comes to branding. Consistency builds trust, which leads to brand loyalty (Samii, 2003). Brand loyalty, again, is the basis for stable and prosperous business relationships with the organisation's various stakeholders.

An effective method of achieving consistency in branding is through the branding colours – the corporate colour scheme. The main branding (corporate) colours will appear on everything from print media and tangibles to the uniforms of employees and vehicles. Colour consistency can be achieved through the use of a well-developed corporate identity manual. The consistent use of colour can help to provide consistency in the emotional message that is sent to the organisation's stakeholders, which is vital for effective branding.

2.7 Visual identity (logos)

According to Balmer (2001) corporate identity is the mix of elements that give the organisation its distinctiveness. He emphasises the importance of elements such as culture, strategy, structure, history, business activities, and market scope when defining the corporate identity and states that the term "corporate identity" is often wrongly used when referring to "visual identity". Baker (1997) agrees with this by stating that the corporate identity is fundamentally different from visual identification, and that the visual identity is an integral part of the corporate identity mix. Corporate identity involves more that just the logo or visual identity. As mentioned previously, corporate identity also involves products, services, buildings, stationery, uniforms, the appearance of employees and all other tangible objects, which forms a visual language that communicates to the organisation's stakeholders. This makes it important to clearly define the concept of visual identity to demonstrate how it differs from the corporate identity.

Melewar and Saunders (2000) refer to a "corporate visual identity system" (CVIS) and identify the elements of the CVIS as the corporate name, symbol or logotype, colour and slogan. In other words, it is the graphic design at the core of the organisation's visual identity. The visual identity, according to the authors, is part of the deeper corporate identity and the outer sign of the organisation's inward commitment. It provides the graphic language and discipline for the clear and consistent projection of a firm's visual identity.

Rogers (1997) refers to the organisation's graphic device, and identifies several terms to be used when referring to the graphic device:

- Logotype - the distinctive typography used for the practice name or the descriptive word in a specific type style.

- Symbol – stylised, simple, significant non-verbal identification device or the graphic image designed for the purpose of identification.

- Trademark – differs from the symbol in that it can be composed of symbolic letters or numbers.

- Signature - is the unique visual representation of the name in a consistent manner that combines the above-mentioned devices and consistently identifies the organisation.

In graphic design the term logo is used to collectively refer to the elements of the visual identity – corporate name, symbol, font type, colour and slogan, when integrated into one unified symbolic image. Throughout the rest of this study, the term logo and visual identity will be used interchangeably when referring to the corporate visual identity.

In Greek, the term logo means "the word" or "the way" (English, 1998:7) and can be seen as sign or symbol. It refers to a representation that symbolises and communicates a meaning or an idea. According to Meggs (1992:6) a sign is a mark or language that stands for or denotes a thing or object and that there is a simple connection between this sign and the object that it signifies. Together they form a pair and are connected in a "one to one" relationship. Aside from this "one to one" relationship, a three-way relationship also exists between the signified, the signifier and the interpreter. The signified is the object or thing that is being represented (the organisation and it mission, objectives, etc.). The signifier is the sign that represents the object (the logo) and the interpreter is the person who perceives and interprets the sign (the organisation's stakeholders, internal and external). The interpretation of the sign is influenced by three elements: the context in which the sign is used, its relationship to other signs, and its environment.

Meaning is assigned to logos through deliberate decision. How well the targeted audience knows, or has learned, the sign and sign system, determines the extent to which the meaning assigned to a logo is conveyed. Meggs (1992:7) gives the following example to demonstrate the development and learning of a sign and sign system: after the prohibition era in 1933 in the USA, the state would not allow liquor stores to erect any signs to identify their businesses. In South Carolina, however, one storeowner painted a big red circle on the building to identify it as a liquor store, something that eventually became a practice throughout the state. To a person who is unaware of the sign or sign system, for example a person from the Orient, the red circle might identify the building as a Japanese facility because of the connection with the Japanese flag. A logo with a too specialised meaning and language (both visual and verbal) creates confusion and becomes an obstacle to effective communication.

Organisations increasingly realise that they are part of society and that possessing a positive corporate visual identity is fundamental to the organisation's growth and success (Melewar & Saunders, 2000). It offers a sense of pride to the employees of the organisation and creates a sense of community. It can give advantage over competitors, attract employees and help convince financial institutions and the government that the organisation is a corporate citizen worthy of their support (Van Riel & Balmer, in Melewar & Saunders, 2000).

The logo is the primary visual element that identifies the organisation and it becomes a mark of quality (Dowling, as in Baker, 1997). It serves as a visual link between all the components of the organisations. According to Baker (1997) the symbol (or logo) or the organisation, when it is used as part of organisational change, serves as a focus for the members of the organisation. It becomes a type of shorthand for the organisation's personality and values; it is, however, what the symbol represents, that is important and not the symbol itself. A strong corporate symbol or logo can evoke a powerful emotional response and can also make the task of formal communication easier (Van

Riel, 1995:72). According to Balmer (2001) the visual identity has four purposes:

- It symbolises change in the corporate strategy.
- It reflects a change in organisational behaviour, including culture.
- It underpins the communication strategy of the organisation.
- It shows that the organisation is up to date with regard to its use of graphic designs.

As discussed previously, the visual identity (logo) carries symbolic meaning regarding the organisation that it represents. One of the symbolic associations used in the visual identity is the colour palette. Colours are known to possess emotional and psychological properties – research has shown that it can elicit different responses from people and people react to some colours in uniform ways (Gimba, 1998). This means that the continual pairing of a particular colour (or combination of colours) with the logo of an organisation can result in the transfer of the emotional and psychological properties of the colour onto the organisation (Madden, Hewett & Roth, 2000).

This means that colour play an important role in the organisations visual identity, as well as the visual identity's communication potential. The importance of corporate colours is evident in the fact that various organisations have registered their colours as trademarks, for example *IBM*'s pale blue and *Kodak*'s yellow (Rogers, 1997). According to Jenkins (in Baker, 1997) colour is an expressive tool in terms of the organisation's visual identity and it depends on its effort on two considerations: its association with natural phenomena as well as its association with received cultural references.

Colour strategy is important in communication – when colour is used effectively, it can support the deeper message in an organisations communications. Strategic issues need to be considered first, then the communicator has to determine how colour will support that message as well as improve the strategy (Geboy, 1997). When used as part of a well-developed strategy, colours in the organisations logo have an influence on the

way that an organisation's stakeholders see that organisation. It communicates information about the organisation's personality and image (Dostie, 2002). Colour can also help to establish continuity and consistency of the visual identity across all its applications (Geboy, 1997), as mentioned in the section on corporate identity systems.

The organisation's logo is one of the first aspects that draw the attention of the consumer or client. It extends to all other visual manifestations of the corporate identity – packaging, stationery, uniforms, the interior and exterior of the organisation's offices and buildings, etc. Because of this, it is important that the colour of the organisation represents the type of organisation, the line of business it is in and the different stakeholders of the organisation. This means that the organisation needs to understand how to utilise colour to convey an accurate message through the use of colour in its logo.

2.8 Conclusion

As can be seen from the above chapter, graphic design forms an integral part of an organisation's communications. It plays an important role in the development of the corporate identity and visual identity, which in turn plays an important role in the corporate image and reputation of the organisation. The visual identity, or logo, of the organisation is more that just a mark of identification. Consumers are focussing more toward the visual identity to make choices about organisations and their products or services. This means that the organisation, which effectively utilises visual identity, and an element of the visual identity like colour, can enhance the effectiveness and success of the organisation's communication.

CHAPTER 3
COLOUR THEORY AND SYMBOLISM

In this chapter, colour is and the communication potential of will be discussed. Colour conditioning, and research that has been done on colour, will also be examined. The chapter will be concluded with the factors that influence colour associations and meanings associated with various colours.

Technology has brought newer methods and cheaper methods of producing colour. Colours are being produced more accurately and provided at much lower costs. Geboy (1996) found that the addition of colour to a publication, or other media, could dramatically improve readership, by as much as 40% - 85%. Visual information has also increased because of digitisation (Lindstrom, 1999). Digital technology is driving a visual revolution through a widespread availability and adoption of tools such as digital cameras, desktop printers, copiers, graphics software, multimedia computers and video/data projectors. Developments in technology have also increased the number of people working with graphical expression and ideas. Tools are becoming less expensive and more widely available.

According to Willard (1998) one would assume that this technological development and increased use of visual communication would lead to more research into colour and colour's potential to communicate. He found, however, that there exists an appalling lack of regard for colour and the potential that colour holds to communicate.

3.1 A definition of colour

Colour could be considered as an experience that is essentially non-verbal. This aspect makes it difficult to define colour in words, which means that it is necessary to understand what colour is, as well as what influences the perception of colour.

Various definitions of what colour is, exist in literature. None of these are necessarily incorrect but are just different ways of looking at the phenomenon

38

of colour. According to Ergo/Gero (2001) however, no definition of colour should include the term "light", which refers to a portion of the visible electromagnetic spectrum lying between 380 and 740 nm. They state that colour can be seen as any aspect of visual sensation that is not due to spatial or temporal attributes of a light. It is not a property of light but rather of the brain, or mind, and that you don't need light to experience colour. To see colours without light, one can simply close one's eyes and imagine a scene or picture.

Another definition of colour is that it is an aspect of vision. It is a physical reaction of the human eye to light that sends an interpretative response to the brain to wavelength characteristics of light above a certain brightness level. It is a phenomenon of perception, not an objective component or characteristic of a substance (Abelard, 1998).

Ergo/Gero (2001) also further stated that colour is a psychological experience having three components, quality, quantity and purity (Ergo/Gero, 2001). These three components are also referred to as hue, brightness and saturation or the dimensions of colour. When two lights differ in one or more of these components/dimensions, they are said to differ in colour. It is important to take these components into consideration and understand what their importance in terms of colour perception. A difference in brightness could mean a difference in the meaning associated with the colours. A light pastel green will not carry the same meaning as a darker green.

Hue refers to quality of the experience (red, green, blue, etc.) and is used universally. Hue is the attribute by which one colour is distinguished from another. All colours are considered to be similar to one or a portion of two of the spectral hues (Fehrman & Fehrman, 2000:6), for example, crimson, red, vermilion and pink are close in hue, but they are all experienced as different colours.

Brightness (also referred to as lightness or value) is the quantity of light that appears to come from an object (Ergo/Gero, 2001). The terms, lightness and

brightness, should not be used interchangeably. Lightness (sometimes called "albedo" or "whiteness") is the amount of light, which an object appears to emit compared to its background or other scene objects. According to Ergo/Gero, 2001), brightness is disembodied aperture colour while lightness is a relative comparison of different objects and also a property of surface colour. Some sources use the term value to mean lightness, brightness or both.

Saturation (also called chroma or colourfulness) refers to purity of a colour – the amount of white that appears to be mixed with a pure colour. Chroma, although similar to saturation, refers to the purity of a particular colour compared to an achromatic light of the same lightness (Ergo/Gero, 2001). This means that chroma is the right term / concept to use when describing a surface colour or a natural scene. If there is no achromatic colour to use as a reference, saturation is the correct term in natural scenes. Colourfulness is the total amount of chromatic content. Chromatic content is composed of saturation, colourfulness in proportion to brightness, and chroma, colourfulness relative to scene brightness.

These dimensions – hue, brightness and saturation - of colour can influence meaning attached to colour (Feisner, 2001:121). Colours act on both the body and the mind and the dimensions of colour can influence how colour is experienced. Although red, yellow, and orange are generally considered high-arousal colours and blues, greens, and most violets as low-arousal hues, the hue, saturation and lightness (or darkness) of the colour can alter the psychological message of the colour (Eiseman, 2002). Take for example the different meanings attached to a light sky blue (freedom, tranquillity) and a darker, more navy blue (trust, wealth). Another example is the colour violet, which can either be regarded as warm or cool, depending on whether the particular shade of violet is closer in hue to red or blue.

Colours can sometimes affect each other when used in combination (Eiseman, 2002). This needs to be considered when a visual identity consists out of more that one colour. Colour combinations can create colour illusions

40

that can be used by the communicator or designer to their advantage. When a person looks at a colour, the brain determines the colour in context of surrounding colours. When a colour is placed next to its complement, for example, a vibrating effect is created. This is caused by an effect called colour fatigue. When one colour strikes a portion of the retina long enough, it can cause the optic nerves to send confused signals to the brain. One colour can also appear different in different surroundings, while two similar colours may appear identical under some conditions. Using two similar colours to close together can also give them a washed out appearance. This is because the brain struggles to distinguish between the two colours, and starts to blend them (Eiseman, 2002).

But colour is more than just a physical reaction to stimuli. It is more than just a wavelength and there are meanings, feelings, memories and associations connected to it (Dmitrieva, 2003). It contains emotional and symbolic components as well as purely visual ones. It affects the human mind and body in different ways. Some colours attract, while other colours repel. It can stimulate or soothe and is associated with emotion. It can support or improve a communication strategy.

When constructing any message, the communicator should consider the message that can be communicated through the use of colour. When colour is part of a well-planned strategy, it can make for a more effective communications effort. This means that aside from visually enhancing a design, colour can function as an important communication tool.

3.2 Colour as communication

Colour can communicate instantly, conveying a message on a subconscious level (Kaye, 1998:4). This makes colour a key element in visual communication. Colour can have an impact on the communication exchange even though both the receiver and the sender are aware of if. It has the power to evoke specific emotional responses in the viewer. These responses can be used to the advantage of an organisation trying to convey a specific message by helping to communicate the message more clearly. According to

Geboy (1996) colour has various advantages when used in communication. It can help to communicate complex information and it creates a sense of personality. It also plays an important supporting role in communicating a message on a deeper level, and it is a valuable tool in establishing continuity and consistency across messages, venues and media.

A simple example of how colour communicates can be found in abstract art (Zelanski & Fisher, 1984:184). Mark Rothko (1903-1970), an abstract expressionistic artist, used colour to evoke a response from the viewer. In the absence of a recognisable image to influence an emotional response, he used the colours of the painting instead. In *Black and Grey* (part of a series - 1969-1970), one of Rothko's works, a sense of despair is conveyed through the use of an intense, heavy black surface "crushing" the grey area beneath it (see figure 3.1). Here the colour, as well as the balance and contrast between the two colours, convey a message almost more effectively than an image or words could do. The colours succeed in communicating in a more universal manner that words or images would have been able to.
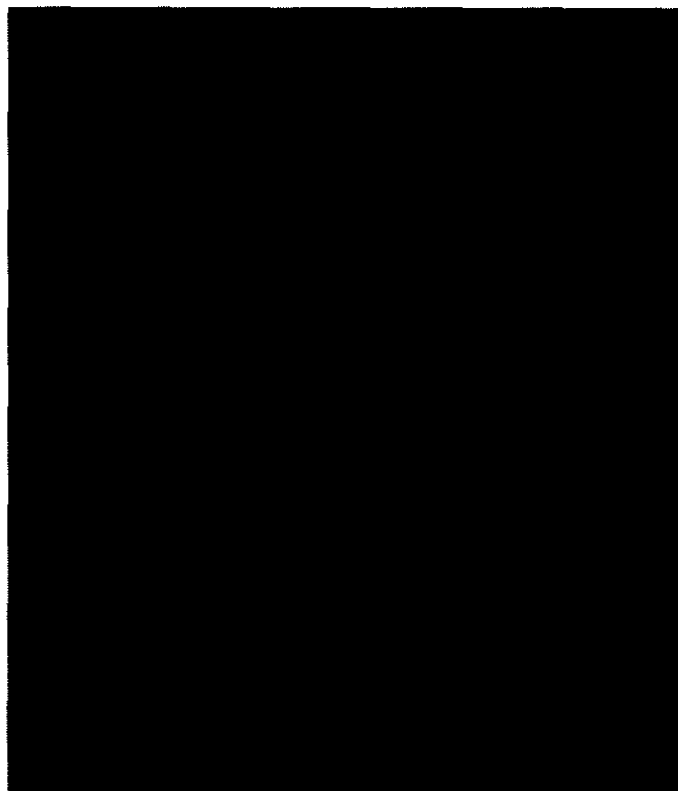
Figure 3.1: Black and grey, Mark Rothko, 1969-1970

Birren (1955:110) states that response to form arouses intellectual processes, while responses to colour are more impulsive and emotional. Clemons (1983:4) confirms this: "colour provokes emotions and aesthetic reactions, which tend to be impulsive". When we see a colour, it produces certain reactions in our minds (Dmitrieva, 2003) - it is associated with certain images, for example, blue with trust (Madden, 2000). Madden (2000) also states that psychologists believe there is a mental model of colour, which is always present in our minds, so seeing or thinking a colour doesn't make any difference in terms of our psychological reaction, since when we think about a certain colour our mind immediately finds the corresponding model.

Our personal, as well as cultural, associations have an effect on colour (Eiseman, 2002). We experience colours as warm or cool mainly because of these long held (and often universal) associations. The author also states that the psychological association of a colour is often more meaningful than the visual experience.

According to Rossotti (1983:209) colour is regarded as a sensation. The stimulation of sense organs often results in emotional changes and a wide variety of situations can exist where colour communicates. This communication aspect of colour can be used in various ways (Zimmer & Zimmer, 1978:66). It can be used realistically or symbolically. It can be decorative or used to convey a particular mood. It can also be used to convey practical, visual information, for example red as used in traffic lights, warning signs, and stop signs.

For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the symbolic way in which colour is used to communicate, the mood, emotion, or response that the particular colour tends to evoke in the viewer, and the meanings that are attached to colour. Colour preferences, the research done on colour and factors that influence meaning attached to colour will be investigated.

Colour conditioning is something that begins at birth. According to Fehrman and Fehrman (2000:7) it is based on things we learned in childhood, on our cultures, and misinterpretation we have come to accept as fact. According to the authors, this bias has more to do with language than with culture, although many of the inherent emotional properties of colour that we have been conditioned to accept are culturally biased also. The authors further state that the linguistic basis of colour symbolism is rooted in analogy. For example, we are often told that red symbolises fire. This comparison is probably based on the fact that fire and the colour red are alike in their redness. The analogy "red is like fire" tells us nothing about the colour red. It does, however, provide us with visual imagery that leads us to believe red is warm, although there is no scientific basis for this claim. This image of red as warm has become so entangled in western culture, that many people refuse to wear red in the summer, claiming that it is too hot (Fehrman and Fehrman, 2000:7).

Our response to colour conditioning is our response to colour preconception and colour biases; it is a predetermined response based on literary and psychological ideas about colour rather than to the nature of the colour self (Fehrman and Fehrman, 2000:7). We seem impelled to attach meaning to colour because our feelings and emotions, our literary, psychological, and intellectual preconceptions interfere with the direct perception of the physical world.

3.3 Colour conditioning and associative learning

Colour plays an important role in a consumer's purchase decision (Grossman and Wisenblit, 1999). It is the product variable that attracts a consumer and that allows the consumer to make a fashion statement. This makes it important for communicators and marketers to know which colours sell best. According to Grossman & Wisenblit (1999) this has led to a new trend in which marketers and communicators feel that it is necessary to update colours regularly. This, however, is not an option when working with a communication element like corporate identity. The communicator needs to understand how colour preference is developed through associative learning and conditioning and how this can be used to the benefit of the communicator.

Consumers learn a colour preference for a particular company or brand based on associations they have formulated through their experience. A favourable experience would lead to a preference for that particular colour. Since association is not directly observable (Mazur, in Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999), the mechanisms for creating association, classical conditioning, can be used to explain the process (classical conditioning was also discussed in the section on *Classical Conditioning and Corporate Identity*). It should be noted, however, that associative learning is a broad application of classical conditioning and includes any systematic pairing of stimuli to create a connection among them, whereas classical conditioning is a specific mechanism for creating associations.

An example of classical conditioning through colour is the *Old Mutual* advertisements. The insurance company's corporate colour is green and they use this colour quite effectively in their advertising. In one of their magazine advertisements, they featured a photograph of a little girl, wearing water wings, swimming alone in a pool. The entire photo was black and white, except for the water wings, which were coloured green. The colour is immediately associated with the safety factor of the water wings. This advertisement then carries the implication that you can rest assured; "*Old Mutual* is always there to lend a helping hand".

Classical conditioning can also be used to alter colour preferences. Gorn (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999) paired blue and beige pens with pleasant and unpleasant music. Subjects exposed to the pleasant music chose the pen that was paired with the music. The same can be done with corporate identity and corporate colour, combining pleasant music and images (with the predominant colour in the images being that of the organisation) with the organisation's identity and message.

As mentioned before, colour associations are difficult to measure, because a constituency may have difficulty articulating complex associations. Therefore an alternative strategy for the communicator is then to develop new colour

associations that they can control using the methods previously described. Associating stimuli that are unfamiliar to people, is easier than developing associations for familiar stimuli (Shimp, in Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999). The more the link between stimuli is repeated, the easier past associations will be overcome and replaced by the new association. Shimp (in Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999) also states that when an audience is aware of the connection between the stimuli, they are more likely to be conditioned.

3.4 Colour preference

According to the Pantone consumer colour preference study (Eiseman, 2002), blue is America's most popular colour. It was chosen by 35% of the respondents in an overall study. Second to blue was green (16% of respondents) and purple was rated third with 1% more that red. Red was considered the most exciting colour and black as the most mysterious. The least preferred colours where fluorescent colours. The second most disliked colour was sulphuric yellow-green. Through their studies on colour preference, Birren (1995:108) and Feisner (2001:118) found that blue was the most liked colour, followed by red and then green. Of these colours, red was seen as the most exiting, green as the most tranquil and blue-violet as the most subduing. Eiseman (2002) also indicated that colour preference often reflects specific demographic groups and that red, for example, could be linked to the more secure within a society and the more economically stable segment.

The question of universal preferences for certain colours is of practical interest and importance for the designer and communicator and has implications for all the fields of communication. The intense competition among organisations means that even a marginal increase in sales that can be caused by colour preference for certain products, can have a commercial significance (Crozier, 1999).

3.5 Colour research

Extensive research has been done on colour, especially in the field of psychology. The majority of the research was done to determine how colour

could help to reveal defiant personalities or emotional problems that a subject might have. Examples of such research are the works of Max Luscher and Max Pfister (Birren, 1955:108). For the purpose of this study, only the research that focused on determining the motivation behind a subject's colour preferences are discussed, as well as research looking at physiological and emotional reactions to colour, since these are the factors that influence the communication potential of colour.

3.5.1 Research on colour preference

Crozier (1999) looked at published psychological empirical research to address the question of colour preference. He found that the research focused on colour patches, which raises suspicion about the validity of the research. It also led to questions such as whether the findings could be generalised to everyday life. One should also take into account that preferences are tied to certain products, and that the dimensions of colour and the conditions in which the colours are viewed, have an influence. According to Pointer and Attridge (in Crozier, 1999) the human eye can discern between about 2, 28 million colours, while there are at most 4 000 words in the English language to name colours. The term "red" then, in other words, can refer to a large number of distinct colours. Earlier studies also tended to use very limited stimulus sets, and in failed to control chrome and value most of the time (Whitfield & Wiltshire, 1990).

Taft (in Crozier, 1999) found that there is some generalisation in preferences among certain colour stimuli by using six computer-generated pictures of everyday objects in the same colour. Responses, however, were guided by what Taft referred to as "generalised conceptions of colour appropriateness", which again are presumably influenced by cultural conventions and stereotypes.

- <u>Eysenck</u>

In 1941 Eysenck (Crozier, 1999), in addition to his own research, summarised the findings of 17 other investigations involving 21 060 participants. He found a consistent rank order of preferences: blue, red, green, violet, orange, and

yellow. He found that this rank order were true for men and women, and for people of different ethic groups (Eysenck labelled them "white" and "coloured"). He found that there were personality differences – extroverts preferred bright and pure colours, while introverts preferred more subdued and tinted colours.

- Birren

Birren (1955:109) has found that there is definite relationship between colour preference and personality - the division of colours, into cool and warm spectrum colours, holds very evident and simple meaning with reference to human personality. The experience of colour is more immediate than the experience of form, and more likely to contain personal, affectively noted tones. According to the findings of Birren's research, people tend to fall into two distinct categories: those who prefer clear, distinct hues, usually warm in tone, and those who favour cooler hues and tones of less saturation. The warm colour dominant subjects are characterised by an intimate relation to the visually perceptible world. They are receptive and open to outside influences. The cold colour dominant subject have a "detached split-off" attitude to the outside world.

- Helson and Lansford

In 1970, Helson and Lansford (Crozier, 1999) made use of Munsell system in their research. This system takes form in the *Munsell Book of Color*, which includes a large number of detachable colour chips. Each of these colour chips can be specified in terms of its hue and co-ordinates for chroma and value. This means that chips used in different experiments can be compared. Helson and Lansford also took into consideration incident illumination, background colour and the non-additive effects of these variables. Their research involved subjects judging 125 chips against 25 different coloured backgrounds using five sources of illumination. They found that the spectral energy of sources and the colours of backgrounds are highly significant in determining the pleasantness of object colours (Crozier, 1999).

- E.R. Jaensch

According to Jaensch (Birren, 1978:112), blonde complexion types have a different attitude toward colour than do brunette types. This is due a difference between in the predominance of "sunlight" in the more tropical regions of the world, and of "skylight" in the more polar regions. As one travels between these areas, from cold to hot climates, sunlight increases and skylight decreases. The more intense light of the hot climates, requires sun adaptation, or as Jaensch calls it, red-sightedness (Birren, 1978:112). This is accompanied by pigmentation in the eye and skin. Red-sighted persons are brunette types, such as people from Latin origin. They are likely to have dark eyes, hair and complexions. They have a natural preference for red and the other warm hues. Blond types, on the other hand, are green-sighted and have a different type of pigmentation, for example Nordic and Scandinavian types with bluish eyes, light hair and a light complexion. Their preference is for blue and green.

This means that where sunlight is abundant, people are likely to show a preference for warm hues. In places with less sunlight, a preference for cooler hues and softer tones will be found. Geboy (1996) agrees with this by stating that colour is climate bound – people in sunny and warmer regions prefer brighter colours.

-

- Silver, Hemphill, and Boyatzis and Varghese

In 1988 Silver (Crozier, 1999) did a survey of 581 adults. He asked them to simply say what their favourite colours were. The order that emerged for both men and women, and white and black participants, were blue, red, black, purple, green, yellow, white, orange, and brown.

Hemphill's study in 1996 (Crozier, 1999), asked 40 participants to name their favourite colour as well as the major colour that they wore. He found that 55% of women nominated their favourite colour as blue and 45% of them nominated blue as the colour they most wore. Among the men 53%

nominated blue as their favourite colour and 46% were wearing predominantly blue clothes.

Boyatzis and Varghese (Crozier, 1999) did a survey of 60 children between the ages of six and seven in 1994. Their results were in line with the sexual stereotypes for children's clothing – 26% of the boys nominated blue as their favourite colour followed by red, while 50% of the girls nominated pink.

- <u>Fehrman and Fehrman</u>

Fehrman and Fehrman (2000:7) suggested that when reviewing all the research done on colour preference, the impression one gets is that an acceptable, or preferable colour, is defined by the object with which it is associated. This relation is probably the product of cultural norms and expectations or subjective colour bias. They also concluded that the factors that influence colour bias are:

- Learned colour bias
- Variations in the saturation or value of the colour under study
- The interaction between light source, background colour, and the colour of the object being viewed.
- The contrast between colour in combination
- The size and placement of light sources.

- <u>Crozier</u>

Crozier (1999) reviewed 16 studies investigating adult colour preference and nine studies on the colour preference of children. He also compared the different methods in which these studies were carried out and how preferences were assessed. In most of the studies, the stimuli were colour chips or coloured objects. Some of the research made use of a limited number of colours and looked at the different responses subjects had to them. Others included a wide range of colours and participants had to order them from most liked to least liked. Paired comparison design was also used where participants had to make comparative judgements between pairs of colour stimuli. In the assessment of infants, colour preference was determined by

measuring the time that they spent fixating on a colour. Inspection times varied in all the experiments, which implied that children were sensitive to variation in colour.

Crozier (1999) summarised his findings in the following table. It lists the frequency with which the six hues that were listed in Eysenck's study appear in rank order position one to six. For example, in ten out of the sixteen studies done on adult colour preference, blue is rated as the most preferred colour and where it is not, it is listed as second or third.

HUE	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL
ADULTS							
Blue	10	4	2	0	0	0	16
Green	2	7	3	3	1	0	16
Red	4	2	6	4	0	0	16
Purple	0	2	3	3	2	3	13
Orange	0	1	0	3	2	5	11
Yellow	0	0	2	4	8	2	16
CHILDREN							
Blue	3	2	1	0	0	0	6
Green	0	1	0	4	0	1	6
Red	4	2	1	0	0	0	7
Purple	0	0	1	0	2	0	3
Orange	0	0	3	1	0	0	4
Yellow	0	2	1	2	1	1	7

Figure 3.2: Summary of colour preferences (Crozier, 1999)

Crozier (1999) provides various reasons for the preference of blue. Some of these are:
- Nominating blue might simply be conventional – choosing blue and the number seven, for example, is very common.

- It is an average or emotionally neutral hue, which means that it could be emerging in the top position, because the more extreme colour choices, like red and green, cancel each other out.
- Colour have acquired connotations and blue lends itself to positive connotations
- Colour preference may be less a function of specific hues than of more general principles, which results in a preference of blue, where the general principles are saturation (colours of higher chroma is preferred to those of less), temperature (cool colours are preferred to warm colours) and brightness (bright colours are preferred to dark colours).

3.5.2 Research on colour combinations

Using coloured lights on a screen, William Walton and Beulah Morris (in Birren, 1978:66) found that the combination of red and blue ranked the highest with adults. Red and blue was followed by blue and green, red and green, clear and blue, amber and blue, amber and green, red and amber, and clear and amber. J. P. Guileford (Birren, 1978:67) believes that there is more involved in colour harmony than emotional pleasure. He found evidence that either very small or very large differences in hue give more pleasing results than do medium differences and that this tendency is much stronger in women than it is in men. This means that a person is more likely to see harmony in colours that are closely related or those that are opposite each other in the colour wheel.

3.5.3 Research on emotional reactions to colour

Colour and colour combinations effects the human mind and body in different ways – some colours attract us, while others can repel (Geboy, 1997). Researchers suggested that colour associations and reactions to colour may have been formulated early in human history when, for example, man associated dark blue with night, and therefore with passivity, while yellow is associated with sunlight and arousal (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999). Today, cool colours are still considered calming and warm colours arousing.

In 1875 a European doctor by the name of Ponza fitted several rooms with coloured-glass windows, coloured walls, and coloured furnishings (Birren, 1978:45). The colours mainly used were red and blue. Regarding red he wrote,

> After passing three hours in a red room a man afflicted with taciturn delirium became gay and cheerful; on getting up the day after his entry into the room, another madman who had refused all food whatever asked for breakfast, and ate with surprising avidity (Birren, 1978:45)

With blue, Ponza (Birren, 1978:45) found that violent cases, that had to be kept in straitjackets, became calmer in less that an hour when placed in a room with a blue window. Another study done on the influence of colour on behaviour had shown that when uncontrollable and violent prisoners were placed in a pink room, they became calm within 15 minutes (Smith, in Clemons, 1983:4). The implication of this is that colour can help to inspire a certain mood in human beings.

In research on emotional reaction to colour, researchers tried to determine whether a reliable colour – mood association exists and whether colour could influence a person's emotional state. Some studies have shown that a definite colour – mood association does exist, but that the strength of this association varies. The difference in strength seemed to be determined by how strongly a person associated a particular colour with a particular mood or emotion. According to Whitifield and Wiltshire (1990), the assumption that colours have emotional and mood characteristics, has received experimental support, as has the assumption that reactivity to colour can reflect a subject's emotional state. They found, however, inconclusive evidence that preference or reactivity to colour could be linked to as specific emotion or personality trait.

According to Fehrman and Fehrman (2000:82) this association is a learned behaviour. For example, when we are very young, we learn to associate red with fire engines, stop signs, and other danger signals. This leads to us form an association with red as a danger or alert sign. We are surrounded with subtle learned responses from childhood. Blue is associated with water, the sky and the ocean, which leads to us associating it with calm, tranquillity and

peacefulness. The authors (Fehrman & Fehrman, 2000:82) feel that it is important to differentiate between these culturally learned colour associations and true biological responses. Fehrman and Fehrman (2000:82) are of opinion that it is more likely that our changing moods and emotions, caused by our own physiological makeup at the moment, interact with colour to create preferences and associations that we then link to the colour–emotion response itself.

Whatever standpoint is taken, the fact is that colour is associated with certain emotions, culturally learned or otherwise, and being aware of these associations and the different associations across cultures, can aid in communication and design to bring a more effective message across.

3.5.4 Research on physiological reactions to colour

Research has shown that aside from emotional responses, colour influences people on a physiological level as well (Clemons, 1983:4). Colour is light and energy. Scientists have found that actual physiological changes take place in human beings when they are exposed to certain colours (Eiseman, 2002).

Birren (1955:110) states that a direct connection exists between the brain and the body, and that certain reactions take place independently of thought or deliberation. Colour can affect muscular tension, brain wave activity, heart rate, respiration, and other functions of the body. Colour also influences behaviour. Red was found to increase bodily tension and stimulate the autonomic nervous system. Green and blue colours were found to release tension and have a lesser physiological effect. As with colour preference and emotional reactions to colour, various studies have been conducted to determine physiological reaction to various colours. Some of these studies are the following:

German neuro-psychologist Kurt Goldstein (in O'Daniel, 2001) conducted a series of experiments and found that colour affects a wide range of perceptions. He found that under a red light, time seems to pass slowly and objects seem larger, longer and heavier. Under a blue light, time seems to

pass quickly and objects appear smaller and lighter. Carrying a black suitcase, identical to a white suitcase, tired subjects more that carrying the white case.

In 1910 Stein (Birren, 1978:45) called attention to a general light tonus in the muscular reactions of the human body. The term "tonus" refers to the condition of steady activity maintained by the body. Conditions of muscular tension and muscular relaxation, for example, are tonus changes. These changes are noticeable and measurable and can give a good indication of the psycho-physiological action of a given colour.

Feré (Birren, 1978:46) discovered that red increased muscular tension from normal 23 units to 42. Orange increased the units to 35, yellow to 30, green to 28, and blue to 24—all above normal. Emotionally, the red end of the spectrum is considered to be exciting while the blue-violet end is considered to be subduing (Birren, 1955:110). Physically and physiologically, the same sort of complementation exists in the spectrum.

Four thousand years ago, in Egypt, doctors used coloured light to heal various ailments (O'Daniel, 2001). Today, New Age medicine is experimenting with the same theory. Practitioners in this field are calling themselves chromo-therapists. In this practice, every colour is said to have a physical effect. Red is a liver energiser, scarlet is a vasoconstrictor, orange helps to strengthen the lungs, green acts upon the sympathetic nervous system, and yellow energises the alimentary tract.

3.6 Factors influencing reactions to colour

Wysecki (Clemons, 1983:3) states that colour influences the individual and that these individual emotional responses vary from person to person and over time within the same person. For example, some of the responses that are produced or provoked by colour can be caused by a memory that the person associates with this particular colour. Such a person might have a fond childhood memory, which involves a particular shade of blue (the colour of

piece of clothing that his or her mother wore), and because of that memory, attach a favourable meaning to that colour.

Meanings attached to colour are learned early in life and cause certain unique and uniform responses when an individual is confronted with that colour. There are various factors that influence reaction to colour. Some of these factors are:

- culture
- colour preference (see sections on "*Colour preference*" and "*Research on colour preference*")
- religion
- colour combinations
- trends
- age

3.6.1 Culture

When looking at the meanings of colours across different cultures, some colours have universal meanings and others not. Colour combinations also play an important role in meaning and preference of colour in a certain culture. Within each culture's shared signs and experiences, however, each individual has a shared personal "reality world" shaped by unique experiences and learning. These individual experiences shape attitudes and perceptions and create a diverse and pluralistic society, which also have to be taken into consideration. It is important to avoid confusing "culture" with "race". According to Whitfield and Wiltshire (1990), culture plays a more important role than race with regards to colour. People who are from different races, but live in the same area or district, are subject to the same cultural influences. This means that there will be a significantly higher within-group agreement between races within the same culture, than between races in different cultures.

Morton (Dostie, 2002) lists various different responses to colour on a global level. Red for example, changes in meaning when used with other colours and across different cultures. In China, red is seen as a colour of prosperity,

while in the West, it is the colour of passion (or danger). With green, it becomes a symbol of Christmas in Western cultures. When used in combination with white, it means joy in Eastern cultures. The colour green does not do well in a global market, according to Morton (Dostie, 2002). Problems have been experienced with green packaging in China and France, although it was successful in attracting investors in the Middle East. Cultural colour associations can also be seen reflected in language of that culture, for example "feeling blue", "seeing red" or being a "yellow belly".

In the most western cultures, white is associated with purity and worn by the bride on her wedding day. In India, white is worn to funerals, whereas yellow is the traditional colour for a wedding (Arntson, 1998:139). The colour blue, for example, is seen as a protective colour in the Southwest (Native Americans) and Southeast of America and in many Middle-Eastern countries. Doors and ceilings are painted blue to ward off evil spirits or ghosts (Feisner, 2001:118).

Madden (2000) found that the colours blue, green, and white were all well liked across countries and that they share similar meanings. Black and red also received high ratings, but meanings were considerably different. Madden (2000) found, however, that in the case of logos, the combination of colours indicated that cultural similarities and differences do exist in the ways that consumers select colour combinations.

When a visual communication will be used globally, it is important for the communicator or designer to consider what the colour (or colour combinations) in the message will mean to each of the cultures reached by the communication. They need to understand the meanings associated with different colours and know which colours are preferred for certain products or services.

3.6.2 Religion and colour

Another factor, influencing the meaning attached to colour, is religion (Feisner, 2001:121). Different religions attach specific meanings to certain colours.

According to Cheskin (1948:54) in ancient times, the sun was worshipped and the light of the sun was associated with colour. Life and goodness were symbolised with bright colours and death and evil with black. To the Greeks, colour was associated with divinity – it was endowed with a complexity of symbolism and elevated to the divine. As with the Egyptians and Assyrians, colour was used extensively not only in paintings, but also in sculpture and architecture. The ancient temples and sculptures were brilliantly coloured; the colour now lost on the remains we see today.

Art was an important aspect of the pagan Greek culture and was condemned by early Christianity. Iconoclasts destroyed all of the artworks that they could find. They did not, however, condemn the use of colour (Cheskin, 1948:54). In the Roman Catholic religion, the colours white, red, green, violet and black, each has symbolic meaning. Red, for example, is the language of fire and blood; it indicates burning, charity and the sacrifice of martyrs. In Hinduism, the colour blue is used to indicate Krishna, the eight avatar of Vishnu (Cheskin, 1948:54).

3.6.3 Colour combinations

It is important to take into consideration that meaning is not limited to only one colour. Different combinations of colours can also have different meanings, which implies that the audience holds different perceptions and prejudices about different colour combinations (Zelanski & Fisher, 1984:207).

The authors have found that in colour combinations, contrast in the values of colours produces an effect of precision and objectivity. Colours that are closer in value give a hazy, vague, introspective feeling. Dark compositions produce the feeling of fear and mystery. Dark values can increase the perceived size of an object and imply space. Light compositions give the feeling of clarity and optimism, while middle values seem relaxed and less demanding. High intensity attracts and gives the viewer a feeling of activity. Warm colours stimulate the senses and appear to advance towards the viewer, while cool colours have a calming effect and retreat into the distance (Zelanski & Fisher, 1984:207).

Preferences for colour combinations are also influenced by culture. According to Madden (2000) when it came to colour combinations in logos, some cultural groups match or select only colours that they like equally (Taiwan and Hong-Kong). Other groups seemed to match colours that carried the same meaning, and others paired colours whose associations seemed complementary. Park, Jun and Shocker (as in Madden, 2000), found that attribute profiles are more favourable when two colours that are less well-liked, but more complementary, are combined in a logo, that the combination of two-well like colours.

The implication of this for the communicator or designer is that they cannot simply transpose a colour or colour combinations from one market to another. They need to recognise how the organisation and its colours are perceived and what meanings they convey. This means that the combination of colours in logos, packaging, etc., are complex and managers of an organisation need to recognise the importance of colour in their communications.

3.6.4 Colour Trends

Colour and colour choice also change in meaning over time with fashion and social awareness. An example of this changing nature is the colour green. During the nineteenth century, it was discovered that the colour *Paris Green* (an emerald shade) contained traces of arsenic. Before this discovery, it was considered a fashionable colour (Feisner, 2001:118). Afterwards, however, it was seen as an unlucky colour. Today, this has once again changed. Greater environmental awareness has led to green being back in fashion - trends in colour reflect the cultural concerns of society (Kaye, 1998:4). Aside from green, it has also become popular to use earthy colours for a product that is considered "green" or "natural", especially with growing environmental awareness.

It is important for a designer to know what the current trends in colour are. According to Eiserman (2002), there are many areas to watch for signs of impeding colour trends. These areas are the following:

- fashion
- the entertainment world
- museum collections (art exhibitions)
- economic issues
- sociological issues
- cyclical patterns / pendulum type patterns
- lifestyles
- multi-cultural mixes
- technology
- buzzwords

Colour, or the lack of colour, can reflect the emotional makeup of an entire decade. Eiserman (2002) provides a summery of colour changes over the past few decades and the abovementioned areas that influenced the changes. In the 1930's, women looked towards the movies for inspiration. To lift spirits after the great depression, women wore white, off-white and lightened pastels. World War 2 brought sombre tones – battleship grey, navy and khaki. After the war *Rosie the Riveter* returned to *Susie Homemaker* and pink made a comeback. Audrey Hepburn's movie, Funny Face (1957), with an all pink sequence, reinforced this. It was also the time the doll, Barbie, was born; she wore pink most of the time. The sixties brought social and sexual revolution. Clashing "flower power" colours became fashionable. In a chemically altered drug culture, colours were rendered more brightly.

In a pendulum fashion, the seventies arrived and everyone was satiated with colour (Eiserman, 2002). Down to earth tones and colours like avocado became the rage. By the end of the decade, however, vibrant colours emerged again with the advent of the eighties and the disco craze. During the eighties, colour change was more rapid. It was the beginning of the computer age and the beginning of the decade saw a "softening" of colours. In the mid-eighties, however, there was a swing towards an empowering, sophisticated and elegant black. Colours were juxtaposed against black on the packaging of designer foods and shiny black furnishings and appliances were in fashion.

The nineties brought a shaky economy and colours moved towards "safe" neutrals. New ecologically aware consumer consciousness also arose. Recycled paper in tones of beige replaced bleached whites. The economy improved by the mid-nineties, and as a result, colours used were brighter. Globalisation also led to a colourful multi-ethnic mix of colours from all over the world inspired by exotic colour palettes (Eiserman, 2002).

In the 21st century, consumers expected more colour options that reflected their own lifestyles and assisted them in achieving their own comfort level (Eiserman, 2002). No matter what the product, the consumer must respond on some emotional level to the colours of the product, the advertisement, the commercials, etc.

Although trends influence consumer or audience choice, consideration thereof plays a more important role short-term communication investments like sales and promotion. An organisation's visual identity is long-term communication investment and should not be susceptible to trends (Gasson, 1974:36). Eiserman (2002) supports this by stating that successful brand image and corporate image colours, that have helped to establish a corporate identity and personality, should not be abandoned in favour of trends. The psychological impact of colours should always be factored into the design regardless of the trends in "new colours".

3.6.5 Age and colour experience

When designing a visual communication aimed at children, one should work with primary colours. In working with children, Imada (Birren, 1978:66) found that this preference for brighter colours was not haphazard, even though good discrimination was not highly developed. Given black crayons, children were inclined to draw inanimate things (cars, houses, etc.). When given coloured crayons, they drew humans, plants and animals.

Birren (1978:65) states that children are influenced more by visual attraction than emotional pleasure or response. Children like bright happy colours

(Kaizer, 2002) and they prefer colourful objects to non-coloured objects. Both Kaizer (2002 and Eiseman (2002) have found that children's preferences are first for red (hues with a longer wavelength), than for blue.

With maturity comes a greater liking for colours with hues of a shorter wavelength (Birren, 1978:65). As we grow older, our colour preference is influenced by learned responses, habit and what adults tell us is "appropriate" colour (Eiseman, 2002). Adult colour preference is also usually more conservative that the colour preferences of younger people. Birren (1978:65) found that children are more colour dominant than form dominant. As children mature they become more form dominant. Creative people, however, remain colour dominant all of their lives.

The psychology and the influences behind colour communication are complex and by no means absolute. It is affected by many considerations. But if the designer or organisation carries knowledge of colour psychology and its influences in communication it can aid in sending a better, more understandable message across. It is important to understand the organisation for which the colour will be used as well as the audience at which the colour is aimed. The communicator/designer needs to know the preferences and prejudices that an audience holds towards a certain colour or colour combinations (Zelanski & Fisher, 1984:206). If the communicator knows how a certain design element works to convey meaning, he or she will be in a better position to control the meaning in the message.

3.7 The different meanings of colour

The Luchner test (Clemons, 1983:3) showed that there are certain colours that represent similar values to some cultures and people. The majority of sources consulted for this study, listed various colours together with the meanings they found to be associated with these colours. These findings have been combined into a table (see Appendix 3) that lists the colours companied by their meanings. The authors of the resources used for the compilation of this table, are listed as well.

According to Feisner (2001:118), colours are identified in the same manner for all cultures. Some cultures don't have separate words for blue and green, yellow or orange. The Inuit, the indigenous people in Alaska, Canada for example, have seventeen words for white, as determined by the different kinds of snow perceived by them. All languages, however, have words for the colours white and black. Although many may argue that these are not colours – black is the absence of all colour, while white is all the hues in the spectrum – they carry powerful symbolism. These two colours will be the first two listed in the table. A third colour that is distinguished by most cultures is red. This will be the third colour in the table. The next colours, in the order listed in the table, are green, blue, yellow and orange. These are the colours that often are not distinguished between. Then will follow brown, grey, pink and purple.

Meanings that were mentioned in two or more of the studies are highlighted in bold. The meanings attached to the different colours are divided into objects and feelings (or abstract concepts). The colours have further been divided into negative and positive.

It is important to note that this table is by no means absolute. Colours can carry strong symbolic connotations (Meggs, 1992:10) and enormous flexibility exists in the different meanings that can be attached to a colour. A colour can connote with many emotions, feelings, meanings, etc. – depending on its contexts and relationships with other signs, symbols and images.

3.8 Conclusion

Colour is supported by all the elements of the visual and corporate identity, and in turn, plays a strong supporting role. It influences corporate image, as well as corporate personality. It has the potential to communicate, as has been shown by the above discussions in the chapter on colour. When the communicator realises the potential that colour has to communicate, as well as the important part it plays in the organisation's overall corporate communications, it can be utilised to create a more effective message that successfully communicate to an organisation's stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the research methods followed, as well as a motivation for the case studies selected for this study. Since the approach of this study is of a qualitative nature, a case study approach, self administered questionnaires and colour analysis of each of the case organisation's corporate colours as utilised in their visual identities were used.

The graphic designers who develop and design the visual identities, are mostly aware of the potential that colour has to function as a communication tool. One can ask whether the same is true for the management of organisations. In this study the communicative role that colour plays as part of selected case organisations' corporate visual identities, is investigated.

As mentioned, the research process followed in this study is of a qualitative nature and it seeks to identify the underlying concepts and the relationships between these concepts, for example, how colour can aid communication. The next three sections of this chapter will first briefly readdress the problem statement, research questions and aims of the study. This is followed by a discussion of the approach used and its relationship to this study, as well as how it was applied in this study to solve the research questions posed.

4.1 Focus of study

The aim of this study is to determine the communicative role that colour plays in the logos of selected organisations. The research in this project attempts to determine, step by step, the motivation behind the use of a particular colour and the communication intended behind each of these colours. The project also attempts to determine the target markets at which the communication is aimed; the research done by each of the case organisations regarding colour symbolism and the suitability of the colour regarding the target markets; and the importance attached to colour as a communication tool.

4.2 Methodological approach and procedures

The traditional difference between quantitative and qualitative research is that whereas a quantitative enquiry examines data that are numbers and makes use of deductive reasoning, a qualitative enquiry examines data that is narrative and makes use of inductive reasoning. According to Grittins (2003) qualitative researchers stress the "socially constructed nature of reality" as well as the "relationship between the researcher and what is studied". It is analytic and interpretative and attempts to examine phenomena in a holistic manner. Qualitative research is conducted in the field in an attempt to capture the normal flow of events and the researcher does not attempt to control events or variables that are not directly connected to the study. This type of research or study depends on the interpretation and analysis of what people say and do not make use measurement as quantitative methods do. The analysis of data gathered involves the critical analysis and synthesis of narrative information to reach verbal conclusions.

From the above, it can be seen that a qualitative approach would be best suited to answer the research question described in chapter one, the role of colour as communication. In the following section the research procedure followed, namely the literature review and the case study approach, will be discussed in context of this study.

4.3 Research procedure

As stated in the introduction the research procedure of this study makes use of two qualitative methods, namely a literature review and a case study approach. In the following section, each of these methods will be discussed in more detail.

4.3.1 Literature review

In this study, two different fields, namely graphic design and corporate communication, were investigated. The aim of the literature study was to demonstrate the importance of graphic design, and specifically a design element like colour, to the field of corporate communication. It also intended to examine the place and role in of graphic design and colour in corporate

communication and to examine the importance of the corporate colour scheme in the organisations' overall visual communications. It also provided background information on corporate communications, as well as on colour as communication

The literature study involved locating and identifying available sources, as well as forming an evaluation and synthesis of the information relevant to the research problem (Du Plooy, 1997:38). The literature review also helped to construct a framework for the intended study and provide a theoretical background for the main problem statement.

The key issues in this literature review were descriptive as well as theoretical. A literature review is essentially an exercise in inductive reasoning where "samples" of text was read to arrive at a proper understanding of a specific area in a discipline, which in the case of this study were corporate communication, graphic design and colour. Care was taken to consult the most recent publications since information older that five years is often considered to be outdated. In the case of colour, however, some of the older publications concerning colour research are still considered valid, and are still quoted in the more recent publications.

The sources used for this literature study were journal articles found online in MCB Emerald, and EbscoHost (Business Source Premier and Academic Search Premier), the Internet, and books identified on the Library catalogue (Ferdinand Postma Biblioteek, PU vir CHO).

Of all the resources consulted for this study, none combine the fields of graphic design with that of corporate communication. Concerning colour, there are a number of sources that examine the meanings associated with certain colour. Very few of the sources, however, directly examined the communication potential of colour and how colour's communication potential could be applied to the fields of communication studies and corporate communication.

4.3.2 The case study approach

A case study can be defined as an in-depth study of a particular instance, or a small number of instances, of a phenomenon (Hyde, 2002:83). The purpose of the case study approach is to investigate a contemporary phenomenon, such as the way in which colour is used as a communication tool, within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994:13).

Case study research often involves the collection of perceptions of 'unobservable' external world phenomena such as perceptions that are 'unobservable' (Perry, 1998). What, however, makes the use of external reality more complex, is that triangulation or the use of more that one research method, is essential to refine fallible observations of the reality. In the study questionnaires as well as a colour analysis were used to achieve triangulation.

According to Perry (1998), the research problems addressed in case studies are more descriptive than prescriptive and no positivist experiments or case and effect paths are required to solve the research problem. The problem is usually a "How do?" rather than a "How should?" problem with questions such as "How do organisations use colour as communication in their visual communication?" being asked.

Prior theory has a pivotal function in the design of the case study and the analysis of its data (Perry, 1998). It can be viewed as additional evidence that can be used to triangulate on the external reality of the case study's research's realism paradigm. Prior theory is developed from the literature, and provides a focus to the data collection phase in the form of research issues that always conclude in the literature review. In chapter three, a colour table listing the various meanings associated with certain colours were complied from existing literature. This table was used in chapter five in the colour analysis of the various media collected.

Bennet and George (1997) suggest that the researcher should select similar cases that are comparable in all but one variable. In the case of this study, this single variable was the corporate colour scheme and specifically the element of colour in the organisation's visual identity. Similar organisations were chosen, all in the same market category providing the same service to approximately the same target markets, but all with different corporate colour schemes.

Tellis (1997) identified six different sources of evidence that is used in case studies and these are documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artefacts. Not all of these sources are relevant to all case studies. The sources used depend on the context of the study. According to Tellis (1997), the most important source, however, are interviews, which were used for this study. The interview questions were detailed and developed in advance, much as they are in the case of survey questions, and were conducted via e-mail in the form of self-administered questionnaires.

The second source of evidence used for this study was physical artefacts. Physical artefacts are physical evidence that is collected during the study as part of a field visit, which can help to broaden the perspective of the researcher. The physical artefacts collected were printed media distributed by each of the case organisations and included flyers, brochures and booklets. The aim of the colour analysis was to function as a control mechanism for the questionnaires. It was used to determine whether the message intended through the colour use, corresponds to the perceived message communicated by the media. Colour analysis of the artefacts was conducted (the results are discussed in chapter five) according to the following criteria:

- The communication potential of the colour scheme.
- The meanings associated with colours used.
- The correlation between the above two points and the organisation's personality, aims, and functions (as determined by the questionnaires).

- The suitability of colour scheme when considering the various target markets of the organisation.

- The consistency of the colour scheme use across the various print media collected.

The main source used in the case study, the self- administered questionnaires as an interview method, is described by Du Plooy (1997:112) as a conversation with purpose. It is designed to explore someone's point of view in detail. It furthermore provides detailed background about the reasons why participants give specific answers and can provide extensive data concerning opinions, recollections, values, motivations and feelings of the participants. Information that cannot be gathered through observation was gathered directly from the participants or respondents. Questionnaires also allow the researcher to see a social or communication phenomenon from the viewpoint of the people involved with the phenomenon, and in the case of this study it would be to examine how they utilise colour as a communication tool.

A problem often experienced with the interviews is the busy work schedules of the respondents. Very few of them have time available in their schedules for a lengthy interview. This led to the interviews being conducted in the form *self-administered questionnaires*, which Du Plooy (1997:114) also refers to as non-personal data collection. This type of interview method allows for an interview to take place without direct personal contact with the respondents and the respondents themselves complete the questionnaire over a certain period of time. In this study, a period of a month was allowed for the completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaires consisted of open-ended questions designed to determine the opinions of the respondents, closed questions, contingency questions, and scales. The scales used were 4 and 5 point Likert Scales, as developed by Rensis Likert in an attempt to improve the levels of measurement in social research through the use of standardised response categories (Anon, 2003b).

The questionnaires were sent to the marketing managers of each organisation, as well as to the designers of the respective visual identities. A short motivational letter explaining the purpose of the study was attached to each questionnaire. Separate questionnaires were developed for the designers and marketing managers. The questionnaires sent to the marketing managers focused on the organisation's visual identity and colour scheme and its relationship to the organisation's personality, aims and goals; the organisation's target markets; visual communication; and the organisations competition. The questionnaires sent to the designers focussed specifically on the visual identity and colour scheme. Examples of the research questionnaires as well as their relation to the research objectives are attached to this report as Appendix 2. The following table offers a summary of the research objectives and their relation to the questions in the questionnaires.

1.	The selected case organisations' **motivation** behind the use of the particular colours.	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13,2.14, and 2.22.	3.3, 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9.
2.	The intended **communication** behind each case organisation's colour scheme as used in the visual identity.	2.17, 2.18, and 2.21.	2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 6.1, and 6,2.
3.	The **target markets** as identified by the selected case organisations.	2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.15 and 2.16.	4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.
4.	The **research** done by the selected case organisations on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various	2.8, 2.9, and 2.10.	3.4, 3.5 and 3.6.

	target markets.		
5.	The **importance** of colour as a communication tool to the organisation.	2.1, 2.19, and 2.20.	3.2, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12 and 3.13.

Table 4.1: The research objectives and their relationship to the questions in the marketing and designer questionnaires

A possible problem that could arise with the use of questionnaires is the risk that the respondents from the three organisations, the marketing personnel, might react with a form of "public relations". The respondents might adapt their answers to show their organisations in a favourable light. This, however, will be countered to a certain extent by the colour analysis of each organisation, as well as by the questionnaires sent to the designers responsible for the development of the logos.

Questionnaires were sent to the following people:
- *Cell C*:
  Carlyn Thomas – Senior Designer at Switch Design
  Gary Harwood – Creative Director, HKLM
  Vanda Harries – Brand Manager
- *Vodacom:*
  Fred Swart – Creative Director Design, FCB
  Rajeeb Jadoor – Brand Manager
- *MTN:*
  Vivian le Roux – Account Director, Pentagraph
  Nathan Reddy – Creative Director

To analyse the data of the questionnaires as well as that of the colour analysis, a cross-case search for patterns will be performed. This will entail that the data gathered will be divided according to type across all cases. In addition, the information gathered form each case will be discussed

individually and compared to the information gathered from the other cases, using categories that are determined by the research questions of this study.

4.4 Motivation for use of particular respondents

The organisations chosen for this study had to be organisations that provide approximately the same product and service in a strongly competitive market. It is postulated that these organisations would have to rely on their corporate image and identity, and more specifically on their visual identity, to differentiate themselves from their competition. This would imply that these organisations would have to be more aware of the potential that a design element such as colour has to contribute to their communication and this aspect would be important for this study. As stated in the literature study, consumers often rely on the visual identity of the organisation to make a choice between products. The reason for this is the fact that organisations such as this have to rely more on their corporate image and identity, and more specifically, their visual identity, to differentiate themselves from their competition. This is important for this study, because these organisations would be more aware of the potential that a design element such as colour has to contribute to their communication. As stated in the literature study, consumers often rely on the visual identity of the organisation to make a choice between products and services.

An important part of an organisation's visual identity is colour and the primary motivation for using the selected organisations in the case study is their respective colour schemes and the apparent role that colour plays in their visual communication. It was also deemed important that the case organisations should have different colour schemes, so as to avoid repetition, and the selected organisations complied with this criterium.

By taking all the above reasons into consideration, the organisations chosen for this study were the three cell phone companies in South Africa, namely *Vodacom, MTN* and *Cell C*. All three of these organisations operate in a highly competitive and fast growing market where they provide similar services and products. The organisations also use different colour schemes,

namely red as main colour for *Cell C*, blue and green for *Vodacom* and yellow and blue as *MTN's* main colours.

4.4.1 Vodacom, MTN and Cell C – a brief background

All three of these organisations operate on a national basis, as well as international basis and they also provide service in various countries in Africa). For this study, however, the focus will be on the South African market. According to *Cellular and Mobile* (2003), an organisation that monitors cell-phone use in all the countries in Africa, the market size in South Africa for the term 2002/3 is estimated at 14.4 million users, of which 80% are active users. They estimate that the potential market will grow to 19 million users by 2006. *Vodacom* currently dominates the market with a 60% share, followed by *MTN*. In June 2001 a licence was awarded to the *Cell C Consortium*. Unlike the first two companies that operate at 900 Mhz, *Cell C* also operates at 1800 Mhz. Together, the three GSM companies cover 71% of the country's population.

Currently *Cell C* has 1.1 million users of which 945 000 are prepaid customers and 78 000 are contract users. *Vodacom* has 7.5 million users and *MTN* 5.22.

Cellular and Mobile (2003) also states that the market is growing daily with 9 000 users, of which the majority is prepaid customers. The market is currently worth 23 billion SA Rands and will grow to around 45 billion. *Vodago* is *Vodacom's* prepaid package and was launched in November 1996. This service accounts for more than 90% to all new connections to their network, but they also offer a *4U* package. Their network currently switches 30% of telephone volume in South Africa and 10% in Africa.

Looking at these statistics, it is clear that the three organisations are competing in a highly lucrative, fast growing, and competitive market. All three organisations offer the same type of product and service. When the consumers therefore need to make a choice between the three organisations and which service to use, the majority will not take the technicalities of the organisations into consideration. The average consumer is more likely to use

the respective visual identities and images of the organisations to make a choice.

4.5 Conclusion

A qualitative case study approach was used to answer the research questions proposed/ described in chapter one. The sources of information used for the case study were self-administered questionnaires and colour analysis of the organisations visual identities through physical artefacts collected in the field according to a set of predetermined goals. The results of the colour analysis and self-administered questionnaires will be discussed in chapters five and six, followed by the recommendations and conclusions in chapter seven.

CHAPTER 5
# ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONS' COLOUR COMMUNICATION

For the purpose of the colour analysis, the mother brand, which is the main visual identity, as used by the organisations, was examined. Derivatives of the visual identities, however, were not examined. The reason for this is that Cell C and MTN's derivatives are adaptations of the main logos and the overall colour scheme and the symbolism behind the colours used, stayed the same. It is only in the case of Vodacom and their derivative *4U* (see figure 5.11), that a new colour scheme was developed. In this chapter, the colour scheme of each of the organisation's visual identities will be analysed according to the goals of the colour analysis as stated in chapter four. Section 5.6 at the end of this chapter contains examples of the visual print media collected, such as brochures, flyers and booklets, which were analysed. Placing all the examples in one section avoids repetition of images throughout the text.

In chapter six, which contains the results of the questionnaires, the focus will be on the motivation behind each organisation's choice of colour scheme, and whether the development of a competitive colour scheme was a consideration. This is viewed from both the graphic design perspective, as well as that of the organisation's marketing management. In the final chapter the results of the colour analysis and the results of the questionnaires will be compared to determine whether the colour message intended by the organisations, is the same as the message that comes across in their use of colour. The results of the colour analysis will be triangulated with the results of the questionnaires in chapter seven.

5.1   Competitive colour

The illustration (figure 5.1) below is a comparison of the three case organisations' colour schemes as used in their main visual identities. It indicates their positions on a colour spectrum bar and illustrates how each organisation differentiates itself in terms of colour from its competition. When

one looks at the colours of the three different organisations, *Vodacom* lies in the cool shades with the colours blue and green (see figure 5.1). *MTN* lies in the middle with their use of yellow and blue, while *Cell C* is on the warmer side of the colour bar with their main corporate colour red.

Figure 5.1: Competitive colour
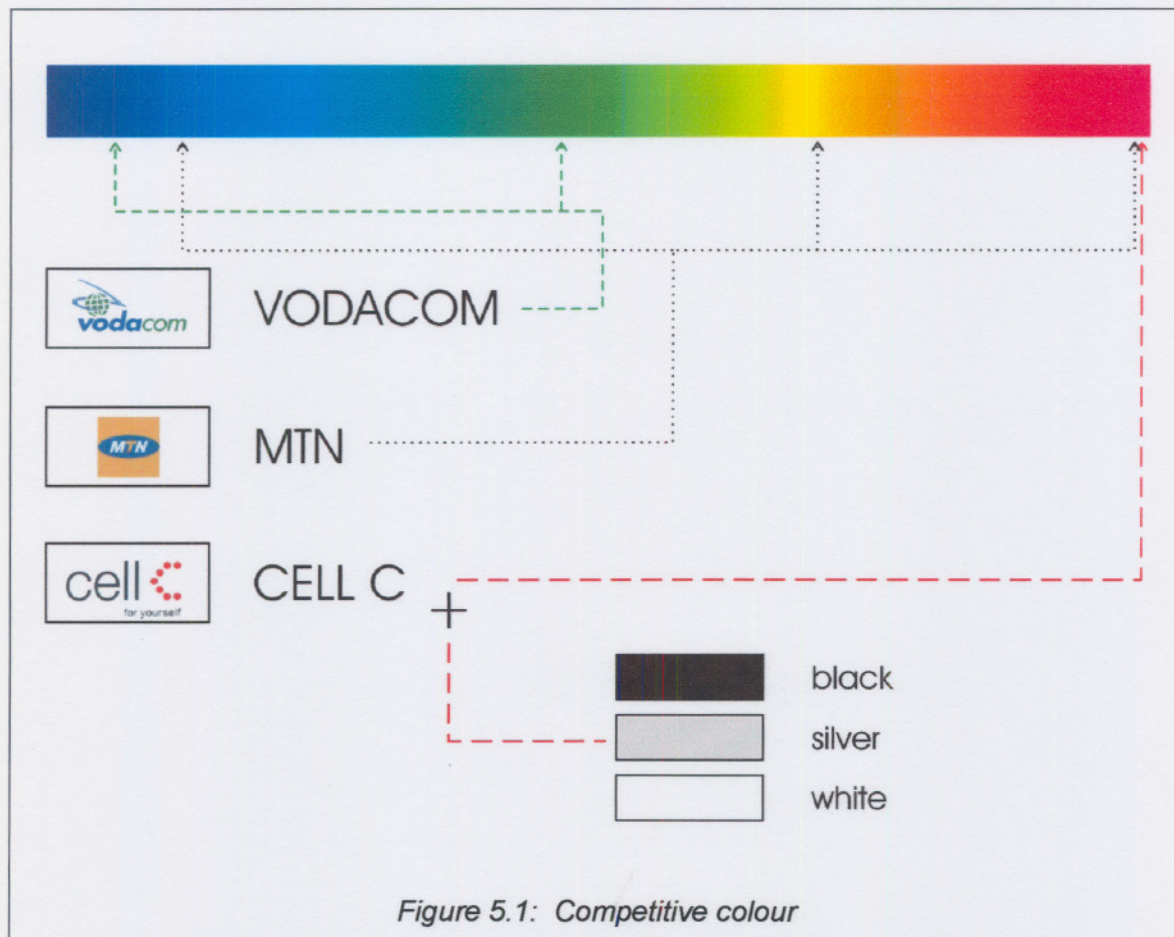
Vodacom was the first to enter the market of the three organisations and therefore the development of a competitive colour scheme would not have been necessary. *MTN* and then *Cell C* were established after *Vodacom* and this made it necessary for them to develop colour schemes that would clearly distinguish them from their competition. It would also provide the internal and external target markets or stakeholders with a colour scheme over which a certain measure of ownership could be developed.

When *MTN* was established, their only competition was *Vodacom*. They did not have to compete with more than one organisation and various existing

colour schemes. Their combination of yellow, blue and a dot of red is sufficient to clearly separate them from *Vodacom*. When *Cell C* was established, they had to compete with two existing colour schemes. One was in both the warm side and the cool side of the spectrum, while the other was only on the cool side of the spectrum. They would therefore have had to look at a colour that clearly separates them from the existing competitive organisations' colour schemes.

In the following sections the meanings associated with each of the organisation's colour schemes as well as what these could potentially communicate about the organisations, will be discussed. Current colour trends and the consistency of colour use, as applied to selected media distributed by the organisation, will also be investigated.

5.2 Communication potential and meanings attached to colour scheme

Although colour is only a single design element in the entire visual message, it communicates certain fundamental aspects about the organisation. As mentioned previously, certain colours have certain meaning and associations, and by using a certain colour, these meanings are transferred onto the organisation that uses the colour or colours as part of its visual communications message. In this section, the meanings that could potentially be associated with each of the case organisations colours, as well as the message that the colours are perceived to communicate about the organisation, will be discussed.

5.2.1 MTN's colour symbolism

The primary colour used by the organisation is yellow combined with blue and red, although the red is used in small measures, for example as a square in the visual identity. The organisation combines a bright warm colour, with a cool, darker blue and then a very small amount of red, again a warm colour.
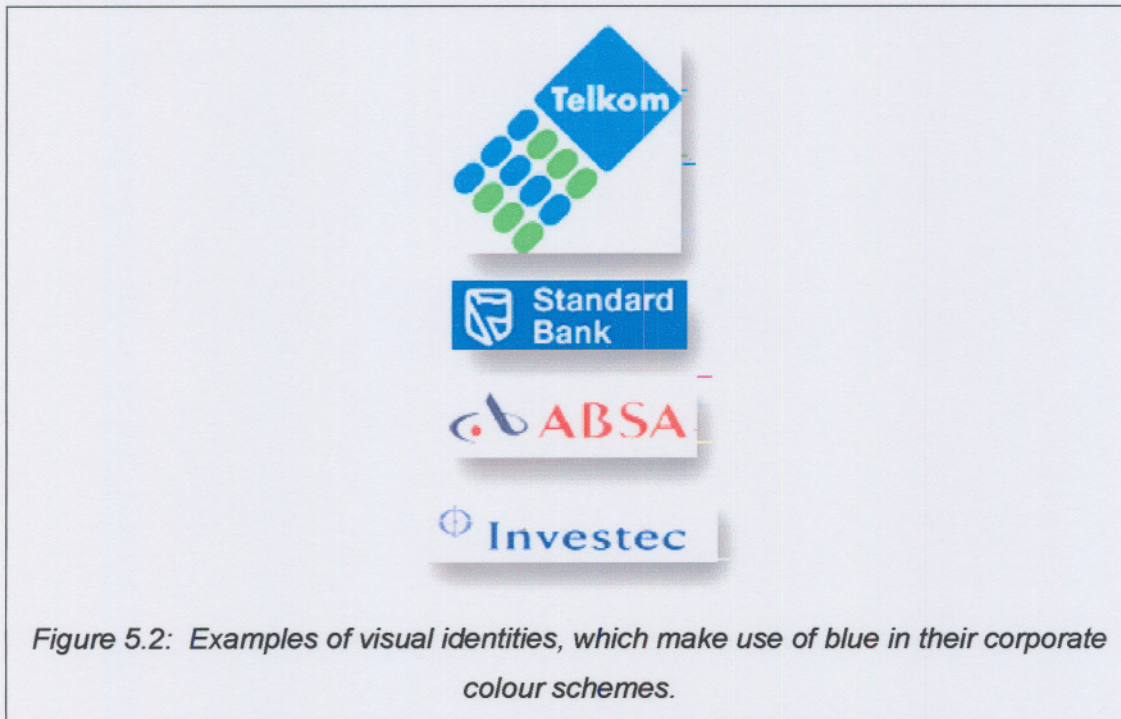
MTN's mother brand

According to the colour table compiled from the sources listed in Appendix 1, the meanings and feelings associated with the colour yellow are: happiness, carefree, warmth, optimism, vitality, brightness, idealism, joy and hope. The colour yellow could also be considered to be a very South African colour; it reminds of the African summer, the African sun. This type of imagery that can be associated with the colour, gives it an ownership element in the sense that it is a colour that we associate with our country and its people. The colour yellow could also be seen to carry the implication that *MTN* is a company without any difficulties, that they have a honest and frank approach to business, and also that they don't take things too seriously – communication is meant to be fun, to keep in touch with friends and enjoy life. It is a company for the people.

The use of blue tempers what could have otherwise been an overly bright and cheery image. According to the colour table compiled from the various sources used for this study, (see Appendix 1) the meanings attached to blue are serenity, authority, cleanliness, trust, dignity, stability, order, confidence, loyalty, and security. The use of the colour blue could potentially project a more stable, secure, solid and dependable image. The combination of a warm colour like yellow and a cool, darker colour like blue also provides a high contrast, which makes for good design. Blue is a colour typically used by banks and insurance or investment companies, for example *Standard Bank*, *Absa*, and *Investek* (see figure 5.2). Combined with white, it gives the designs a crisp, clean look; which could contribute to the perceived image of MTN as an honest and frank organisation. According to the colour table (see Appendix 1) blue is also a colour that is associated with freedom. The MTN

78

user could potentially make the association that the blue implicates freedom of speech, the freedom to connect, to keep in touch, through the service that *MTN* provides.

Figure 5.2: Examples of visual identities, which make use of blue in their corporate colour schemes.

The colour red in the colour scheme could be seen as being used mainly as a design tool to provide a focus point in the logo. The colour is also used in the designs of the printed visual media to highlight certain information.

An interesting element in *MTN*'s use of colour, as well as in their overall design, is the fact that in all the images used in the handouts, for example the clothing worn by models and the volleyball net in figure 5.8, are predominantly in shades of yellow and a blue tinted grey. This creates unity in the visual identity and application of corporate colour and strengthens the consistency of colour use. It also aids to subtly highlight the corporate colours. According to the colour table and sources listed in Appendix 1, grey is a colour that is associated with intelligence, modesty, technology, security and dignity. It gives the design an image of sophistication, and as in the case of blue, potentially gives a more mature feeling to a design that could have otherwise been considered too bright, and carefree. An image such as this, too bright

and carefree, could easily lead to a shallow or cheap image being associated with the organisation.

5.2.2 Vodacom's colour symbolism

The *Vodacom* logo's colours are green and blue, both of which are cool dark colours. Some of the meanings associated with blue have been discussed in the previous paragraphs, and as mentioned previously, the use of the colour blue could potentially project a more stable, secure, solid and dependable image. The connection with the company could be seen as one of an organisation that empowers its customers by providing them with a stable, secure service, which allows them to stay in touch. According to the colour table and sources listed in Appendix 1, blue is also a colour that is associated with confidence, which potentially conveys the image that the organisation is one that can be trusted to provide an effective service.

Vodacom's mother brand

According to the colour table and sources listed in Appendix 1, green is associated with cleanliness, naturalness, growth, calm, renewal, harmony and peace. It could be seen as conveying a message of growth and calm. The particular shade of green used by *Vodacom,* however, is a relatively dark shade, and because of this, could potentially convey the same symbolism as the blue used in the logo.

The use of the colours, blue and green, could give the impression of a more stable, solid and dependable company aimed at an older target market. It also potentially gives the impression of an affordable, cost-effective, and

80

honest company. The use of darker shades of the two colours, however, could lead to the association that the organisation is one that likes to maintain the status quo (stable and solid) and this could imply that there is no real technological advancement in the organisation. Both of the colours are also cool colours, which could lead to an image of aloofness and it could create the perception of an organisation that does not really get involved with its stakeholders or an organisation that is cool and distant and not in touch with the needs of its stakeholders. This perception will be compared to the results of the questionnaires to determine whether there is consistency between how the organisation perceives itself, and how its stakeholders could potentially perceive the organisation.

5.2.3 Cell C's colour symbolism

The main colour used by Cell C is red and it is combined with black, silver and white. According to the colour table and sources listed in Appendix 1 red is a colour that is associated with warmth, passion, love, luck, sexiness, fire and festivity. The colour table (Appendix 1) shows that black is a colour that is associated with sophistication, power, elegance, formality, wealth, style and strength. The combination of these two colours gives the impression of a dynamic, progressive and growing organisation aimed at the young at heart with their fingers on pulse of what is current. Since both red and black are strong, bold colours, it again leads to the potential association of *Cell C* being a strong organisation.

Cell C's mother brand
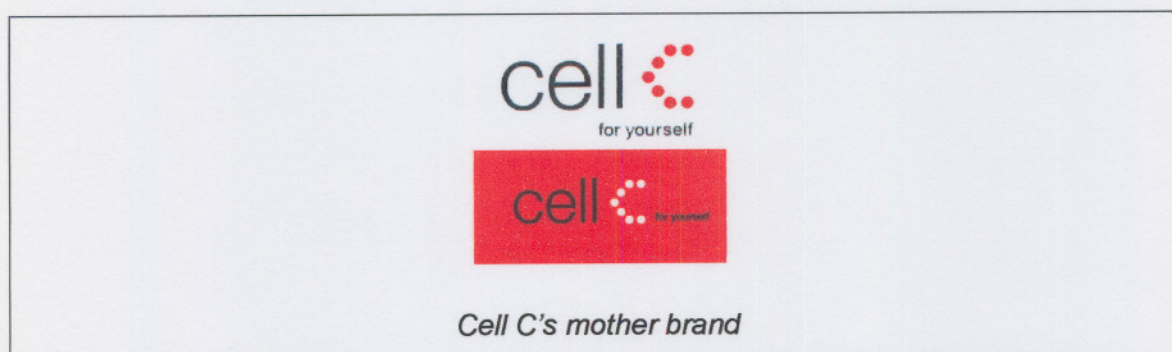
According to the colour table (Appendix 1), red is a colour that is full of life, vibrant and energetic. This potentially communicates that the organisation is

one that has a passion for life, a passion for what it does and a passion for its customers. Red could be associated with life and communication. The act of staying in touch, through the organisation and the service that it provides, connects well with these images associated with the colour. The particular shade of red that is used, is also a darker than, for example that of *Shoprite*, a South African retail store and their OK franchise (see figure 5.3). This use of a darker shade of red could lead to an association with luxury and sophistication, as opposed to the association of affordability with a lighter, brighter red, as in the case of *Shoprite*.
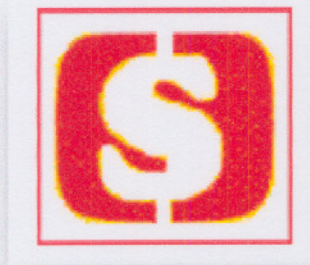
Figure 5.3: Visual identity of Shoprite, a South African retail store.

The use of the colours black, white and silver provides an effective background and support for the red. The design of the logo is also very simplistic and minimalist; the organisation alternatively applies the logo to media in red, black or white (as can be seen in the image in the beginning of the section), on a background of one of the other two colours. The above three colours also provide a contrast to the red, without overpowering it.

Silver is a colour that is associated with sophistication and technology. The silver used in their media, is darker grey, mat silver, which reminds of brushed steel. The use of this colour could lead to the perception that the organisation is a solid, dependable organisation, but not without luxury or sophistication.

5.3 Suitability of colour scheme considering target markets of the organisations

As mentioned previously, the target markets at which the product or service is aimed, plays an important role in the development of visual and verbal communication. When considering a colour scheme for an organisation, the target markets have to be taken into consideration. Although a particular colour or colour scheme can appeal to more that one target market or constituency, it cannot appeal to all. This section attempts to determine the perceived target markets to which the selected case organisations corporate colour scheme, as applied in their visual identities, would appeal.

5.3.1 MTN's target markets

Considering the symbolism associated with the colour yellow, as discussed previously, the organisation's main colour is one that could potentially appeal to a younger target market that would include students and young professionals. The perceived message concerning the organisation's target markets, as communicated by their colour scheme in the visual identity, is that this is an organisation with a dynamic, youthful nature, and that it is aimed at target markets with a similar nature. Aside from the occasional predominantly blue design in their media (see figure 5.7) there is nothing that potentially connects to the older target markets. The images and photographs used in their media are also predominantly of younger people, even in the predominantly blue designs could be considered to be aimed at an older market.

5.3.2 Vodacom's target markets

As mentioned before, the use of darker colours could lead to an image of an organisation that prefers to maintain the status quo. The colour scheme could potentially convey an image of an organisation that is sufficient and effective in what they do, but it does not really promote a feeling of growth and technological progress. Such an image, however, might be one that appeals to older target markets; people who are not used to technology and prefer the familiar, as well as to persons who want to make use of the service for professional reasons (see figure 5.12).

Of the three the organisations, *Vodacom* is the one organisation that could be seen as having a more direct appeal to the older target markets. However, *Vodacom* also has the *4U* identity (figure 5.11) as mentioned previously, which is aimed at younger target markets. The use of two separate identities and colour schemes, which focus separately on an older and a younger target group, could give the organisation a more competitive edge when compared to the other organisations, who make use of only one colour schemes each. A possible problem, however, is the fact that there is no definite connection between the two identities in terms of colour. The *4U* logo does make use of green, but it is a pastel, grey-green shade that does not connect to the mother brand's darker green. It could imply a deliberate move away from the mother brand to encourage use by a younger target market that might prefer not to be linked with the older generation.

5.3.3 Cell C's target markets

As mentioned in the previous section, the colours of the organisation give the impression of a dynamic, progressive and growing organisation. It is not colours that could be considered as bound to a specific age group. There is a possibility, however, that it could be seen as bound a certain social class. The overall impression given by the colour scheme is one of an organisation that caters to the upper class. Cell C's use of imagery, however, connects it to other demographic groups. The photographs used in the printed visual media are not of one particular age or demographic group, unlike *MTN* that makes use of only younger models in their images (see figures 5.7, 5.8, 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17). *Cell C* features people from different walks of life and from different social groups, directing each of the different media to different target groups, while still making use of the same corporate colour scheme.

As mentioned, red is also a colour that is associated with life; it is the colour of blood, which is the one thing that connects us all. This image could appeal to all the different target groups and it is the colour of life, passion and love, which is something that we all share.

5.4 Current colour trend

The current colour trend should not be a consideration when developing a visual identity (Gasson, 1974:36). An organisation's visual identity is a long-term investment and it stays unchanged for periods of five years or longer. It is something with which both the organisation and its consumers and target markets should identify, and ownership of the identity should be developed. This is something that happens over time and cannot happen if the logo needs to be constantly updated to remain in line with the current colour trend. A visual identity should ideally be simple, effective and timeless. This makes the visual identity adaptable to the current design trend, which makes it easier for an organisation to keep up with overall trend in the design industry, while still maintaining a consistent visual identity and recognisability. The ideal should be that the organisations do not take trend into consideration when deciding on a colour scheme for the organisation's visual identity, but rather try to remain unbound to trend through simplicity in design and colour use. The consideration of colour trend by both the organisations and graphic designers of the case organisations will be investigated in chapter six.

5.4.1 MTN and colour trend

MTN's main colour, yellow, could be seen as season bound since it is essentially a summer colour and is often associated with the image of the sun. This association is an element that *MTN* effectively utilises in their current "Yellow Summer" campaign. The use of blue, however, could be seen as providing balance and makes *MTN's* corporate colours more than simply a "summer" colour combination.

5.4.2 Vodacom and colour trend

Vodacom's colour scheme could not be considered to follow any design trend since blue and green are colours that are used by many organisations (see figure 5.2). The frequency with which this colour scheme is used makes it unbound by trend. It also, however, reduces the potential ownership that the organisation could have of the colour scheme. Unlike *MTN,* who only competes with NBS (see figure 5.4) regarding ownership of the colour yellow in the marketplace, *Vodacom's* blue and green colour combination is

associated with a number of other organisations. It would be potentially difficult for the organisation to achieve ownership of its colour, especially in the minds of its stakeholders.

Figure 5.4: NBS's visual identity

5.4.3 Cell C and colour trend

Looking at trend, red and black could be considered as classic colours. The same could be said of the colour silver. When considering trend and the visual identity, the ideal, as mentioned, would be not to adapt the logo, but to adapt the *application* of the logo to current design trend. The simplicity of Cell C's visual identity, the use of solid colour and dots, would make it easy for the organisation to adapt the application of their visual identity to changing trend in graphic design.

5.5 Consistency of colour scheme across various media collected (physical artefacts)

Consistency of colour use is of extreme importance in the application of a corporate colour scheme, whether in the use of logo, the media distributed by the organisations, or the uniforms worn by employees of the organisation. The benefits of consistent application of colour and the use of a visual identity manual have been investigated in the literature study (see section 2.4).

Overall, *Cell C* and *MTN* have a high consistency of colour throughout their designs (see sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.3). The only consistency problem perceived was a slight difference in the red and yellow used by the companies respectively. The printing of the media, however, might have caused this inconsistency. The different types of paper stock react differently to the inks,

which could result in the slight variation of colour use. This could also, however, be contributed to the fact that the same print houses are not always used. All print houses do not mix their inks in exactly the same method and the one might use a small amount of water more that the other. This could result in the slight difference in colour use between the various media.

Cell C's use of colour is constant in all of the media collected. Their use of solid blocks of red and black gives all the media the same look and feel. Aside for the change in logo colour (alternative use is made of the colours red, black or white), it is represented in either red or white or black, depending on the design of the media, the use of the colour scheme is constant and immediately recognisable as *Cell C*. *Cell C* also makes use of the same technique as *MTN* to establish consistency in images. All of the photographs have predominantly grey or red areas, which allows for a strong connection to the corporate colour scheme without distracting from it, and simultaneously providing colour and interest to the design (see figures 5.7, 5.8, 5.15 and 5.16).

Although not part of the media collected, another consistency problem was noted regarding all three the case organisations while collecting media in the field. Although all the franchises of the respective organisations have a high level of colour consistency, the problem lies with organisations and small to medium enterprises (SME's) that, for example, sell the organisation's airtime cards. Although all three the case organisations provide businesses with the necessary marketing media, such as posters, stickers and freestanding signboards, some SME's manufacture their own marketing media (see figure 5.5). In the examples, the visual identities of the case organisations were painted by hand onto the storefronts of some businesses. Although on average the correct colours are used, it is not always the case. The SME's are also still using the old visual identity of *MTN*.

Figure 5.5: Hand painted storefronts

The only consistency problem noted in the colour analysis of the media, concerned the flyers and brochures distributed by *Vodacom*. Where the use of colour concerning *Vodacom's* logo is consistent, the application of the colour scheme to the visual print media is not. More that one shade of green are used and the majority of the media makes use of a light, almost lime green. The organisation has also added red and orange to some of their designs. The use of these three additional colours is also inconsistent throughout all the media. The shade of light green also differs from media to media (see figures 5.12, 5.13 and 5.14) and not all of the media contains the colours red and orange. Since these colours are not part of the colour scheme used in the main visual identity, one could get an overall impression of too much colour and a fragmented identity. Aside from these three colours, the design of the media also makes use of speech bubbles to indicate the various packages offered by the organisation. All of the speech bubbles are in different colours (see figure 5.6), which do not connect to the corporate colour scheme of the organisation.

Another problem is experienced with the images that are used in the media. Photographs are either too colourful with the minimum repetition of the corporate colour scheme, or the images are too plain or dark and they tend to blend into the background formed by the corporate colour blue (see figure 5.8).
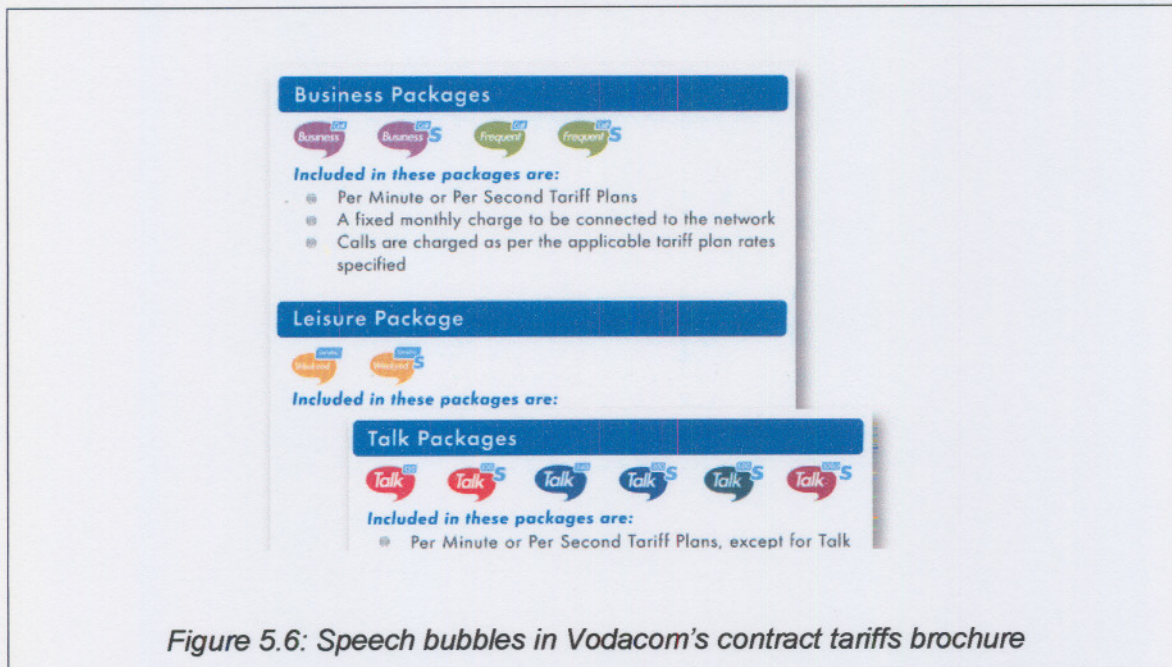

Figure 5.6: Speech bubbles in Vodacom's contract tariffs brochure

The designs also either use the blue, or the light lime green, instead of trying to effectively combine the colours and provide balance through effective use of white space. White space could effectively be utilised to solve the problem of lack of contrast between the colours and to lighten overall design to provide a crisper, simpler, design. *Vodacom* also have the derivative identities, *My Life* and *Funky Fone*, which make use of the corporate blue and light green (M*y Life*) and orange and purple (*Funky Fone*), which does not connect with the corporate colour scheme as used in the mother brand or main visual identity (see figures 5.13 and 5.14).

5.6 Examples of collected visual printed media distributed by the case organisations

5.6.1 MTN
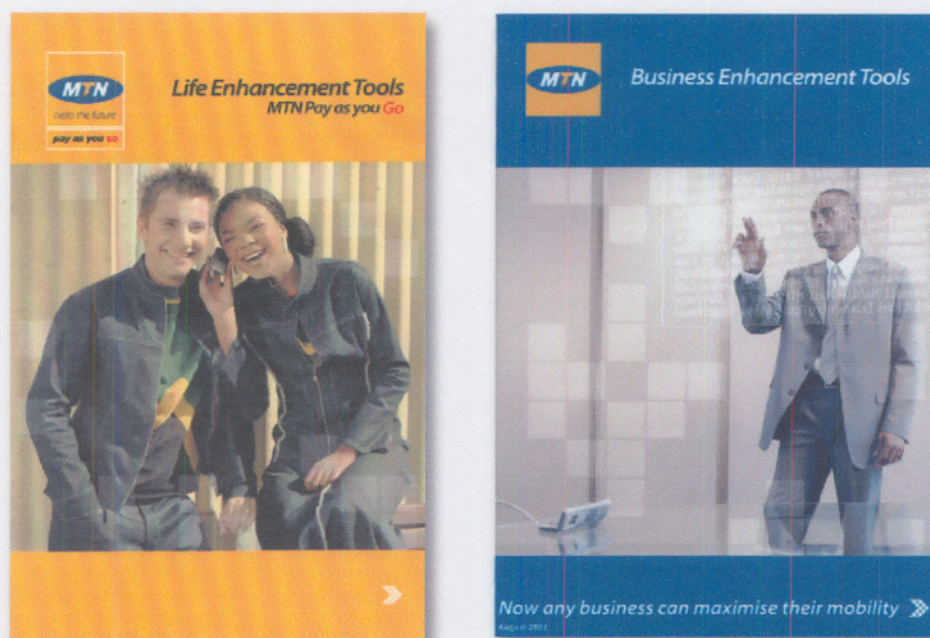
Exhibit 5.7: Examples of MTN's brochures

Figure 5.8: Examples of MTN's brochures

Figure 5.9: Example of one of MTN's flyers

Figure 5.10: MTN sound styles z-fold brochure

5.6.2 Vodacom

Figure 5.11: Example of Vodacom's 4U visual identity and brochure.

Figure 5.12: Examples of the brochures distributed by Vodacom

Figure 5.13: Vodacom's Funky Fone booklet

Figure 5.14: Example of one of Vodacom's flyers

5.6.3   Cell C

Figure 5.15: Examples of Cell C's brochures
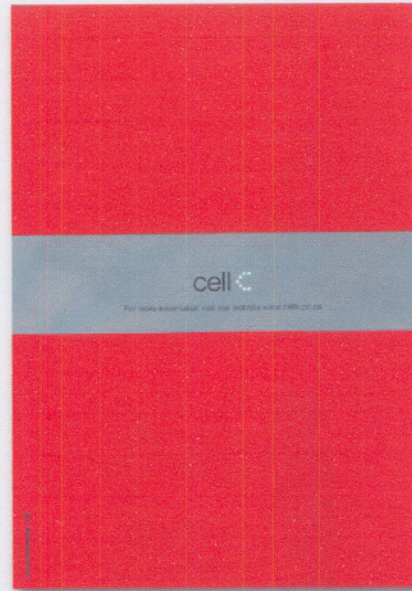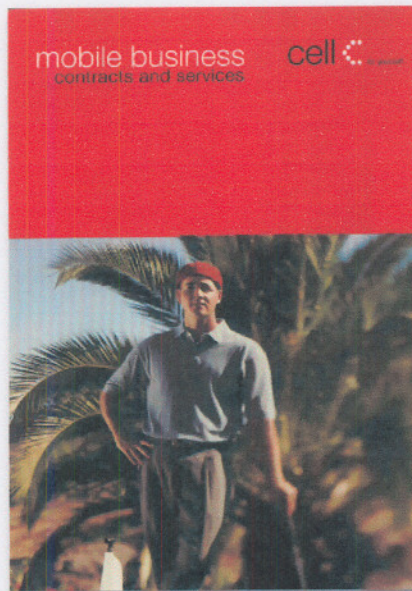
Figure 5.16: Examples of Cell C's brochures
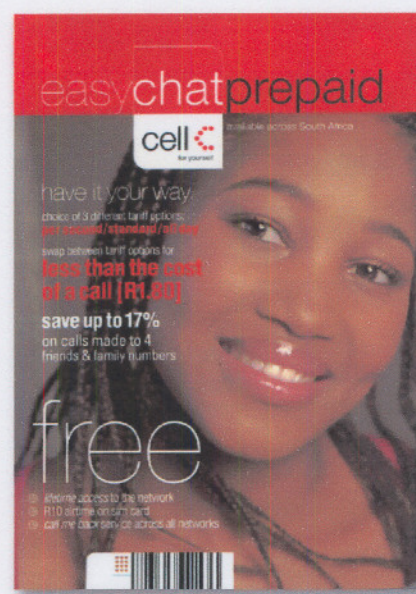
Figure 5.17: Image from Chat Pack brochure and front of Easy Chat Prepaid brochure
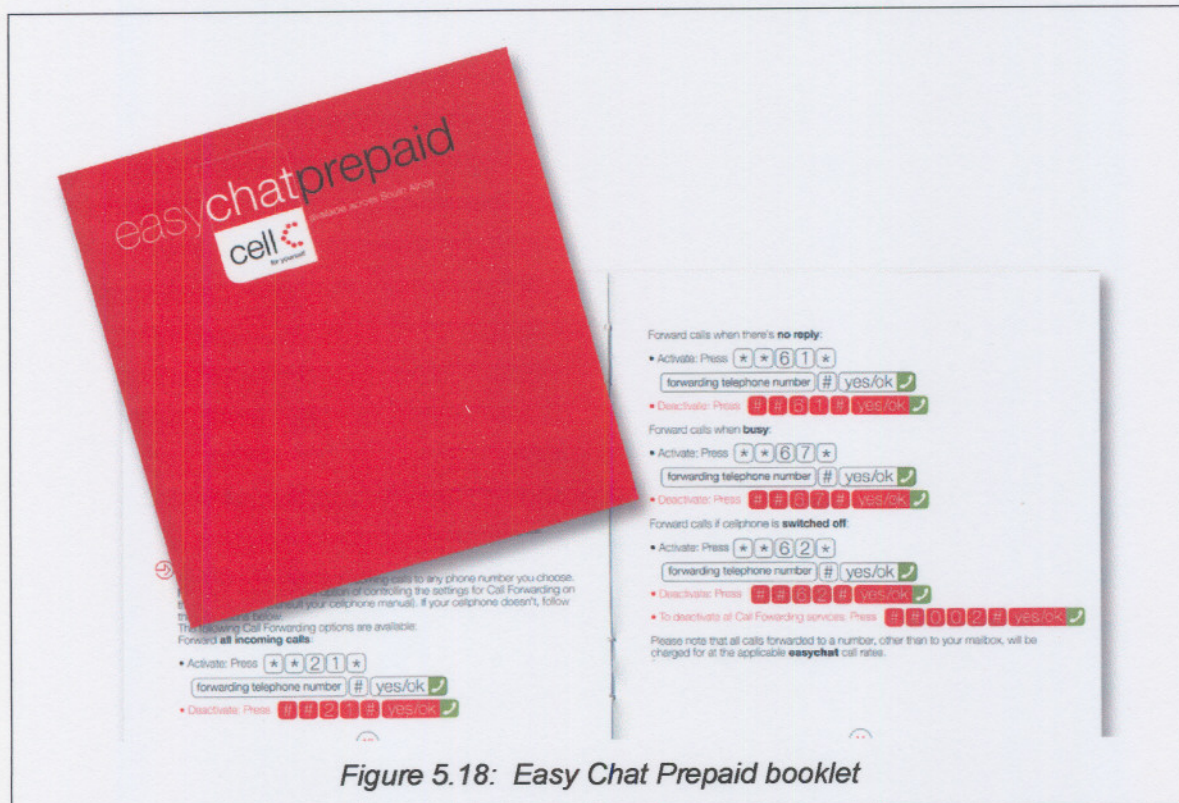
Figure 5.18: Easy Chat Prepaid booklet
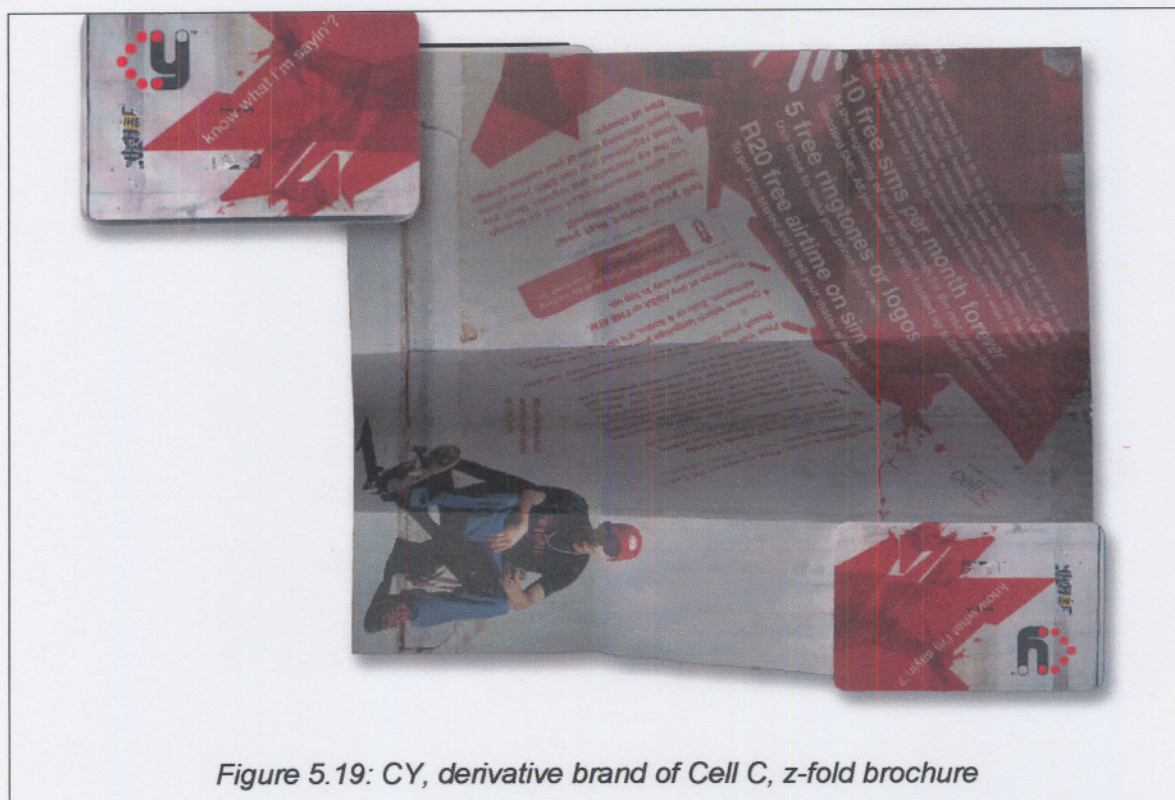
Figure 5.19: CY, derivative brand of Cell C, z-fold brochure

5.7 Conclusion

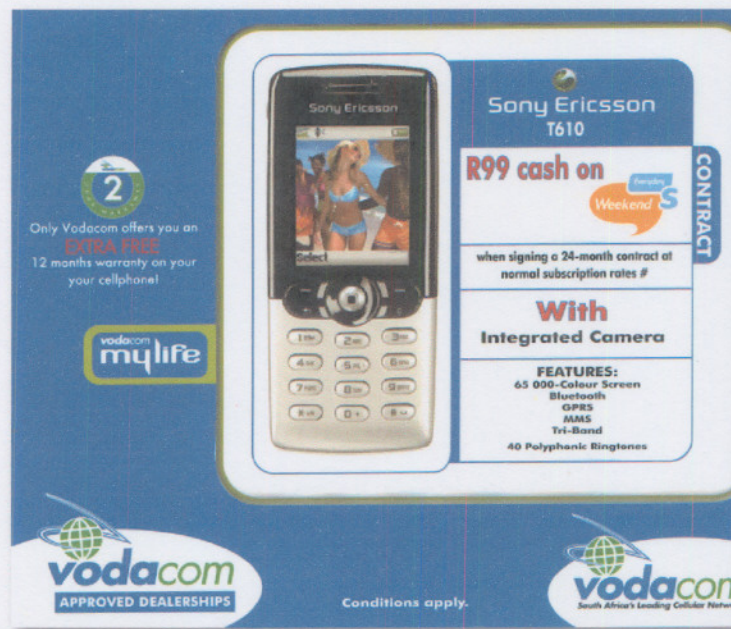The colours used by an organisation, communicates certain aspects about the organisation's personality to the target markets of the organisations through the meaning that can be attached to the colours. The following chapter provides the results of the questionnaires received from both the graphic designers that work with the organisation's visual identities, and the questionnaires received from persons in marketing management from each of the organisations. These results are compared to that of the researcher's colour analysis in chapter seven, to verify if the message intended by the organisation through the use of their particular colour scheme, comes across as intended.

CHAPTER 6
RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The research methodology made use of a qualitative case study approach, using self-administered questionnaires as the main method to gather data. This chapter consists out of the results of the questionnaires. The objectives of the questionnaires relate directly to the research questions and objectives as expounded in chapter one. The results are the opinions and viewpoints of the respondents, not that of the researcher, unless stated otherwise. Six questionnaires were sent out to the graphic designers and marketing or brand managers of the selected case organisations, *MTN*, *Vodacom* and *Cell C*. The respondents and their demographic details are listed in chapter four. The results are given according to the research questions as listed in chapter one and results from each case organisation are discussed separately.

6.1 Research question 1: The selected case organisations' motivation behind the use of the particular colours

The first research question of this study, was formulated as follows:

> *What is the **motivation** behind the selected case organisations' use of a particular colour scheme in their visual identities?*

Aside from specifically questioning the motivation behind colour choice, other methods to determine the motivation behind the use of a particular colour scheme, was to determine if colour choice was motivated by trend or competitive colour scheme development. The choice of a colour scheme should not be motivated by trend, since trends change constantly. It is arguably not feasible to base the choice of colour scheme for a long-term investment, the visual identity, on a constantly changing factor such as trend. Competing in a market is also a factor that affects colour choice; the organisation needs to visually differentiate itself from the competition. This is achieved through the development of a competitive colour scheme.

6.1.1 The motivation behind MTN's use of yellow, blue and red

According to the respondents, the reasoning behind the choice of colours was not actively driven and it is most likely that the colour scheme was chosen because it had a clear margin to differentiate the organisation in the market. The respondents also stated that the colour has a sunshine yellow appeal to the African continent, which gives the colour a high level of ownership. They consider ownership of the colour as a crucial tool to build recognition and equity without displaying the brand logo. Although the respondents agreed that the colour of the visual identity is adequately in line with colour trend, they stated that colour choice was not influenced by colour trend. Since the logo has been developed, it has not been updated to reflect colour trend or to adapt to changing trends in colour use.

6.1.2 The motivation behind Vodacom's use of blue and green

The respondents agreed that there is a definite motivation behind the use of the particular colours in *Vodacom's* logo. According to *Vodacom's* brand manager, the corporate colour scheme was chosen to represent their association with their major stakeholders who have been involved with the South African Telecommunications industry for over two decades.

According to *Vodacom's* graphic designer, there was a definite process followed to develop the visual identity. The original idea was that of a globe (the earth) and a swirl (line). Blue and green were chosen, because they represented the colour of the planet. The designer stated that another reason for the choice of the two colours were their technological references, with blue representing electric and green representing growth and development. The designer also felt that the organisation is starting to move towards the use of a singular colour, blue, and that this was a positive move. The association with blue is an image that is friendly and calm. It is also seen as having a more caring connection. The respondent stated that blue could be seen as representing the sky, an element that connects us all.

Concerning trend, there is disagreement between the designer and the brand manager. According to the brand manager, the organisation's colour scheme

as used in the visual identity, is very in line with current trend. Concerning updating the logo to current trend, the brand manager stated that this had been done. New colour schemes had been introduced for the organisation's two sub brands, *Vodago* and *4U* where a light green is used for the *Vodago* logo and a teal green is used for the *4U* logo (see figures 5.11 and 5.12 in previous section).

The designer disagreed with the brand manager and stated that the visual identity is not much in line with current trend. The green and blue logo is still used, but the blue is more prominently used in general communication. The respondent also stated that the organisation's move towards the use of a singular colour is more in line with other current identities that make use of only one colour, like *Standard Bank* and *Eskom*. The respondent felt that an adaptation to trend concerning colour didn't take place, but one concerning application of the existing colour scheme did.

The brand manager did not clearly define how the organisation developed a competitive colour scheme, or how it compares to that of the competition. According to the designer, *Vodacom* was the first in the market place. The development of competitive colour scheme was not a motivation behind the choice of colour. The respondent felt, however, that the colour does offer a competitive edge; their choice of colours on the cool end of the colour spectrum, forced the competition to make use of the warmer colours.

6.1.3 The motivation behind Cell C's use of red, black, silver and white

The respondents stated that a definite process was followed to develop the organisation's visual identity and colour scheme. They described the process as follows:

- Insight – briefing, interviews with key personnel and an analysis of competitors.
- Concept design – development of a brand platform, naming, brand architecture, and the exploration of multiple ideas.
- Design development – refinement and extension of concept design
- Production – the final preparation for production and print.

According to the respondents, the red dots of the visual identity were originally meant to be orange. The colour scheme was changed because *Twenty 20* (a South African online banking venture) launched their visual identity, which made use of orange dots. Lime green was then considered as a potential colour scheme, but the client (*Cell C*) preferred red – a colour that is both eye-catching and not a dominant colour in the identities and corporate colour schemes of the competitors.

Concerning the motivation behind the particular colours chosen, the respondents reported a motivation behind each of the colours used. Red was chosen because it was considered a bold, dynamic, engaging, warm and aggressive colour. The respondents also stated that red was chosen because it could be considered a universal messenger, which symbolises danger, love and passion. White was chosen because of its clean, fresh and uncluttered associations and silver was chosen because of its association with elegance and its contemporary feel. No motivation was given for the use of black.

All the respondents agreed that the colour scheme is in line with current colour trend, which they described as "bold simplicity." The respondents also stated that the logo has not been updated since its development to reflect current trend (the visual identity was developed in July 2001).

6.2 Research question 2: The intended communication behind each case organisation's visual identity's colour scheme

The second research question of this study, was formulated as follows:

*What does the organisation want to **communicate** through the colour/s used in the visual identity?*

6.2.1 The intended communication behind MTN's colour scheme

Regarding the personality of *MTN*, the respondents stated that the organisation has an internal personality and an external personality. The external personality of the organisation, as reflected by the colour scheme, was described as innovative, contemporary, lifestyle and life stage orientated.

They also described the organisation as a forward thinking organisation striving to broaden its base, to influence Africa, and to continuously be market leaders. Concerning the internal personality, the respondents stated that the organisation displays itself as a professional organisation that supports Africa as a whole. The overall aim of the organisation was described by respondents as follows: to develop and drive deeper into Africa and to broaden their customer base and widen their network, which is reflected by their visual identity and colour scheme.

The respondents stated that they are aware of the potential that colour has to communicate. According to the respondents, the message that they want to convey through their colour scheme is that the organisation is bright, forward thinking and innovative, as well as a trendsetter that has a passion for life and living. Concerning the accuracy with which the colour scheme reflects the organisations services and products, the respondents felt that the reflection was very accurate. The reflection of the personality, however, was considered to be only reasonably accurate.

The respondents felt that the colour schemes, of the three organisations, are not something that should be compared. Each of the case organisations has their own unique points and the three colours – yellow, blue and red – are completely different and should not be compared. When asked to describe the personalities of the organisation's competition, as communicated by their colour schemes, the respondents described *Cell C* as innovative go-getters; that the use of the colour red communicates a message of "we know who we are and what we offer". According to *MTN's* marketing, the colour used by *Cell C* is difficult to take ownership of in the market place, but unique in the industry. The colour leverages of the concept of "product for the people" that is associated with the colour red, a perception already position by the Coca-cola brand. No comment was made regarding *Vodacom*.

6.2.2 The intended communication behind Vodacom's colour scheme

Concerning the personality of the organisation, the respondents described it as warm, caring, in touch with all South Africans and a leader when it came to

technological advancement. According to the respondents, the aims of the organisation are to provide world-class telecommunications to all South Africans, to be a leading corporate citizen and to be Africa's leading cellular network. The respondents stated that they are aware of the potential that colour has to communicate.

The message communicated to the organisation's target markets, according to the respondents, is that the organisation is innovative, trustworthy, and young, and that it offers value for money. They felt that the colour scheme accurately reflects the organisation's services and products, and that the colours also very accurately reflect the personality of the organisation.

Respondents were also asked to comment on the personalities they felt were communicated by the competition. *Vodacom's* marketing described *Cell C* as bold and strong; and *MTN* as a lifestyle orientated organisation. The graphic design perspective was that the competition's use of warmer colours communicated a more caring image than *Vodacom*, which could be to their advantage. The use of cooler colours, however, allows *Vodacom* to differentiate themselves much more clearly, which they felt was more in their advantage than being perceived as a "warm" organisation.

6.2.3 The intended communication behind Cell C's colour scheme

The respondents described the personality of the organisation as expressive and open to new ideas, not inclusive to a particular gender, race or colour – *Cell C* is for everyone. The respondents further described the organisation as young, dynamic, fun and engaging. It is a responsible organisation, which has the interest of its consumers at heart. One of the respondents also commented that the organisation is considered to be the underdog since it is the third entrant into the market.

The respondents felt that the colour scheme is accurate in communicating the personality of the organisation and in reflecting the services and products offered by the organisation. When asked to describe the personalities of their competitors, as communicated by their colour schemes, the respondents

described *Vodacom* as big and corporate. *MTN's* use of yellow, blue and red was described as communicating a bright, fun and engaging personality. The respondents also commented that blue is used in both competitors' colour schemes and visual identities and that it is a colour that is commonly used corporately. The respondents felt that the colour is one that communicates strength.

6.3 Research question 3: The target markets at which the colour schemes of the visual identities of the selected case organisations are aimed

The third research question of this study, was formulated as follows:

*At which **target markets** are the colour schemes of the visual identities of the selected case organisations, aimed?*

6.3.1 The target markets identified by MTN

According to the respondents, the groups targeted are the mass market, as well as middle and upper income groups with various product differentiations. Their audiences are considered to be style and trend orientated; people to whom brands are important. The respondents also stated that the same colour scheme is used for all the target markets, locally and internationally. They consider the mother brand and corporate colour scheme to be specific in the identification of their organisation, and these are not changed for different target groups. The usage and the application of the colour, however, are adapted to suit the different audiences.

6.3.2 The target markets identified by Vodacom

According to *Vodacom's* respondents, the target markets identified by the organisation are the following:

- Corporate – companies and organisations
- Emerging – persons with a household income of less than R5000 a month
- Developed – household income of more than R5000 a month
- Youth – between the ages of 16 and 24 years.

Collectively, the target markets of the organisation were described as all the people that need to connect. The respondents stated that the same colour scheme is used for each of the different South African target markets and no changes have been made. Concerning international target markets, the brand manager reported that no changes have been made to adapt the colour scheme. The graphic designer, however, states that changes have been made to accommodate international target markets. The change was described as a move away from green towards blue. It was felt that green was too cold, and having to associate two colours with the organisation was causing the visual identity to become too cluttered. This inconsistency between the opinion of the graphic designer and the brand manager could arguably indicate that there is a lack of communication between the two respondents.

6.3.3 The target markets identified by Cell C

The respondents stated that the same colour scheme is used for all target markets and that no changes were made to the colour scheme for different local or international target groups. The main target group was described as mainly 15 to 35 year olds. The colour scheme and visual identity was described as having a strong youth appeal – it is unconventional and has traction – but without excluding the rest of the market. According to the respondents Cell C, as well as its products and services, is not exclusive to a particular gender, race or colour.

6.4 Research question 4: The research done by the selected case organisations on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets

The fourth research question of this study, was formulated as follows:

> Did the management of the selected organisations do **research** on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets?

According to the respondents of all three the case organisations, no research was done to determine colour preference or colour suitability concerning the

various target markets of the organisations. Neither was research done to determine the symbolism attached to the colours used in the colour schemes. In the case of *Vodacom*, the designer commented that when the logo was developed, the organisation probably reasoned that there were various organisations dealing with technology that made use of blue and green. The organisation decided to use the same colours. Although *MTN's* respondents stated that no research was conducted to determine colour preference or suitability, research was mentioned as part of the graphic designer's role in the development of the colour scheme.

6.5 Research question 5: the importance attached to colour as a communication tool by the selected case organisations

The fifth research question of this study, was formulated as follows:

> *How important is colour as a communication tool to the selected case organisations?*

One of the questions asked in the questionnaires, was whether the organisation had an identity manual. The existence of an identity manual to standardise the use of the colour scheme is an indication of the importance attached to colour, by the organisation, as a communication tool. Whether the graphic designer was involved in the development of the colour scheme, as well as the level of involvement, is also an indication of importance that an organisation attaches to the colour scheme and visual identity as method of communication. It seems that the higher the graphic designer's level of involvement, the greater importance is attached to colour as a communication tool.

6.5.1 The importance of colour as communication according to MTN

The respondents of *MTN* rated colour as a communication tool as extremely important. They stated that the graphic designer played a significant role in the development of the organisation's colour scheme and the designer was completely involved in the development thereof. According to the respondents the role that the graphic designer played was research and development. Monitoring and setting the visual trend are considered the task of the designer and *MTN's* marketing stated that it is through the graphic

designer's unique visual experience and outlook that the colour is conceptualised, enhanced, complemented with other colours and delivered to the eyes of the organisation's consumers.

The consistency of the application of the colour scheme was rated as reasonably constant. The respondents were unaware of any audits that have been done to determine the consistency of the application of colour scheme and logo. The respondents also stated that they were unaware of the existence of an identity manual to standardise the use of colour scheme or its application. Control was described as "loose", although all the artwork (the visual media, printed and otherwise) generated by the organisation, as well as the designers, had to be approved by a centralised marketing area.

6.5.2 The importance of colour as communication according to Vodacom

The respondents rated colour as communication as extremely important for the organisation. The graphic designer, however, did not play a role in the determination of the visual identity's colour scheme. According to the respondents, the organisation does make use of an identity manual. An audit is also conducted every year to determine the consistency of the application of the colour scheme. The graphic designers were involved in the development of the identity manual. The respondents stated, however, that the identity manual was not developed at the same time as the visual identity. The organisation found that after 10 years, the logo and identity were not being applied consistently. The variation in the application of the colour scheme was leading to fragmentation in the brand. To solve the problem of fragmentation, the organisation, in conjunction with the graphic designers, developed a visual identity manual to standardise the use of the colour scheme.

6.5.3 The importance of colour as communication according to Cell C

The respondents rated the involvement of the graphic designers in the development of the corporate colour scheme as very high. Colour as communication was also rated as an extremely important tool for communication. According to the respondents, the organisation makes use of

a visual identity manual to standardise the application of the visual identity and the corporate colours scheme. They reported that the graphic designer was involved in the development of the manual. The graphic designers wrote, designed and produced the manual; they developed all the rules from the use of the logo to the typefaces, colours and advertising standards.

6.6 Conclusion

From the above results, it can be concluded that, according to the respondents, colour plays an important communicative role in the visual identities of the all three case organisations. Colour is also seen as an important element in the organisation's overall communication strategy. The results also found that definite motivation exists behind the choice of colour scheme and that there is an intended message behind the use of the colours. From these two chapters, chapters five and six, as well as the theory discussed in the literature study, certain conclusions can be draw and recommendations made. These will be discussed in chapter seven.

CHAPTER 7
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the previous two chapters, the results of the colour analysis and questionnaires were given. In this chapter, the results of the questionnaires, as well as the colour analysis will be discussed. From these two chapters, as well as the theory discussed in the literature study, certain conclusions and recommendations have been made. The conclusions, based on the objectives of this study as described in chapter four, are made with the aim of placing chapters five and six in perspective. The results and recommendations will be discussed according to each of the objectives of the study.

7.1 The selected case organisations' motivation behind the use of the particular colours

The term, "motivation" in the context of this study refers to the existence of certain intent behind the use of an organisation's colour scheme. This intent could be to develop a competitive colour scheme for the organisation in order to use colour as a differentiation tool if the organisation needs to compete against already established organisations in the market place. In the case of *Cell C* and *MTN*, this was one of the motivations behind the choice of both organisations' colour schemes. The two organisations had to differentiate themselves from their existing competition, namely *Vodacom*, who had already established their organisation in the market place using the cool side of the colour spectrum. Their use of blue and green forced the other two case study organisations to move to the warmer side of the colour spectrum in order to clearly differentiate themselves from *Vodacom*.

The intent behind colour choice can also be to communicate certain fundamental aspects about an organisation. Colours can be chosen because of the specific associations that the organisation feels can be linked to them. Associating a particular colour with an organisation could therefore lead to the transference of these meanings and symbolism from the colour to the

organisation. This was found to be one of the motivations behind the choice of colour scheme in both *Cell C* and *MTN*.

Aside from differentiation, a further motivation behind *MTN's* colour scheme, as stated by respondents, was to establish a strong ownership of their main corporate colour, yellow, for both the organisation's internal and external targeted markets. This meant that they looked towards colour associations, which would link to both the personality of the organisation and their target markets. Yellow is also not a commonly used colour in the marketplace. This would enhance their uniqueness. Colour association was also found to be a strong motivation for *Cell C's* colour choice. The organisation attaches meaning to each of the colours used in their corporate colour scheme. With each colour they attempt to communicate to their target groups some aspect of the organisation's personality.

The motivation behind *Vodacom's* colour choice, as stated by the respondents, was neither trend or competition or communication-potential driven. Of all three the case organisations, *Vodacom* was found to be the only organisation that chose a colour scheme exclusively for the purpose of representing their alliance with their major stakeholder, which is *Telkom*. The impression is created that the communication potential was only added as an afterthought. It is only now, at a later stage, that the graphic designer is attaching symbolism to the colour scheme to communicate visually to the organisation's target markets. The designer is also trying to move visual communication to a singular colour, which he feels would communicate more effectively and be less complex. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the graphic designer is also attempting to, through the use of a single colour, bring the organisation up to date with current trend.

According to data from the questionnaires all three the case study organisations perceive their corporate colour schemes to be in line with current trends. Although this was a motivation behind their colour choice, it is debatable whether this is a feasible motivation when making decisions concerning colour. The building of equity in a brand and recognition in colour

as ownership, takes years to develop. A corporate colour scheme that is bound by colour trend, or needs to be updated, could arguably be detrimental to the building of brand equity and recognition.

According to the respondents from *MTN*, the tone and style may require adaptation in order to facilitate changing trends and perceptions in the minds of target groups; the ownership of colour is more crucial to the success of the brand. According to one of the respondents from MTN, a possible solution to the question of trend is to enhance the corporate colours of the organisation. This can be done by deepening or lightening the colour or to make use of layered backgrounds. In the mind of the consumer, however, the perception of the colour should not change. The respondent felt that the colour should "become" the organisation and should represent the essence of the visual identity and brand. When doing the above, a change may occur, but as long as the organisation's target markets merely identifies that the brand has not dated, as opposed to actually recognising considerable change in colour, then a positive change has been made. To drastically change colour usage could lead to a loss in recognition and could take years to overcome. Investing in what exists, rather than reinventing, is possibly the best solution to adapt to changes in trend. The respondent also felt that it is through style that an organisation can modernise and keep pace with changing trend. It is the manipulation of style advancement that could potentially deliver value to an organisation's colour scheme.

7.2 The intended communication behind each case organisation's colour scheme as used in the visual identity

When one compares the results of the questionnaires with that of the colour analysis, a high level of consistency concerning the message perceived and the message intended by the case study organisations *MTN* and *Cell C*. Concerning *Vodacom*, however, there is a much lower level of consistency and there is a high level of disagreement exists between the two respondents. *Cell C* and *MTN's* respondents are in sharp contrast, where the opinions and perceptions generally concurred. This discrepancy could be due to two factors:

- The lack of involvement of the graphic designer in the development of the visual identity and colour scheme, and

- The motivation behind *Vodacom's* choice of colour scheme.

Vodacom's choice of colour scheme was not driven by the need to differentiate from competition or for its communication potential, rather by trend. The trend at the time, according to the respondents, was to use blue and green for technological organisations. Their colour scheme was also chosen because of its association with the organisations major stakeholders, Telkom. With the other two organisations, the graphic designers were the driving forces behind the development of the visual identities and therefore had an influence in the choice of colour scheme.

Concerning the perceived message as communicated by their competition, the three case organisations had reasonably accurate perceptions of the intended messages behind *Cell C* and *MTN's* colour schemes. In the case of *Vodacom*, *MTN's* respondents had no comment, while the *Cell C* respondents simply commented that "blue is a colour that is often used corporately and that the colour itself is usually associated with strength." No real description was given concerning Vocacom's perceived personality.

In the colour analysis, it was found that the colour scheme of *Vodacom* could potentially communicate a message of aloofness. This could potentially create an image of an organisation that is cool and distant and not in touch with its target markets. This corresponds with *Vodacom's* graphic designer's opinion that the competition managed to communicate a much warmer image than Vocadom, and that the organisation should move away from green, which the designer considered to be too cold, and focus on a single colour, blue. The brand manager of *Vodacom*, however, made no mention of this and also seemed to be unaware of a move towards a singular colour.

7.3 The target markets at which the colour schemes of the visual identities of the selected case organisations are aimed

Reaching the target markets in order to communicate effectively with them is also an area in which colour plays an important role. The organisation needs to know who its target markets are and what its colour scheme potentially communicates to them. In the colour analysis, an attempt was made to determine who the perceived target markets of the various organisations were. This was then compared to the results of the questionnaires and the intended target markets identified by the organisations.

Concerning *Vodacom* and *Cell C*, a relatively high correlation existed between the perceived target markets and the intended target markets. In the case of *MTN*, the perceived target market was one that consists out of younger people. The respondents, however, identified the intended target markets as middle and upper income groups, as well as audiences who are trend and style orientated. The respondents made no mention of any specific age groups targeted by the organisation.

7.4 The research done by the selected case organisations on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets

None of the three case study organisations had conducted any research to determine colour suitability. It could be argued that the motivations behind the colour choices made this unnecessary. *Vodacom* chose its colours because of its association with its major stakeholders and research might not have been considered necessary because the connection was already there.

The colours chosen by *Cell C* and *MTN* could arguably have familiar associations. One of the first images associated with the colour yellow is the sun, and in the case of red the associations are life, love and passion. These associations could be considered universal and easily identifiable with the organisations (refer to colour table where repetitive colour meanings and associations have been highlighted, Appendix 1).

113

In the South African context, with its mixture of different cultural groups, isolating a colour which appeals to all cultural groups and that has the same association for all the groups, could be a difficult process. In a less complex culture, colour research could be simpler, since the target markets might not be comprised of so many different cultural groups, each attaching different meanings and symbolism to different colours. As mentioned in chapter three, the use of classical conditioning and associative learning could provide a more effective solution. Instead of trying to communicate through the existing colour associations, new associations could be made which prove to be more in line with the organisation's communication strategy.

7.5 The importance of colour as a communication tool to the organisation

Throughout this study, an attempt has been made to determine and indicate the role played by colour in an organisation's visual communication. It is regarded as an important element of the corporate visual identity, and lies central in an organisation's corporate communications function. As indicated in the literature study, in the colour analysis and in the results of the questionnaires colour plays a definite role. It was found that definite motivation existed behind the choice of colour schemes and all the respondents stated that they are aware of the potential that colour has to communicate. They were also aware that an intended message existed behind the colours used in their visual identities. This led to the following question being asked, namely: how important does the organisations rate colour as a communication tool? As mentioned in chapter six, the existence and use of a visual identity manual and other methods of visual identity and corporate colour scheme control, as well as the level of involvement of a graphic designer, were used as methods to determine the level of importance attached to colour as a communication tool.

All three the case organisations rated colour as a communication tool as very high. Only two of the case study organisations, *Cell C* and *MTN*, had involved the graphic designer from the beginning of the development process of their visual identities and the level of involvement was also very high. *Cell C* made

use of a visual identity manual, developed by the graphic designers responsible for the design of the visual identity. This manual was developed simultaneously with the identity. Although *MTN's* respondents were unaware of the existence of a visual identity manual, a control method was being used, namely that before production, all the visual media and designs have to be approved by a central marketing department. The colour analysis also proved that a high consistency existed in *MTN* and *Cell C's* application of colour schemes in the visual media used for the analysis. This could be attributed to the more structured approach adopted by the graphic designers of the two organisations.

The colour analysis showed *Vodacom's* identity and colour scheme application to be fragmented. This could have been caused by the non-involvement of a graphic designer. A lack of communication between the brand manager and the graphic designer was shown in the results of the questionnaires received from *Vodacom*. For example, the brand manager was unaware of changes being made to the colour scheme. *Vodacom* is also the only case organisation that did not have a visual identity manual from the start. Their manual was only developed 10 years later when a fragmentation in the brand, due to inconsistent application of the colour scheme, was identified. Considering that the logo was developed in 1994, this means that the manual was only developed no less recent than the other two, and the inconsistency in colour use mentioned in the colour analysis could be attributed to that.

7.6 Conclusion

From the above it can be deducted that colour would be considered an important tool for communication in practice. It is, however, a tool that needs to be constantly monitored and controlled. Inconsistent use of the colour scheme could easily lead to fragmentation in the brand and a loss of ownership of the colours. Ownership of colour is crucial as a tool to build brand recognition and equity even without displaying the brand logo.

The aim of this study was to answer a question of a descriptive nature and it examined the role that is played by colour in an organisation's visual identity as a communication tool. It examined how colour contributes to the organisation's visual communication and what the motivation behind a particular colour choice is, should such motivation exist. From the literature study, the colour analysis and the results of the questionnaire, factors were identified that could contribute to an organisation's successful visual communication through colour. These factors were found to be:

- the motivation behind the choice of colour scheme
- the collaboration between the organisation and the graphic designer
- the visual identity manual

One of the first steps when establishing an organisation is to determine the mission, vision and objectives of the organisation. The second step is then to develop a visual identity, which then becomes the visual shorthand that represents the above. It identifies the organisation and communicates fundamental aspects about the organisation. This cannot be done effectively when colour choice is not clearly motivated with the intent to communicate.

The organisation and the graphic designer should work together to develop a motivated colour scheme that has the potential to communicate. This process and its steps were summarised by one of the respondents as insight, concept design, design development and production. Throughout this process, the graphic designer and organisation should work together. The establishment of a visual identity manual is also regarded as an important step in the development of an organisation's visual identity and needs to be developed from the beginning, at the same time that the visual identity is developed. It should be developed to prevent fragmentation in the application of the visual identity and should not be used to try and undo damage already done. The collaboration process is also not one that should stop with the development of the visual identity. Collaboration should continue throughout the organisations visual communication to prevent any fragmentation or miscommunication.

It is important to note that colour alone is not enough to make a visual identity "good" or "bad". It is merely one element among many. The target markets of the organisation perceive the visual identity as a whole, not as bits and pieces. It is the overall look and feel that is important. This does, however, not imply that colour is not important. If colour is used effectively from the onset of the establishment of the organisation, if the colour choice is motivated, and the application of colour is controlled, it can aid greatly in communicating successfully to the organisation's target markets.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABELARD. 1998. Orange is tertiary: theory of colour. [Web:]
www.abelard.org [Date of access: 8 Nov. 2002].

ABRAHAM, M. 2001. Branding, corporate identity, heraldry, plumage?
[Web:] www.sticky-marketing.net [Date of access: 9 Sept. 2003].

ALESSANDRI, S.W. 2001. Modelling a corporate identity: a concept
explication and theoretical explanation. *Corporate communications: an
international journal*, 6(4):173-182. [*In* Emerald Online, Full display :
www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

ANON. 2003a. Laughing it off: Justin nurses a big brand hangover. [Web:]
www.iol.co.za [Date of access: 4 Jul. 2003].

ANON. 2003b. Survey questionnaire construction. [Web:]
http://www.tele.sunyit.edu/TEL598sur.html [Date of access: 28 Aug. 2003].

ARGENTI, P.A. 1998. Corporate communication. New York : Irwin/McGraw-
Hill. 258 p.

ARNTSON, A.E. 1988. Graphic design basics. Fort Worth : Holt, Rinehart
and Winston. 214 p.

AYOTTE, J. Corporate identity and image management. [Web:]
www.jmadesign.com/corpidarticle/id.html [Date of access: 4 Feb. 2003].

BAKER, M.J. 1997. Visual identity: trappings or substance? *European
journal of marketing*, 31(5/6):366-382. [*In* Emerald Online, Full display :
www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

BALMER, J.M.T. 2001. Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate marketing: seeing through the fog. *European journal of marketing*, 35(3/4):248-291. [*In* Emerald Online : Full display : www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

BALMER, J.M.T. & GREY, E.R. 2003. Corporate brands: what are they? What of them? *European journal of marketing*, 37(7/8):972-997.

BENNET, A. & GEORGE, A.L. 1997. Research design tasks in case study methods. [Web:] http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/benetta/RESDES.html [Date of access: 28 Aug. 2003].

BICKERTON, D. 2000. Corporate reputation versus corporate branding: the realist debate. *Corporate communications: an international journal*, 5(1):42-48.

BIRREN, F. 1978. Color and human response: aspects of light and color bearing on the reactions of living things and the welfare of human beings. New York : Van Nostrand Reinhold. 141 p.

BIRREN, F. 1955. New horizons in color. New York : Reinhold. 200 p.

CELLULAR AND MOBILE. 2003. Statistics in Africa. [Web:] http://www.cellular.co.za/stats/statistics_south_africa.htm [Date of access: 14 Aug. 2003].

CHESKIN, L. 1948. Colors: what they can do for you. New York, N.Y. : Liveright. 333 p.

CLEMONS, F. 1983. The effect of color on communication, or, a course of a different color. Houston, Tex. : American Business Communication Association, Southwest Division. 11 p.

119

CROZIER, W.R. 1999. The meanings of colour: preference among hues. *Pigment & resin technology*, 28(1):6-14. [*In* Emerald Online, Full display : www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

DMITRIEVA, O. 2003. Color associations. [Web:] www.colormatters.com/research/colorassociations.html [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

DOSTIE, S. 2002. Color in print design. [Web:] www.dmatters.com/index.html [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

DU PLOOY, G.M. 1995. Introduction to communication: communication research. Kenwyn : Juta. 200 p.

EISEMAN, L. 2002. Color symbolism and trends. [Web:] www.ditialout.com [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

EISEMAN, L. 2002. Roper/Pantone consumer color preference study. [Web:] www.ditialout.com [Date of access: 4 May. 2002].

ENGLISH, M. 1998. Designing identity: graphic design as a business strategy. Gloucester, Mass. : Rockport. 144 p.

Ergo/Gero. 2001. Human factors science: color. [Web:] www.ergogero.com/FAQ/part1/ [Date of access: 18 May. 2003].

FEHRMAN, K.R. & FEHRMAN, C. 2000. Color: the secret influence. New Jersey : Prentice Hall. 233 p.

FEISNER, E.A. 2001. Color: how to access colour in art and design. London : Laurence King. 166 p.

GASSON, P.C. 1974. Theory of design. London : Bratsford. 230 p.

GEBOY, L.D. 1996. Color makes a better message. *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, 16(2):52-54, Summer. [*In* EBSCOHost : Academic Search Elite, Full display : http://www-sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

GIMBA, J.G. 1998. Color in marketing: shades of meaning. [Web:] www.trainingforum [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

GRITTINS, R. 2003. An investigation into methods and concepts in qualitative research. [Web:] http://www.sesi.informatics.bangor.ac.uk/english/home/research/technical-reports/sesi-020/formats/SESI-020.pdf [Date of access: 28 Aug. 2003].

GROSSMAN, RP & WISENBLIT, J.Z. 1999. What we know about consumers' colour choices. *Journal of Marketing Practice*, 5(3):78-88. [*In* Emerald Online, Full display : www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

HATCH, M.J. & SCHULTZ, M. 2001. Bringing the corporation into corporate branding. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8):1041-1064.

HEATH, S.B. 2000. Seeing our way into learning. [Web:] http://www.capinstitute.org/learningcircles/learningarts/seeing.html [Date of access: 4 May. 2002].

HELLER, S. 1999. Design literacy. New York, N.Y. : Allworth Press. 281 p.

HOWARD, S. The power of corporate branding. [Web:] www.brandaid.co.in/ [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

HYDE, K.F. 2000. Recognising deductive processes in qualitative research. *Qualitative Market Research: an international journal*, 3(2):82-89.

KAISER, J. 2002. Color symbolism chart. [Web:] www.webdesign.about.com/library.htm [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

KAYE, J.R. 1998. Color. Glouchester : Rockport Publishers. 96 p.

KOENDERMAN, T. 2002. No laughing matter. [Web:]
www.beerwineandspiritsindustrynewsletter.com [Date of access: 4 Jul. 2003].

LAMBERT, A. 1989. Corporate identity and facilities management. *Facilities*,
7(12):7-12. [*In* EBSCOHost : Academic Search Elite, Full display :
http://www-sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

LANDA, R. Visual identity and branding. [Web:] www.onwordpress.com/pdf-
file/landa/gds_ch10.pdf [Date of access: 4 Feb. 2003].

LAUER, D.A. 1990. Design basics. 3rd ed. Fort Worth : Harcourt Brace
Jovanvich College Publishers. 272 p.

LOHSE, G.L. & ROSEN, D.L. 2001. Signalling Quality and Credibility in
Yellow Pages Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 30(2):73-85, Summer. [*In*
EBSCOHost : Academic Search Elite, Full display : http://www-
sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

LEFT. 2002. Color. [Web:] www.cosmos.ne.jp/~hide-
t/files/left.20020424.html [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

LINDSTROM, R.L. 1999. Getting the picture. [Web:]
www.presentationexcellence.com/beingvisual2.pdf [Date of access: 5 Apr.
2002].

LITT, J. 1998. Graphic design vs. desktop publishing. [Web:]
www.graphicdesign.about.com [Date of access: 19 Nov. 2002].

MADDEN, T.J. 2000. Color, culture and consumption. *Journal of
International Marketing*, 8(4):90-107, Jan. [*In* EBSCOHost : Academic Search

Elite, Full display : http://www-sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

MADDEN, T.J., HEWETT, K. & ROTH, M.S. 2000. Managing images in different cultures: a cross-national study of colour meanings and preferences. [Available on Internet:] www.faculty.wintrop.edu/hewett/PERSONAL/kellyvita.doc [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

MEGGS, P.B. 1992. Type and image. New York : John Wiley and Sons. 199 p.

MELEWAR, T.C. & SAUNDERS, J. 1998. Global corporate visual identity systems: standardisation, control and benefits. *International Marketing Review*, 15(4):291-308.

MELEWAR, T.C. & SAUNDERS, J. 2000. Global Corporate Identity Systems: using an extended marketing mix. *European Journal of Marketing*, 34(5/6):538-50. [*In* Emerald Online, Full display : www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

MILLIKEN, J. 2001. Qualitative research and marketing management. *Management Decision*, 39(1):71-77.

MOUTON, J. 2001. How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies. Hatfield : Van Schaik Publishers. 280 p.

O'DANIEL, M. 2001. Psychology of colour. *New Strait Times – Management Times*, Mar. 7. [*In* EBSCOHost : Academic Search Elite, Full display : http://www-sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

PERRY, C. 1998. Processes of a case study methodology for postgraduate research in marketing. European Journal of marketing, 32(9/10):785-802. [*In*

Emerald Online, Full display : www.emerald-library.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

PETERSON, B.L. 1996. Using design basics to get creative results. Cincinnati : North Light Books. 142 p.

PRICE, M. 2002. Designing with colour. [Web:] www.walsworthyearbooks.com/theyearbook/resource/ideafiles [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

ROGERS, S.C. 1997. How to create a graphic identity for your practice. [Web:] www.nysscpa.org/cpajournal/1997/0297/features/f42.htm [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

ROSSOTTI, H. 1983. Colour. New Jersey : Princeton University Press. 239 p.

RUSSEL, J.T. & LANE, W.R. 1999. Klepner's advertising procedure. 14th ed. New Jersey : Prentice Hall. 716 p.

SAMII, M. 2003. Visual branding. [Web:] www.sapdesignguild.org [Date of access: 9 Sept. 2003].

SIMõES, C. & DIBB, S. 2001. Rethinking the brand concept: new brand orientation. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 6(4):217-224.

SOY, S. 1998. Case study as a research method. [Web:] http://fiat.gslis.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/1391dib.html [Date of access: 28 Aug. 2003].

STRYDOM, J, JOOSTE, C. & CANT, M. 2000. Marketing management. 4th ed. Cape Town : Juta. 532 p.

TELLIS, W. 1997. Introduction to case study. [Web:]
http://www.nova.edu/sss/QR/QR3-2/tellis1.html [Date of access: 28 Aug.
2003].

VAN RIEL, C.B.M. 1995. Principles of corporate communication. London :
Prentice Hall. 239 p.

WHITFIELD, T.W.A. & WILTSHIRE, T.J. 1990. Colour *Psychology: a critical
review. Genetic*, Social & General Psychological Monographs, 116(4):387-
411. [*In* EBSCOHost : Academic Search Elite, Full display : http://www-
sa.ebscohost.com] [Date of access: 5 Apr. 2002].

WILLARD, C. A dystopia of colour education in a utopia of color experience.
[Web:] www.colormatters.com [Date of access: 4 Feb. 2003].

WILDE, J. 1991. Visual literacy: a conceptual approach to graphic problem
solving. New York : Watson and Guptill. 191 p.

YIN, R.K. 1994. Case study research – design and methods, Applied Social
Research Methods Series Volume 5. 2nd ed. Newbury Park : Sage. 200 p.

ZELANSKI, P. & FISHER, M.P. 1984. Design: principles and problems. Fort
Worth : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers. 292 p.

ZIMMER, A. & ZIMMER, F. 1978. Visual literacy in communication:
designing for development. Amersham : Hulton Education Publications. 144
p.

Appendix 1: Meanings associated with different colours

The different sources used for the development of this table were the following:

1. Arntson (1988:139);
2. Birren (1978:121);
3. Dostie (2002:20);
4. Ergo/Gero (2001);
5. Feisner, (2001:119);
6. Kaizer (2002);
7. Left (2002);
8. O'Daniel (2001);
9. and Zelanski and Fisher (1984:207).

COLOUR	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE	
	Object/material	**Feeling/abstract**	**Object/material**	**Feeling/abstract**
Black	Being in credit,	**Sophistication**, **power**, **sexuality**, **mystery**, **elegance**, formality, wealth, **style**, strength	Death, darkness	Emptiness, **depression**, disapproval, bad luck, **mourning**, fear, **evil**, unhappiness, remorse, anger, rebellion,
White	Winter, snow, marriage (Western cultures)	**Purity**, **birth**, **cleanliness**, **sterility** (positive), **innocence**, **precision**, lightness, **peacefulness/peace**, empowerment, good, reverence, **simplicity**, humility, youth	Death (Eastern cultures), cold	Surrender, clinical, sterile (negative) cowardliness, cover-up, emptiness
Red	Fire (positive connotation), sports teams; national colours, Father Christmas (Santa /	**warmth**, **passion**, dramatic, sexuality, **love**, luck, sexiness, festivity, Important, **energy**,	Devil, fire (negative connotation)	Anger, **aggression**, **violence**, war, revolution and anarchy, **danger**

	Christmas), **blood**,	compassionate, power, **excitement**, **desire**, **strength, heat** , urgency		
Blue	Sky, technology,	**Coolness**, serenity, authority, **cleanliness**, honesty, soothing, power, dignity, heaven, **truth**, **tranquillity**, **trust**, **security**, **order**, **peace**, calm, stability, **harmony**, unity, confidence, **loyalty**,	Winter (cold)	Introversy, depression, sadness,
Green	**Environment/nature**, **Spring**, **money**, **vegetation** (plants)	Cleanliness, naturalness, soothing and cooling, **growth**, **freshness**, **health**, **youth**, calm, refreshing, **renewal**, **fertility**, peace, harmony, balance, generosity, luck	Poison, alien	**Envy**, **inexperience**, gullibility, immaturity, eeriness, nausea, rawness, sourness, **jealousy**, misfortune,

Yellow	Sun (sunshine), gold, summer	Warmth, good health, optimism, happiness, vitality, hope, joy, idealism, brightness		Cowardice, prejudice, dishonesty, betrayal, jealousy, covetousness, deceit, illness, hazard
Orange	Fruit, flowers, sun	Warmth, brightness, energy, balance, enthusiasm, vibrant, expansive, flamboyant,		Danger (OSHA coding[1])
Brown	Earth, wood, coffee, outdoors,	Comfort, security, reliability, endurance, stability, simplicity,		Melancholy, boredom
Grey		Age (distinction), intelligence, modesty, technology, security, reliability, dignity, maturity, solid,		Sadness, boring, old age,

---

[1] OSHA is the Occupational Safety and Health Agency. They have developed standards in the industry for the assignment of colour meaning. The agency has for example standardised red (danger), orange (warning), yellow (caution), blue (notice), and green (safety). These standardised colours can be seen in use in, for example, the compulsory warning /flammable signs on petrol tankers.

		conservative, practical		
Pink	Baby, feminine	Healthy, sweet, youth, gentility, affection		Left-wing (political)
Purple	Royalty	Bravery, **spirituality, mystery/mysterious**, transformation, **nobility**, ceremony, wisdom, intelligence, **knowledge**, wealth, sophistication, **enlightenment**	Death	**Conceit**, vanity, **mourning**, rage, cruelty, arrogance

Appendix 2: Research Questionnaires

The relationship between questions and the research objectives are indicated on the questionnaires. The corresponding objective is indicated after each question in bold, according to the numbering below.

The research objectives of this study are to determine:

1. The selected case organisations' **motivation** behind the use of the particular colours.

2. The intended **communication** behind each case organisation's colour scheme as used in the visual identity.

3. The **research** done by the selected case organisations on the suitability of the colour scheme regarding colour symbolism and their various target markets.

4. The **target markets** as identified by the selected case organisations.

5. The **importance** of colour as a communication tool to the organisation.

Designer Questionnaire:

1. GENERAL
1.1 Name of respondent:
1.2 What is your position in the organisation?
1.3 Name of Design Company:
1.4 Name of organisation for which visual identity was designed: (Through out the questionnaire, there will be referred to the company listed here as "the organisation".)
1.5 When was the design created?
1.6 What are the colours of the organisation's visual identity (in Pantone, if possible)?

2. THE VISUAL IDENTITY AND COLOUR SCHEME

2.1 How would you rate your **involvement** in die development of the colour scheme?

Relates to objective 5

Very high	☐
High	☐
Adequate	☐
Not much	☐
Not involved	☐

2.2 What **process** was followed to develop the corporate colour scheme and visual identity? **Relates to objective 1**

2.3 How would you describe the **personality** of the organisation for which the colour scheme and logo was developed? **Relates to objective 2**

2.4 What is the **motivation and meaning** behind the use of each of the colours in the colour scheme? **Relates to objectives 1**

2.5 At which **target markets** are the colour scheme aimed? **Relates to objective 3**

2.6 Is the same visual identity and colour scheme used for each of the different **target markets?** **Relates to objective 3**

Yes ☐   No ☐

2.7 If "No", what **changes**, if any, were made to the colour scheme and visual identity? **Relates to objective 3**

2.8 Was **research** done to determine colour preference for the various target markets? **Relates to objective 4**

Yes ☐   No ☐

2.9 If "Yes", what **type of research** was done? **Relates to objective 4**

2.10 What were the **findings** of this research? **Relates to objective 4**

2.11 How in line with **current colour trends** do you consider the colour scheme of the visual identity to be? **Relates to objective 1**

Very	☐
Adequately	☐
Not much	☐
Don't know	☐

2.12	In line with **which trend** is the colour scheme? **Relates to objective 1**
2.13	Has the visual identity been **updated** to reflect current colour trends? **Relates to objective 1** Yes ☐ No ☐
2.14	If "Yes", what **changes** have been made? **Relates to objective 1**
2.15	Has the colour scheme of the organisation been adapted or changed in any way to accommodate the organisation's **international target markets**? **Relates to objective 3** Yes ☐ No ☐
2.16	If "yes", what **changes** have been made? **Relates to objective 3**
2.17	How accurately do you think the visual identity and colour scheme **reflects** the organisation's services and products? **Relates to objective 2** Very ☐ Reasonably ☐ Not much ☐
2.18	How accurately do you think the visual identity and colour scheme reflects the **personality** of the organisation? **Relates to objective 2** Very Reasonably ☐ Not much ☐
2.19	Was your company involved in the development of an **Identity Manual** to standardise use of the visual identity and colour scheme? **Relates to objective 5** Yes ☐ No ☐
2.20	If yes, **how** were you involved? **Relates to objective 5**
2.21	What are the **competitions' personalities** as reflected by their colour schemes? **Relates to objective 2**
2.22	How was a **competitive colour scheme** and visual identity developed for the organisation? **Relates to objectives 1**

Marketing manager questionnaire

1. GENERAL
1.1 Name of respondent:
1.2 What is your position in the organisation?
1.3 Organisation name:
1.4 How long have you been with the organisation?
1.5 How old is the organisation?
1.6 What are the colours of the organisation (in Pantone, if possible)?
2. ORGANISATION PERSONALITY, AIMS, AND GOALS
2.1 How would you describe the **personality** of the organisation? **Relates to objective 2**
2.2 What are the primary **aims** of the organisation? **Relates to objective 2**
3. VISUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT
3.1 Are you aware of the **potential** that colour scheme has to communicate? **Relates to objectives 2** Yes ☐   No ☐
3.2 How **important** would you rate colour scheme as visual communication? **Relates to objective 5** Extremely ☐ Very ☐ Reasonably ☐ Not much ☐ Don't know ☐
3.3 What is the **motivation** behind the use and the meaning attached to each colour in the corporate colour scheme? **Relates to objective 1**
3.4 Was **research** done to determine colour preference for the various target markets? **Relates to objective 4** Yes ☐   No ☐
3.5 If "Yes", what **type** of research was done? **Relates to objective 4**
3.6 What were the **findings** of this research? **Relates to objective 4**

3.7 How in line with current colour **trends** do you consider the colour scheme of the visual identity to be? **Relates to objectives 1**

Very ☐

Adequately ☐

Not much ☐

Don't know ☐

3.8 Has the visual identity been **updated** to reflect current colour trends? **Relates to objective 1**

Yes ☐ No ☐

3.9 If "Yes", what **changes** have been made? **Relates to objective 1**

3.10 To what extent does your organisation have **ownership** of the corporate colour scheme? **Relates to objective 5**

3.11 Did the **graphic designer** play a significant role in the determination of your colour scheme? **Relates to objective 5**

Yes ☐ No ☐

3.12 If "Yes", to what **extent** was the graphic designer involved? **Relates to objective 5**

Extremely ☐

Very ☐

Reasonably ☐

Not much ☐

Don't know ☐

3.13 Describe the role that the graphic designer played in the development of the colour scheme: **Relates to objective 5**

4. TARGET MARKETS

4.1 Who are the different **target markets** of the organisation? **Relates to objective 3**

4.2 What do you think the colour scheme **communicates** to the various target markets of the organisation? **Relates to objective 2**

4.3 Is a **different colour scheme** used for each of these target markets? **Relates to objective 3**

Yes ☐ No ☐

4.4 If "Yes" how has the colour scheme been **adapted** for different target markets? **Relates to objective 3**

4.5 Has the colour scheme of the organisation been adapted or changed in any way to accommodate the organisation's **international target markets**? **Relates to objective 3**

Yes ☐ No ☐

4.6 If "yes", what **changes** have been made? **Relates to objective 3**

5. VISUAL COMMUNICATION

5.1 To what **media** (internal and external) is the colour scheme applied?

5.2 How accurately do you think the colour scheme and visual identity **reflects** the organisation's services and products? **Relates to objective 2**

Very ☐

Reasonably ☐

Not much ☐

5.3 How accurately do you think the colour scheme and visual identity **reflects** the personality of the organisation? **Relates to objective 2**

Very

Reasonably ☐

Not much ☐

5.4 How **constant** is the application of the colour scheme and visual identity? **Relates to objective 5**

Very ☐

Reasonably ☐

Not much ☐

5.5 How often are **audits** done to determine the consistency of the colour scheme and visual identity application? **Relates to objective 5**

Every year ☐

Every second year ☐

Every 5 years ☐

Can't remember ☐

Never ☐

5.6 Does the organisation have an **identity manual** to standardise the use of the visual identity and colour scheme? **Relates to objective 5**

Yes ☐ No ☐

5.7 What **other methods** of standardisation are used by the organisation? **Relates to**

objective 5
6. COMPETITION
6.1 What **personality** do you think is reflected by your competition's visual identity and colour scheme? **Relates to objective 2**
6.2 How do you think your corporate colour scheme and visual identity **compares** (differences and similarities) to that of the competition? **Relates to objectives 2**