

**Equality of Opportunity for Racial Minorities in the UK Civil Service:  
The Impact of Organisational Culture**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Cardiff University**

**Cardiff School of Social Sciences  
Cardiff University**

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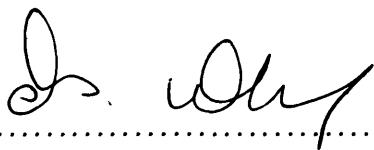
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**Charles Willie**  
**5 February 2007**

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## **GLOSSARY - Terminology and Definitions**

This glossary defines some of the key terminology used in this study. The definitions are adapted from a wide range of sources, but in the main have been developed based on the researcher's experience and knowledge accumulated over a number of years working in this arena.

### **Affirmative Action**

A policy or a programme that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity, as in education and employment. A term commonly used in the USA to refer to positive discrimination.

### **The Civil Service**

Is the body of government officials employed in civil occupations that are neither political nor judicial and is the body concerned with the conduct of the whole range of Government activities, as they affect the country, ranging from policy formulation to carrying out the day to day duties of public administration. Civil Service Departments and Agencies are the main instruments for implementing Government policy when Parliament has passed legislation, and for advising Ministers.

For the purpose of this study the Civil Service relates to the UK Civil Servants in the Departments and Agencies, which employs just fewer than two per cent of the UK workforce.

### **Direct Race Discrimination**

Describes a situation in which one person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of racial or ethnic origin. In the context of this study direct race discrimination

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also covers *racial segregation*, Racist abuse and racial harassment which are unlawful direct discrimination under the *Race Relations Act*.

## **Diversity**

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. In the context of this study this takes note of the uniqueness of the contribution each person brings to the workplace and of the attributes that derive from their own sense of identity and self esteem. As valued individuals, accepted for whom they are and for what they bring, they are more positive, productive and focused on organisational goals than those who feel excluded, discriminated against or just tolerated. The positive work ethic that results is the impetus for performance and consequently for 'profits through diversity.

## **Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is a social construction that indicates identification with a particular group which is often descended from common ancestors. Members of the group share common cultural traits (such as language, religion, and dress) and are an identifiable minority within the larger nation-state. In Latin America, it often refers to Indians and Africans, although perhaps everyone has some type of ethnic or cultural and historical identity based on belonging by birth to a distinctive cultural group.

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## **Ethnocentricity**

Is the viewing the world from the perspective of one's own culture or particular ethnic group, often with the assumption that the values, beliefs and achievements of that group are superior to those of other ethnic groups. Many claim that ethnocentrism occurs in every society; ironically, ethnocentrism may be something that all cultures have in common.

## **Eurocentric**

Eurocentric is the practice, conscious or otherwise, of placing emphasis on European (and, generally, Western) concerns, culture and values at the expense of those of other cultures. It is an instance of ethnocentrism, perhaps especially relevant because of its alignment with current and past real power structures in the world

## **Indirect Race Discrimination**

In the context of this study—describes a situation where an apparently (race) neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons of a racial or ethnic origin at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Since July 2003, there has been a revised wider definition of indirect discrimination. This new definition covers both formal and informal practices and provisions. Also, the adverse impact on the racial or ethnic group need no longer amount to a substantial effect. It will be enough for the individual to show that he or she has been placed at a particular disadvantage (even if this is not 'substantial'). Furthermore, under the new definition, it will not be necessary to show on a statistical basis that the complainant has been placed at a disadvantage, as tribunals are more likely to adopt a more flexible and non-statistical approach. The main objective of this revision is to correct any subtle barriers which are not requirements or conditions, yet lead to discrimination

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## **Institutional Racism**

In general the term relates to the procedures, practices and behaviour within an organisation or institution, which support and encourage direct or indirect racial discrimination. The notion of institutional racism can be traced back to the black civil rights campaigns of the 1960s in America. The use of the term reflected a desire to challenge the belief that racism was essentially an individual phenomenon borne out of individual prejudice. Rather, the aim of those who used the term was to focus attention on the discriminatory effects of institutions and broader social structures.

The Macpherson Report arising from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and published in 1999 defines institutional racism as:

*“the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.”* (Macpherson 1999)

Importantly, in the context of this study the notion of institutional racism is not meant to imply that all or even most of the individuals within a particular organisation are themselves personally racist. Rather, its focus is on the effects of the organisation (and its culture) as a whole.

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## **Mainstreaming (Gender)**

Now commonly acknowledged as a concept of bringing equality issues into the mainstream of society, but originally established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing (China) in 1995. The conference highlighted the necessity to ensure that gender equality is a primary goal in all area(s) of social and economic development. In July 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as: *"Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality."*

## **Multi-Culturalism**

The belief that many different cultures should be encouraged and allowed to flourish in society and that services and facilities such as health, education, the arts, etc should be delivered in a way that embodies and promotes this belief.

## **Nationalism**

A distinctive sense of a cultural and historical identity, and/or a common destiny based on being a citizen of a particular nation state.

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## **Organisational Culture**

For the purpose of this study organisational culture can be seen as a pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. This identifies that culture is to do with groups of people collectively (not individuals alone), who through their experiences together, day by day in the work environment, will build a picture of what the organisation is all about and how it undertakes its purpose, and that this picture is built through learning how to behave for survival and progression.

## **Positive Action in employment (sections 37 and 38 Race Relations Act 1976):**

This is the targeting, training, or encouraging of job applications from people from racial groups that are under-represented in a particular area of work. This can include a wide range of outreach activities, special open days, briefings on background so candidates learn more about the industry etc.

Positive action does not mean skewing any recruitment or selection procedures for jobs or promotion in order to discriminate in favour of any person from a particular racial group as to do so is likely to be unlawful.

Before you can embark on positive action you need to do (or be able to refer to) some sort of ethnic monitoring within the areas of work concerned, since positive action under the Race Relations Act refers to 'under-representation'.

## **Positive Discrimination**

Treating people more favourably on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, gender etc. (Under the *Race Relations Act* this is illegal in the UK.)



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## **Prejudice**

Pre-judging people in a negative way according to pre-conceived ideas about them.

## **Progression**

1. the act of moving forward toward a goal
2. a movement forward;
3. a series with a definite pattern of advance

In the context of this study civil servants are able to move up a pay band or scale. This is known as career progression.

There are three main forms of career progression:

- Progression up to the contribution threshold for each grade, reflecting the growing experience and skill of the job holder. Staff will have a normal expectation that progression from point to point up to this threshold will take place on an annual basis, subject exceptionally to existing procedures for dealing with performance problems. This is known as incremental progression – where the worker moves as the result of having achieved an agreed performance marking or target - the worker moves as the result of having attained a particular level of competence. e.g. having completed a training programme, or having attained a job related qualification.
- Accelerated incremental progression, reflecting substantially greater than normal application of skill and experience by the job holder.
- Discretionary progression beyond the agreed contribution threshold.

## **Principles of Progression**

- Opportunities for progression should be available to all groups of staff, though the scope and criteria for such progression may need to vary.

- 
- People should be rewarded fairly according to their contribution, including application of new skills and of expertise developed over time in the job.
  - Progression criteria should:
    - be clearly related to institutional objectives;
    - recognise achievements, and reward competences and activities likely to contribute to future success;
    - help motivate staff; and
    - not be unfairly or inappropriately discriminatory.
  - Systems for assessment of the contribution made by staff should be fair, consistent and transparent on the basis of defined expectations and success criteria. Judgements should be demonstrably based on objective evidence, and recognise team work where appropriate.
  - Both progression criteria and the mode of their application should be developed in consultation with those concerned – managers, employees and their union representatives.
  - Progression arrangements should be communicated to staff so that they understand the operation of the process, and the part they and their managers play in it.
  - Appropriate training should be given to managers and staff so that progression systems can be operated in an equitable, fair, transparent and objective manner.
  - Any progression system should:
    - Avoid costly, bureaucratic and excessive burdens on staff;
    - Ensure that the effort involved in its operation is justified by the rewards under consideration; and
    - Ensure that progression opportunities and rewards are demonstrably equally available to all staff who meet the criteria.

---

## **Racial Discrimination/Disadvantage**

Can arise in any of four ways:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Race discrimination by way of harassment
- Victimisation.

These four ways are further described in this glossary.

In the context of this study – These four types of discrimination apply in the following circumstances:

- In arrangements for determining who shall be offered employment
- In the terms on which employment is offered by refusing or deliberately omitting to offer the person employment
- In the terms of employment provided
- In the way in which access is provided to opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, or any other benefit, facilities or services
- By dismissing or subjecting a worker to any other detriment

## **Race**

Is commonly taken as the basis upon which groups of people are identified as distinct from each other. Under section 3 of the *Race Relations Act 1976*, this distinction refers to colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins. A person can therefore be a member of several racial groups at the same time. In the context of this study, the term 'race' is used to reflect this anti-discrimination legislation distinction but does not imply endorsement of the long discredited notion of race as a valid biological concept.

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## Racial/Ethnic Group

In the context of this study a racial/ethnic group is defined as ‘a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins’

Tariq Modood (1997) provides this definition of racial/ethnic groupings that is used in this study:

*‘In principle, an ethnic group would be defined as a community whose heritage offers important characteristics in common between its members and which makes them distinct from other communities. There is a boundary, which separates ‘us’ from ‘them’, and the distinction would probably be recognised on both sides of that boundary. Ethnicity is a multifaceted phenomenon based on physical appearance, subjective identification, cultural and religious affiliation, stereotyping and social exclusion. But it is not possible in advance to prescribe what the key distinguishing characteristics might be; the components of ethnicity will be different, for example, within Britain compared with Northern Ireland. So it is necessary to adopt a flexible and practical approach to choosing the specific criteria to identify the ethnic boundaries in any particular society’.*

What makes a racial/ethnic group distinctive will vary from one group to another. It could include a common sense of national identity, a shared set of customs and traditions, a shared history of migration and settlement and/or a shared experience of discrimination and exclusion. Some racial/ethnic groups may be distinctive because of their skin colour. However, what makes them an ethnic group is not the colour of their skin as such but rather a sense of shared history and identity.

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## **Racial Harassment**

Is the language or behaviour aimed at another because of their race, colour, ethnicity or national origins which the recipient finds unacceptable and offensive. In the context of this study racial harassment can involve relationships between work colleagues and/or unfair decisions and procedures being used by an organisation. Until 19 July 2003 harassment was not expressly outlawed by the *Race Relations Act* (1976). New regulations now outlaw harassment on grounds of race, ethnic or national origins. Anyone suffering harassment on grounds of colour or nationality can bring a direct race discrimination complaint.

## **Racial Minority**

In the context of this study it is important to note that colour cannot be used to distinguish between minority groups, for example, between Africans and Caribbeans or between Indians and Pakistanis, nor can it distinguish between people within the 'white' majority group, that is all 'white' Europeans are grouped together yet have diverse cultural backgrounds, from Sweden to Turkey, Ireland to Romania. What all this leads to is the fact that there is no universally agreed, or ideologically untainted, nomenclature for racial ethnic classification. The term racial minority is therefore used in this study to refer generically to persons of Chinese, Asian, West Indian and African descent. These broad groupings relate to the 'visible' Black and Asian ethnic minority community and help to readily identify the groups that are experiencing racial discrimination and disadvantage.

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## **Racism**

Racism can be understood as a collective term that refers to all of those ideas, beliefs, actions, customs, practices and policies that have the effect of disadvantaging and/or discriminating against members of particular ethnic groups. The defining feature of racism is therefore the outcome of particular activities, rather than whether those responsible for such activities intentionally wish to disadvantage or discriminate against others.

In the context of this study and in general terms, racism consists of conduct, words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In this study, racism is described as a set of attitudes and behaviour towards another racial or ethnic group based on:

- the belief that natural difference in physical characteristics (such as skin colour, hair type, face shape, etc.) corresponds directly to differences in personality and ability; and
- the social and economic power of members of one racial or ethnic group to enforce and enact such attitudes and behaviour towards others.

## **Stereotyping**

Making broad generalisations about particular groups of people and expecting all members of that group to think and behave identically.

## **Victimisation**

Anyone involved in bringing proceedings, making allegations or giving information in connection with the *Race Relations Act* is protected by the Act against victimisation. That means that they must not be subject to any detriment as a result.

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## Summary

This thesis is concerned with organisational culture and its impact on equality of opportunity in employment for racial minorities, specifically in the UK Civil Service. It focuses on equal opportunities policies and practices in the context of organisational and cultural change, and attempts to understand better the relationship between culture and disadvantage.

To provide this understanding the Civil Service is taken as a case study, using as a starting point the launch of The Programme for Action to Achieve Equality of Opportunity in the Civil Service for People of Ethnic Minority Origin (otherwise known as 'the Programme for Action on Race' (PAR)) in May 1990. From this starting point, the study compares and contrasts Civil Service statistical data and the perceptions of a sample of three respondent groups (Civil Service managers, racial minority staff and equality organisations) on career progression outcomes for white and racial minority Civil Servants. It seeks to identify what, if any, influence the Civil Service culture may have had on these outcomes. In order to do this, the study first draws upon theoretical perspectives around culture, race, racism and racial disadvantage, and examines the literature on the relationship between culture and racism (cultural racism) with particular regard to the UK Civil Service. The evaluation of the theoretical perspectives provides the basis for the selection of an exploratory research design methodology and to a mainly qualitative analysis of the responses from the three respondent groups (Civil Service Organisation Managers, Equality Organisations and Racial Minority Civil Servants) to the study's semi-structured interview schedules, and questionnaires.

What clearly emerges from the study is that, both statistically and in the perceptions of those surveyed, there has been a lack of tangible progress for racial minority civil servants, particularly at the senior civil service level. Central to this lack of progress are the barriers still faced by racial minority staff, together with a lack of priority afforded to this issue. The evidential response to the study's two specific research questions clearly identify organisational culture as a key contributory factor to these barriers and the lack of priority

Furthermore the study findings suggest that initiatives such as the Programme for Action on Race (PAR), whilst well intentioned, have failed to make a significant impact. The conclusion therefore reached is that a radical approach is needed if there is to be a proportionate level of racial minorities particularly in the higher echelons of the Civil Service.

# Chapter One

## Introduction



---

## 1.1 Introduction

We cannot be a beacon to the world unless the talents of all people shine through, not one black high court judge; not one black Chief Constable or permanent secretary; not one black army officer above the rank of colonel, not one Asian either. Not a record of pride for the British establishment ... There is no harm in reminding ourselves of just how much negative discrimination there is.

*(Rt. Hon. Tony Blair - Labour Party Conference, Brighton, September 1997)*

This thesis is concerned with organisational culture and its impact on equality of opportunity in employment, specifically, career progression for racial minorities in the UK Civil Service. It uses as a starting point the date of the launch of *The Programme for Action to Achieve Equality of Opportunity in the Civil Service for People of Ethnic Minority Origin* (otherwise known as '*the Programme for Action on Race*' (PAR<sup>1</sup>)) in May 1990. Using the Civil Service as a case study the study compares and contrasts career progression outcomes for white and racial minority Civil Servants from this 1990 date to 2004, and seeks to identify what, if any, influence the Civil Service culture may have had on these outcomes.

This introductory chapter provides the theoretical and practical policy context of the study, and includes:

- a short introduction, by way of background;
- a description of the rationale, aims and objectives of the study;
- the context of the study; and
- a description of the study structure.

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<sup>1</sup> PAR Aimed to build on existing policies and procedures to help Departments and Agencies recruit, develop and retain ethnic minority staff, in terms of fair and equal opportunities to develop their skills and advance their careers.

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## 1.2 Background

Both in the past<sup>2</sup>, and more recently<sup>3</sup>, evidence of the existence of race inequalities and disadvantage in employment and other areas are well documented. Theoretical disputes over the reasons for this, however, remain largely unresolved. Research on discriminatory practices in organisations has tended to focus on the influence and impact of the implementation of equal opportunity policies on employment opportunities for black people and other minorities,<sup>4</sup> rather than patterns of inequality among them.

In the dispute about the causes of racial inequality and disadvantage in employment matters, the many inter-related issues that are put forward and acknowledged by researchers and commentators<sup>5</sup> as potential contributory factors include:

- the extent of commitment from central government (whether equality is on the political agenda);
- prevailing labour market conditions;
- organisational culture and workforce attitudes;
- what is understood by equal opportunities;
- constraints and opportunities that attend the implementation of equal opportunities;
- the limits of the law; and
- arrangements for handling and implementing equal opportunity policies.

Other less obvious factors can all also be considered as having a bearing on equality and equity in employment, and as a consequence an influence on the

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<sup>2</sup> Becker (1957); Smith (1974); Brooks (1975); Smith (1977); Beteille (1979); Home Affairs Committee Report on Racial Disadvantage (1981); Smith (1981); Brooks (1983); Jenkins (1986)

<sup>3</sup>Jenkins (1991); Jenkins and Solomos (1989); Edwards (1995); Skellington (1996); Alibhai-Brown (2000); Parekh (2000); Loury (2002); Modood (2003)

<sup>4</sup>Smith (1974), Smith (1981), Brooks (1983), Jenkins (1986), Jenkins and Solomos (1989), Edwards (1995), and Pilkington (2003)

<sup>5</sup> See Home Affairs Committee Report (1981); Jenkins (1986); Smith (1974), Alibhai-Brown (2000), Parekh (2000); Kandola and Fullerton (1994); Coussey and Jackson (1991); Lustgarten and Edwards (1993); Cockburn (1991).

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specific focus of this study, the career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service.

These are factors such as:

- change agents;
- patterns of political, professional and departmental power;
- the distribution of control over personnel functions; and
- geographical location.

These factors in themselves are not necessarily discriminatory, however, many contribute to a lack of opportunities or conditions for racial minorities to develop and progress in organisations with the same expectations as their white colleagues. This relative lack of opportunity, it is suggested, can have a real and damaging impact on the lives of racial minorities. Lord Scarman, (1981) in his report on the disorders in Brixton in the 1980s, highlighted the extent to which racial disadvantage in areas such as employment contributed to the underlying causes. This is a point underscored by the Government reply to the *Home Affairs Committee Review of Racial Disadvantage in the UK* (1982:2), which stated that:

At present the circumstances of many members of the ethnic minority communities are less fortunate than those of the majority of the population. To a disproportionate extent they .....experience greater levels of unemployment.....they experience the deprivations of the poorer section of the white community, but to a greater extent. This is due to a variety of factors: [amongst these are] cultural differences.....[leading to] racial disadvantage.

This disadvantage has more recently been underlined in a 2001 Cabinet Office study on reducing racial disadvantage, which concluded that:

inequality between ethnic minorities and whites would continue to widen over the next 20 years unless fresh action was taken, and warned that the government had little clear understanding of why some ethnic groups had recently done

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better than others, and that Ministers had no means of consistently assessing the impact of their policies, or refining them to target specially disadvantaged groups. (*Guardian Unlimited 2001*)<sup>6</sup>

Working from broad theoretical perspectives around organisational culture and racial disadvantage, this study seeks to identify the impact that the culture of the Civil Service may have on equality of opportunity for racial minorities in the UK Civil Service. This is achieved by focusing on the recognised dominant base culture of the UK Civil Service and seeking to understand its impact on progression opportunities for its racial minority staff. This core culture of the civil service has been acknowledged by a number of writers such as Sampson (1982), Theakston (1995), Pyper (1999), and a comprehensive in-depth review by Schneider-Ross Report (1999:3) commissioned by the Cabinet Office, which concluded that:

In essence, the main barrier to the progression of ethnic minorities is perceived to be a deeply embedded culture, which has the impact of excluding those who are different. In the main, this is not a question of overt discrimination or prejudice it is an altogether more subtle (and less conscious) process.

More recently, a similar view has been put forward by Ed Straw of the independent think tank DEMOS<sup>7</sup>. Straw (2004:31), in writing about the need for reform of the civil service, identifies the existence of an underlying embedded culture and makes the point that:

All cultures have strong immune and self-preservation systems. The behaviour of the individuals making up the organisation is not malign or conspiratorial in defence of the status quo. Nonetheless, cultures are extraordinarily resilient, especially in organisations which have successfully adapted to change over generations.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://society.guardian.co.uk/raceequality/story/0,,533313,00.html> (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

<sup>7</sup> *Demos* is an independent think tank, which aims to create an open resource of knowledge and learning that operates beyond traditional party politics. Connecting researchers, thinkers and practitioners to an international network of people changing politics.

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The Schneider-Ross Report (1999), whilst welcomed by the Cabinet Office (who acknowledged the embedded culture identified by Schneider-Ross) was, however, considered by some senior civil servants<sup>8</sup> as incorrect in its assertion that the culture of the Civil Service may in fact be a barrier to the progression of its racial minority staff. This senior civil service view is to be expected, according to Cockburn (1991:219), who in a study of senior management opportunities for women, suggests that ‘white males resist equal opportunity policies in organisations by generating institutional and cultural barriers’. She argues that organisations are dominated by:

those that have the power to define all other groups as inferior.  
It is a white male heterosexual and largely able-bodied ruling monoculture.

The fact that these senior Civil Servants did not believe that the culture of the Civil Service created progression barriers is perhaps not a surprise, given that the make up of the senior civil service is predominantly white, male, heterosexual and largely able-bodied.

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<sup>8</sup> Relates to (a) my own independent observation with regard to the views of senior managers of a government department when presented in March 2000 with the findings of the Schneider-Ross report, and (b) Commentary from Rachel Ross (co-owner of Schneider-Ross) on the ‘backlash’ from senior civil servants to the Schneider-Ross findings at the November 2003 IIR Public Sector Conference *‘Rhetoric to Reality’* (IIR is a leading knowledge and skills transfer organisation).

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## 1.3 Study Rationale, Aims and Purpose

### 1.3.1 Rationale

This study takes note of the increasing rhetoric and evidence of perceived disadvantage experienced by racial minorities in aspects such as employment, economic activity, health, and education<sup>9</sup>. This perception, which is frequently referred to by the Prime Minister when he talks about the issue of equality and diversity, and was emphasised in his speech at the launch of the *'Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market'* report in March 2003, provides a clear focus for this study. He said that:

Some ethnic minority groups have done well in the education system and in the labour market. But, too many members of ethnic minority communities are still being left behind. And even those individuals who achieve academic success do not necessarily reap the rewards in the workplace that their qualifications merit. We need a much more fine-grained approach with interventions tailored to meeting the different needs of particular groups. This report contains such a package of fresh and practical measures, all of which will be implemented immediately as government policy. (*Rt. Hon. Tony Blair – March 2003*)<sup>10</sup>

The rationale for the study is also informed by existing discourse and material on culture, race/racism, and racial disadvantage. Each of these areas is considered in depth, both in theoretical and practical terms. With regard to culture, for example, there is an increasing acknowledgement of cultural differences, as defined by writers such as Berlin (1990), and the perceived influence of culture, as suggested by commentators such as Ott (1984), Hall (1996), Grosvenor (1997), Hofstede (2001), and Tileaga (2006). Importantly for

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<sup>9</sup> Jenkins (1991), Jenkins and Solomos (1989), Edwards (1995), Skellington (1996), Alibhai-Brown (2000), The Parekh Report (2000)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.strategy.gov.uk/work\\_areas/ethnic\\_minorities/index.asp](http://www.strategy.gov.uk/work_areas/ethnic_minorities/index.asp) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

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this study, the power of culture, as identified in the infamous *In Search of Excellence* of Peters and Waterman (1982), and more recently in Blanning (2002) and Bolaffi, *et. al.* (2003) are also significant.

The issues of race, racism and racial disadvantage are experiencing a resurgence of academic interest. The murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1998 highlighted and emphasised the importance of race/racism as an issue for debate, discourse and action. The inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, chaired by Sir William McPherson, reported to Parliament in February 1999 (*The Macpherson Report* 1999). Apart from its wide-ranging findings relating to the conduct of the Metropolitan Police, the Report also addressed the need for all public bodies to take practical measures to challenge institutional racism and to promote racial equality positively. These practical measures are set out in the public sector obligations of the *Race Relations Amendment Act 2000* (RRAA)<sup>11</sup> and include recruitment and progression issues. Within the Civil Service, these obligations reinforce the need for action acknowledged in the Government reply to the *Fifth Report from the Home Affairs Committee on Racial Disadvantage* in 1982, and since that time, by a number of prominent politicians such as Mo Mowlam, in the Equality Foundation Journal, *Inclusion* (2000). As the Minister responsible for the Civil Service in 1999, she emphasised the Government's commitment, stating that:

As a government we are committed to creating a fair and inclusive society with opportunities for all regardless of age, sex, ethnic background or disability. Mowlam (2000:17)

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<sup>11</sup> The RRAA strengthened the 1976 *Race Relations Act* and is a key part of the Labour Government strategy to implement the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry's recommendations. It places a general duty on specified public authorities to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

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This is a point underscored by the then Home Secretary, Jack Straw in a foreword in the March 2000 Home Office document *Race Equality in Public Service* (2000:3), where he stated that:

The promotion of race equality within the provision of services to the public is a key priority for this Government ...

The rationale is further justified by my own experience and interest in the subject matter, particularly as a result of my 24 years work experience as a racial minority Civil Service manager. This experience and job role provides an invaluable source of knowledge and understanding in exploring the issues of the Civil Service culture and racial disadvantage that are key elements of this study. Whilst I recognise that this experience as an 'insider' may bring with it the possibility of bias and 'baggage', understanding the dangers of this and compensating for it from the outset as suggested by Sherif (2001:436-447) should ensure an objective and balanced review focussing on evidence assisted and aided by significant personal experience.

### **1.3.2 Aims and Purpose**

The specific aim of this study is to seek to understand better the influence of organisational culture on racial disadvantage in career progression, and to develop new insights on its impact and effects in order to improve knowledge and understanding.

The main objective is to provide an evidential response to the general question of whether organisational culture has an impact on career progression practices and more specifically whether this impact disadvantages racial minorities. In providing this response, following an evaluation of the theoretical constructs of culture and race/racism, the study focuses on career progression in the UK



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Civil Service, and aims to explore, identify, elucidate and analyse the effects of the apparent embedded culture of the civil service on the racial minorities employed in the UK Civil Service, thereby making a contribution to the existing literature on racism within a workplace culture.

## 1.4 Study Context

In matters of equality within the Civil Service, there are 'programmes for action' which support equality policies and initiatives that should assist Departments and Executive Agencies in attaining a representative balance of minority groups within the workforce, and ensure their progression through the management chain. This study takes the position that the various Civil Service policies and initiatives that have been put forward since the 1990s have been genuine attempts to create and improve opportunities for its minority staff groups. However, statistically the improvement appears limited in terms of progress for groups such as racial minority staff who have previously experienced bias and/or discrimination on the basis of their race. Although similar conclusions could be drawn on other equality strands (and indeed issues such as class), the study's specific context is an examination of the behaviour of the Civil Service as shaped by its organisational culture, and its impact on the suitability/acceptability of individuals and as a consequence on the progression and career development of racial minorities in the UK Civil Service. This takes note of the perception, as indicated by the Schneider-Ross report (1999:3-4), that significant inequalities still exist; indeed as far as race is concerned, Schneider-Ross conclude, 'they are almost certainly more significant than those for other equality strands'. This is a view underlined by the Head of the UK Civil Service in 1999, Sir Richard Wilson, who made this clear in his speech launching the Modernising Government Initiative (1999:60), stating:

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We need to bring about a real culture change that values diversity. We have far too few women, people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, and people with disabilities in the senior parts of the civil service. We must be part of and not apart from, the society that we serve. This is a top priority. We want a civil service that values the differences that people bring to it. We need to have the benefit of those differences. We must not only reflect the full diversity of society, but also be strengthened by that diversity.

Within the context outlined above, the findings of this study will throw light on the extent to which the Civil Service values differences, and indeed reflects the full diversity of society within its career progression practices.

## **1.5 Study Structure and Order**

The thesis is organised into twelve chapters. Although each chapter has its own individual focus, the development of each, results from the general characteristics of racial disadvantage and organisational culture, and from this, attempts to understand better the relationship between culture and disadvantage. It explores the case of the UK Civil Service, in the following way:

Chapter two, through an interrogation of the research literature, provides a consideration of the theoretical and conceptual perspectives of a key focus of the study - organisational culture. The chapter explores the concept of culture, in particular its characteristics, component processes, origin, meaning, and the divergent views of organisational culture. The conceptualisation of levels, components and interactions are then examined, followed by a discussion of approaches to organisational culture. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the influence/power of organisational culture and its importance and relevance to this study.

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Chapter three, again based on a review of research literature, provides a consideration of the concepts, theories and meaning of race and racism with particular reference to their impact on racial minorities. Specifically, the chapter reviews the theoretical concepts associated with race and racism, exploring origins and characteristics, and meaning, and construction, together with an exploration of the linkages between race and racism and the complexities of racism. The chapter concludes with an examination of the workplace complexities and sensitivities of racism.

Chapter four examines the literature on the relationship between culture and racism (cultural racism), in particular its impact on the employment practices of recruitment, selection and performance management. To do this there is first an evaluation of the conceptions and theories around cultural racism. This is followed by an assessment of disadvantage in the labour market generally, but with specific regard to racial disadvantage. The chapter concludes by providing an evidential focus for the study with an exploration of the impact of cultural racism on the personnel management functions that may have a bearing on career progression: recruitment, selection and particularly performance management.

Chapter five provides an overview of a key agency of the state, the central government bureaucracy known as the UK Civil Service. The chapter first reviews the history, structure and code of practice of the UK Civil Service. It then provides an overview of the theoretical and practical implementation of its mode of operation. Taking note of the contributions on organisational culture, race, racism and racial disadvantage from previous chapters, the chapter concludes with a discussion on the perceived embedded organisational culture of the UK Civil Service and the influence and impact that this culture may have

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on the recruitment, but particularly the career progression opportunities, for racial minorities within it.

Chapter six sets out the literature derived justification for the study. It specifies the research questions and how they are to be addressed and evaluated. It conceptualises and operationalises the main concepts, and in the light of the research questions, provides an examination of the research techniques relating to race issues, together with a reflective critique of the design strategy selected for this study. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the research methodology that could be used when researching issues such as race, and includes a rationale and justification for the data collection approaches of interview and questionnaire, selected for this study.

Chapter seven provides a descriptive assessment of the methods and tools used in the data collection for this study. Structured around the research questions, this chapter looks at the data collection methods (semi-structured interviews and questionnaires) utilised. It then looks at the issues of ethics and access, in particular reflections of the role of the researcher as an ‘insider’. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the approach taken to the administration, analysis and presentation of the data collected.

Chapter eight, focuses on the Civil Service by drawing together relevant statistical data on career progression for racial minorities. This official Civil Service workforce information provides a statistical timeline of quantitative data pertinent to this study. This timeline starts in 1989, uses data from 1997 as a mid-point, and ends with data from the published 2004 Civil Service Statistics. The chapter concludes with an overall summary which sets out the emerging findings from these statistical data.

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Chapter nine looks at the ‘influential’ considerations of the first part of the responses to the study’s semi-structured interview schedules, and questionnaires. These responses are presented by setting out the qualitative and quantitative findings and results with regard to Civil Service culture followed by the results and findings ordered around the issues of policy and commitment, each of which are considered as potentially having an impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities within the Civil Service. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main points arising from this first part of the data collection exercise.

Chapter ten looks at the ‘practical’ considerations of the second and final part of the responses to the study’s semi-structured interview schedules, and questionnaires. These responses are presented by setting out the qualitative and quantitative findings and results ordered around the experiences of the respondents with regard to the issues of practice, opportunity, bias, and barriers each of which are considered as potentially having an impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities within the Civil Service. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main points arising from the second part of the data collection exercise.

Chapter eleven is structured around the research questions, and provides an analysis of the results and findings of Chapters eight, nine and ten. Through a detailed examination of the performance management appraisal system, this analysis provides an evaluation and establishes the extent to which the organisational culture of the Civil Service impacts on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the UK Civil Service. The chapter concludes with an overall summary of the analytical conclusions.

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Chapter twelve is a review of the thesis, summarising the major findings that have emerged, and providing an overall conclusion. The chapter provides an evidential response to the research questions, but also identifies limitations of the study. It concludes with recommendations for potential future research opportunities.

The study ends with an epilogue chapter which highlights limitations, lessons learnt and what I may have done differently if starting the study again.

As a starting point for the study the following chapter looks at the issue of organisational culture.

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## **Chapter Two**

# **Organisational Culture: Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives**

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## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the theoretical and conceptual perspectives of a key concept in the study - organisational culture. Through an analysis of the research literature, the chapter explores the concept of culture, its characteristics, components and processes. This is achieved by first looking at the origin and meaning of culture, taking particular note of the many divergent views and descriptions. This is followed by a review of the make up of culture, specifically its levels, components and interactions. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the influence/power of organisational culture, and as a consequence its importance and relevance to this study.

## 2.2 The Study of Organisational Culture

In looking at the conceptual theories and meaning of organisational culture, the starting point, as identified by Pettigrew (1979), is that of understanding the concept of culture itself. In his influential contribution to the subject, Pettigrew (1979) explains that the concept comes originally from social anthropology, and that over a long period of time, commentators have sought to analyse, interpret and describe its attributes and problems. This long standing study that Pettigrew (1979) makes reference to continuity with the present and provides an extensive literature to draw upon. Whilst this literature is useful, it can also be problematic given the proliferation of definitions, descriptions, concepts and meanings given by a host of commentators. This is a fact emphasised by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), who in conducting a review of anthropological literature, found over 160 definitions of the concept. Ogbonna (1993) suggests that the number of definitions equals the number of theorists studying culture. By way of example, a few paraphrased examples of the very many descriptions and definitions of organisational culture provided by writers and commentators since 1871 are listed in chronological order at Table 2.1 below.



*Table 2.1 - Definitions of culture - Chronology*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Paraphrase of Definition of Culture</b>
1871	<i>Tylor</i>	That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs art, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.
1948	<i>Herskovits</i>	The man made part of the human environment
1949	<i>Kluckhohn</i>	The set of habitual and traditional ways of thinking, feeling and reacting that are characteristic of the ways a particular society meets its problems
1952	<i>Kroeber &amp; Kluckhohn</i>	Transmitted patterns of values ideas and other symbolic systems that shape behaviour
1957	<i>Selznick</i>	Core values that determine the organisational philosophy or mission
1959	<i>Hall</i>	A form of communication , the link between people and the means they have of interacting with each other
1961	<i>Becker, Geer, Strauss and Hughes</i>	Set of common understandings expressed in language
1979	<i>Pettigrew</i>	Shared symbols, language, ideologies, rituals and myths The system of such publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time. This system of terms, forms, categories and images interprets a people's situation to themselves.
1979	<i>Weick</i>	Patterns of cognitive processes
1979	<i>Van Maanen &amp; Schein</i>	Values, beliefs and expectations that members come to share
1980	<i>Hofstede</i>	The collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another.
1981	<i>Schwartz &amp; Davis</i>	Pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by members that produce norms shaping behaviour
1981	<i>Ouchi</i>	The philosophy that guides an organisation's policy
1981	<i>Pfeffer</i>	The institutionalised power of the dominant interests of the organisation
1981	<i>Hall</i>	A form of communication , the link between people and the means they have of interacting with each other
1984	<i>Hofstede</i>	Culture is characteristic, not of individuals, but of people who were conditioned by similar educational and life experiences. A cultural group may refer to a tribe, regional group, minority, majority or nation. Culture becomes crystallised in the institutions that people build together: family structure, educational structure, religious organisations, associations, forms of government, social work organisations, law literature, settlement patterns, building and even scientific theories. All of these structures reflect common beliefs that are rooted in the common culture
1985	<i>Schein</i>	A pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered or developed by a given group
1985	<i>Handy</i>	In organisations there are deep set beliefs about the way work should be organised, the way authority should be exercised, people rewarded, people controlled.
1988	<i>Meek</i>	Both the shaper of human action and the outcome of a process of social creation and reproduction
1992	<i>Fleras &amp; Elliot</i>	Providing a framework for organising, maintaining and transforming relations of power and dominance in society
1996	<i>Carr-Ruffino</i>	The collective programming of the mind, the learning process that results in the members of one group of people being different from those of another
1997	<i>Georgides</i>	A system of shared values (what is important) and beliefs (how things work) that impact with a company's people, organisational structures and control systems to produce behavioural norms ( the way things are done around here).
2000	<i>Seel</i>	An emergent result of the conversations and negotiations between the members of an organisation

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This chronology clearly demonstrates that culture has been extensively researched, however, there remain divergent views on what it is, and as such is still a subject that attracts a good deal of comment and debate. This study reviews only a limited subset of the extensive organisational culture literature available, specifically those aspects that assist in the assessment of the impact and influence of organisational culture, in particular the linkages and interactions of the main elements of organisational culture (artefacts, 'shared values', beliefs, and customs) that many of the writers and commentators listed at Table 2.1 refer to.

A detailed examination of the different perspectives and definitions is beyond the scope of this study. However, having identified these differences, before looking at the limited subset to be reviewed, there is a need to better understand why these contrary views may exist.

### **2.3 Divergent views on organisational culture.**

A starting point to this better understanding of culture is the issue of 'the assumptions social scientists bring to their research', referred to by commentators such as Burrell and Morgan, (1979), Morgan and Smircich, (1980), Van de Ven and Astley, (1981), and Hofstede, (1994). Burrell and Morgan (1979:1) in particular argue that, 'All social scientists approach their subject via explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the social world and the way in which it may be investigated'. Smircich (1983:339) contends that definitions reflect the differences in 'basic assumptions that researchers make about both organisation and culture'. Burrell and Morgan (1979) go on to identify two dimensions to these assumptions, the first relates to the subjective-objective views of the commentator, which comprise three sub-dimensions, those of ontology, epistemology and human nature. The assumptions made on

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each of these sub-dimensions, they contend, have an influence on the approach of the commentator. The second dimension relates to the nature of society with regard to regulation or radical change. From these dimensions Burrell and Morgan (1979:24-26) provide four models into which 'all social theories can be located'. These are paraphrased as:

- **Functionalism:** - Relating to an approach to the study from an objective-rational stance viewing society as comprising empirical artefacts and relationships, culture becoming something the organisation has or acquires;
- **Interpretism** - Relating to an approach to the study from a subjective-regulatory perspective, seeing culture as something the organisation is;
- **Radical Humanism** - Can be seen as an extension of the interpretive model, relating to an approach to the study and a view of society from a subjective-radical perspective; and
- **Radical Structuralism** – Relating to an objective-radical view of society that it sees as being comprised of contradictory groupings and elements.

These dimensions provide an explanation and reason as to why contrary views exist and why social science commentators take different standpoints. In short, these different theoretical perspectives can be aligned to an individual's basic assumptions about society, its state and individual consciousness. The models set out by Burrell and Morgan provide an excellent framework of the theoretical approaches, and as a consequence facilitates an understanding of the conceptual positions and perspectives of different commentators.

The assumptions that social scientists bring to their research and as a consequence the divergent views of culture highlighted above are further developed and emphasised by the Postmodernism debate. In outline, Postmodernism is a complicated term, or set of ideas, that has only emerged as an area of academic study since the mid-1980s. In general, Postmodernism, as identified by Anderson (1998:34), 'questions the ability of conventional sociology to produce valid theories of society or to objectively describe the

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world', arguing that 'social behaviour is now a question of lifestyle choice, that everyone's viewpoint is equally valid and that there are no absolutes, no right or wrong'. Postmodernism therefore, as Sokal and Bricmont (1998) suggest, involves many different ideas and arguments that we can use to help us understand the world and its many different cultures. Curran *et al.* (1996) talk about it as, believing is seeing. *How* I see determines *what* I see. 'Facts' are not even 'facts' unless my interpretive framework provides for the recognition of them as 'facts'.

In the context of this study, these so called 'facts' in relation to the culturally constructed nature of our experience are a particularly important consideration, as underlying many of the claims about the factual nature of the world are the individual perceptions that make these facts. By way of example and with specific regard to this study, take the notions of being black, gay or thin. These are identities that are socially constructed, and given meaning by perceived societal 'norms'. However, we have to ask ourselves the question why these socially constructed categories are distinctive and not others. What is so special about skin colour, sexuality or size that we proclaim them as different, and different from what? As Kumar (1995:103) puts it:

For every feature you select for examination, another one bearing on the question can be offered with equal aplomb, even though it may point in an entirely different and even contrary direction. Earnest examinations of the fit between theory and reality are met with an ironic smile. Contradiction and circularity, far from being regarded as faults in logic, are in some versions of post-modern theory actually celebrated.

This is a point well made by Kumar, as the theory of the treatment of difference and the perception of the reality of the treatment of difference are key considerations of this study.

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## 2.4 Definition and meaning of organisational culture

Taking note of the above divergent views, and the many definitions of organisational culture, a conceptual meaning of organisational culture, used by this study, which encapsulates a consensual viewpoint, is that of the prominent organisational psychologist Ed Schien, who offers this definition:

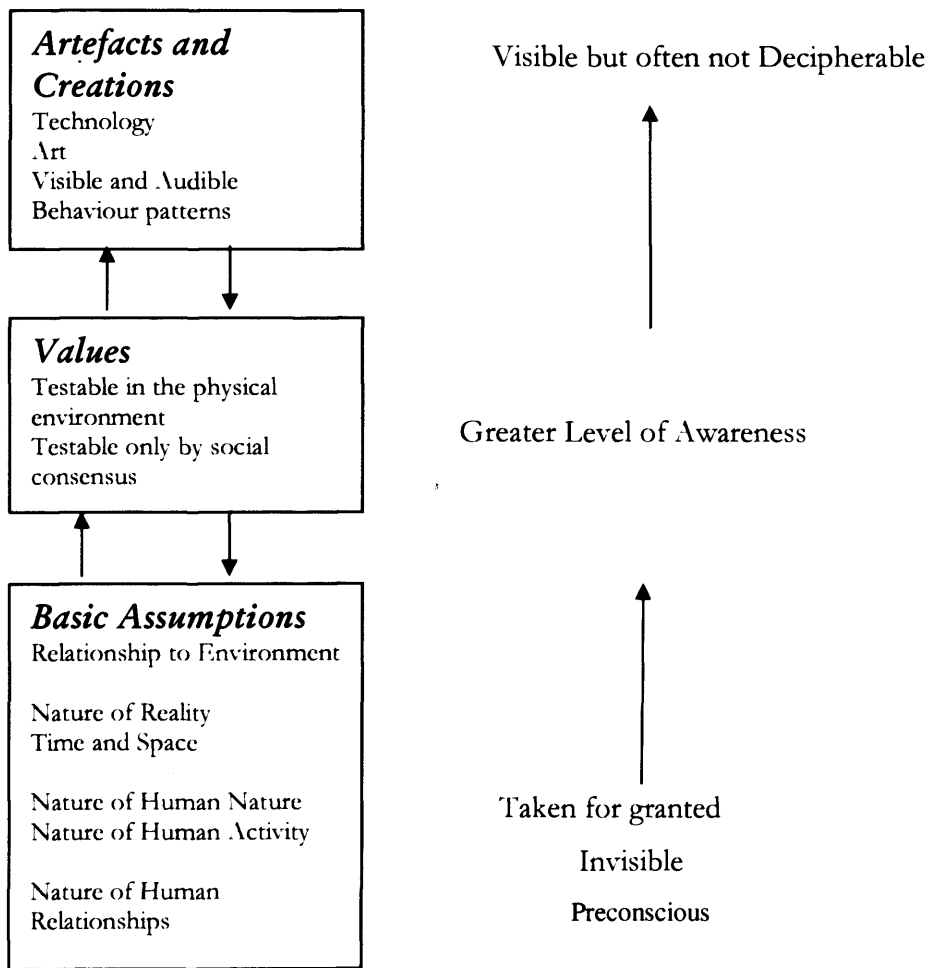
Organisational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems. Culture is not overt behaviour or visible artefacts that one might observe if one were to visit a company. It is not even a philosophy or value system which the founder may articulate or write down in various 'charters'. Rather it is the assumptions which lie behind the values and which determine the behaviour patterns and visible artefacts such as the architecture, office layout, dress code and so on (Schien, 1985:17)

By way of clarification of this definition, Schein (1985) further identifies three levels of the cultural phenomenon in organisations. Schein suggests that, first on the surface are the overt behaviours and other physical manifestations (artefacts and creations): second, below this level, is a sense of what ought to be (values), and third, at the deepest level are those things that are taken for granted as 'correct' ways of coping with the environment (basic assumptions). It is the pattern of 'what ought to be' and 'taken for granted' basic assumptions that Schein (1985) describes as culture.

This view accords with those of writers such as Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), Schwartz and Davis (1981), and Hofstede (1984), who all distinguish between the implicit and explicit/overt nature of organisational culture. The explicit, they refer to as the typical and distinctive patterns of behaviour of a people and the typical and distinctive artefacts they produce. The implicit they

refer to as the total set of cultural beliefs, values, attitudes and norms which underlie and determine the observed regularities in behaviour, which makes up the explicit culture. This distinction is well illustrated at Figure 2.1 below by a model developed by Schein (1985), a model praised by Hatch (1993:658) as ‘one of the only conceptual models ever offered’.

**Figure 2.1 - Levels of Culture Representation**



*Source: (Adapted from) Schein (1985:14)*

In conceptualising culture it is important to understand each of the aspects of this interlinked concept of artefacts, values and assumptions, and the manner in which they link and interact. The following section, therefore, provides a brief overview and analysis of this linkage and interaction.

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## 2.5 Culture's Linkages

Schein's (1985) model reflects the general consensus of academic opinion, linking artefacts to values and values to basic assumptions. Artefacts, for the purpose of this study, are defined by Ott as (1989:24):

Material and nonmaterial objects and patterns that intentionally or unintentionally communicate information about the organisation's technology, beliefs, values and assumptions, and ways of doing things.

Ott (1989) further describes artefacts as physical, intangible or behavioural, for example, language, ceremony, rituals, documentation and furnishings. As put forward by commentators such as Badovick and Beaty (1987), values and beliefs are taken as shared<sup>12</sup>, which, as contended by Ott (1989:89) are, 'the pervasive and dominant sets of interrelated systems of thoughts, beliefs and/or values that is an organisation's framework of attitudes and actions which enable an organisation to exist in a particular manner'.

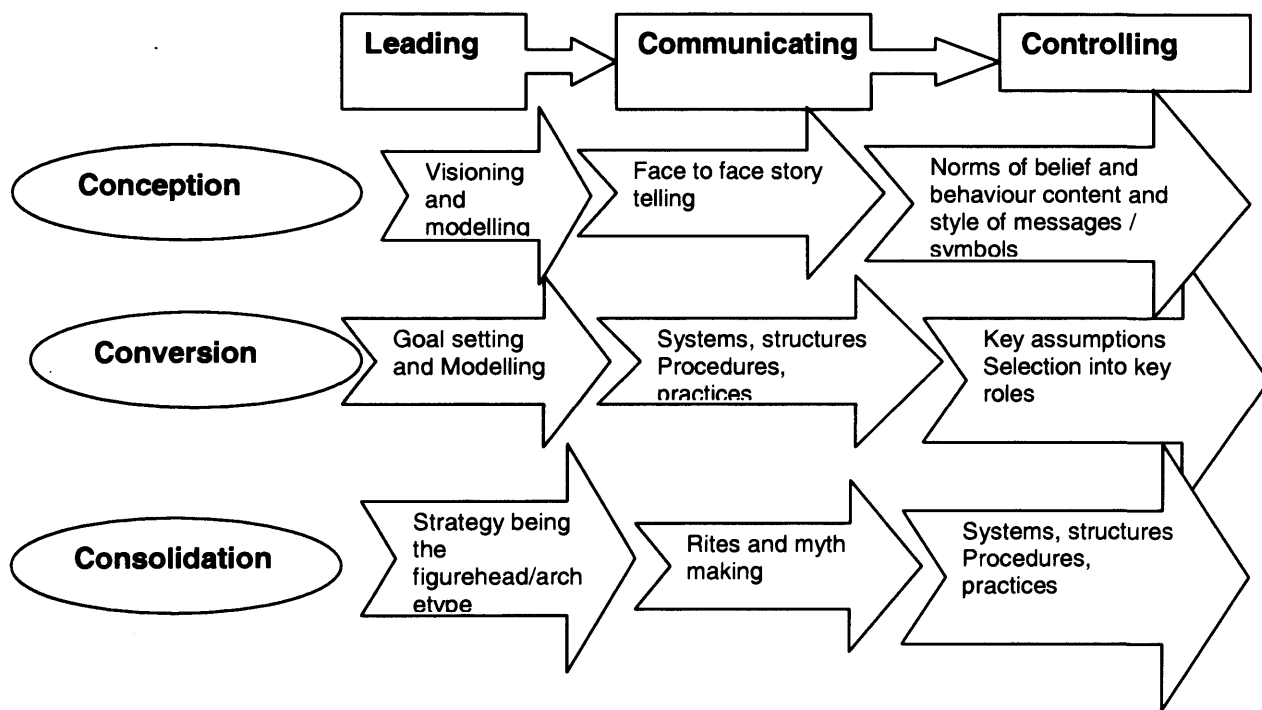
Schein (1985) makes the point that artefacts are the most tangible aspect of culture. Hatch (1993: 669) takes this forward in her view of cultural realisation, contending that artefacts are 'infused with the assumptions and values that led to its proactive realisation' but localised through 'the realisation processes of producing members'. In this she provides a clear link between artefacts and values/beliefs. This link is well illustrated by the Payne's (1991) model of the key processes of organisational culture, adapted at Figure 2.2. The model suggests that from the conception to the consolidation of organisational culture, three key processes can be identified: leading, communicating and controlling. Payne (1991:27) argues that these processes are concerned with

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<sup>12</sup> Values and beliefs and the basic assumptions referred to by Schein (1985) are closely aligned and as a consequence the majority of commentators tend to concentrate on one or the other, perhaps to the detriment of an holistic approach to the subject. The merits of this approach are outside of the boundaries of this study and as such reference to a single term of values and beliefs for the remainder of this section is utilised.

‘setting the norms of behaviour and the norms of values and beliefs’. This is a point well made by him, and it is these norms which he considers still shapes the systems, structures, practices and procedures of organisations, such as, I would suggest, that of today’s Civil Service.

*Figure 2.2 - Organisational Culture - Key Processes*



*Source: Adapted from Payne(1991:29)*

As identified by Peters and Waterman (1982), these cultural linkages are often based on shared values and form a crucial part of the make up of organisational culture. A point underscored by Theakston (1995) and Pyper (1999) who both make the point that well established organisations, such as the Civil Service have usually developed a strong culture of shared values which exerts a powerful influence on a wide range of functions, practices, procedures, policies and specifically the behaviour of an organisation. This culture will have the capability of influencing how organisations recruit, select and promote individuals, the methodologies they use and the technical or personal qualities



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that are considered important. The effect of this, as Coussey and Jackson (1991) imply, may be that talented minorities do not go to organisations where they are not appreciated and, instead go to those where there is a more supportive multicultural approach, which enables them to develop to their full potential. The organisations with a supportive multicultural approach then benefit from the talents on offer. A point amplified by Hoecklin (1995:21), who comments:

By learning something about the variety of human cultures ... it is possible to see that your own solutions may not be the only, the best or the most appropriate for the task at hand. It is this basic realisation that is the first step in using cultural difference strategically.

The interactions that the link between artefacts, values and beliefs provides, and the influence that this has on organisational practice, are discussed below.

## **2.6 Cultural Interactions**

Values and beliefs are reported by a number of commentators and writers<sup>13</sup> as being the ‘bedrock’ of organisational culture that provide a sense of common direction for all employees and guidelines for their day-to-day behaviour.

Johnson (1999:74), for example, puts forward a view that values equate to ‘the way we do things around here’. This view is amplified by the definition provided by Hofstede (1984:18) who suggests that ‘values represent a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others’. These preferences, (which can differ based on the dominant values within different parts of an organisation), Hofstede (1984) considers, can, and do have important implications for behaviour.

In looking at this issue of different dominant values within an organisation, the issues of counter-cultures<sup>14</sup>, multi-cultures<sup>15</sup> and sub-cultures were also

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<sup>13</sup> Deal and Kennedy (1982), Hofstede (1984)

<sup>14</sup> A term used to describe a cultural group whose values and norms of behaviour run counter to those of the social mainstream of the day, the cultural equivalent of political opposition. Although distinct countercultural

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considered, in particular that of sub-cultures in the context of identifiable cultures within an organisation. The traditional view of a sub-culture, relates as identified by commentators such as Sackmann (1992:143) and Deal and Kennedy (1982), to a social group within a national culture. This social group has a distinctive pattern of behaviour and belief and exists because of differences between tasks, expertise and activities performed by various organisational groups. Whilst this definition is acknowledged as accurate, in the context of this study what is clear is that dominant subcultures that may exist within different Civil Service Departments, Sections, branches etc, generally follow the dominant culture of the Civil Service. This is due, it is suggested, to the embedded nature of Civil Service culture supported by its structure, rules and the similar cultural values of those who hold the power within its structure.

This suggestion is of particular importance to this study, and is supported by Hofstede (1984), who in trying to classify national cultures, also identifies that many sub-cultures with different value systems may co-exist in an organisation. Underlying these sub-cultures, he considers, is a dominant western culture. Sardar (1998:22) puts forward the view that 'there can be little doubt that the global theatre is a strictly western theatre.... and is a personification of western power and control'. This is further emphasised by Hoecklin (1995:8) and Handy (1985) who also are of the view that there are signs that as the world becomes one market place, the versatility of the western style capital markets and the freedom of the individual in the Anglo-Saxon culture becomes seductive.

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undercurrents exist in all societies, here the term counterculture refers to a more significant, visible phenomenon that reaches critical mass and persists for a period of time.

<sup>15</sup> A description of societies made up of varied groupings of people who, apparently, have their own cultures, and the sum total of these is the national multicultural. From this definition a number of terms (multiculturalism, intercultural, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural democracy) all essentially describing the same concept have been generated. A concept advocating that society should consist of, or at least allow and include, distinct cultural groups, with equal status.

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These western 'shared values' are often referred to as the 'core values' of an organisation and can, as indicated by Hofstede (1984:273-274), be seen to be related to fundamental beliefs about the worth, utility or importance of something that serves as criteria for appraising social alternatives, including how workers are treated. Hofstede (1984) suggests that as values powerfully influence behaviour, they are a matter of great concern to the success and progress of organisations. Specifically Hofstede (1984:273-274) makes the point that often organisations succeed because their employees can identify, embrace and act on the values of the organisation. These values, Hofstede (1984:19) suggests, may be grand in scope(direction) or narrowly focussed (intensity) and can capture the imagination, tell people how to work together, or can simply drive theory.

Schein (1992), whilst recognising the influence and importance of beliefs and values, which he refers to as culture, also recognises its changing nature, putting forward a conception that is in the form of an adaptive agent that enables organisational participants to learn to cope with problems of survival. This he contends, suggests that where a culture has outlived its usefulness as a means of sustaining people's behavioural patterns, they learn or (soon develop) alternative ways of legitimising the old or new behaviours that may eventually translate into a new set of beliefs and values. In the context of this study, this legitimisation of behaviour, as explored in Chapter five, is particularly relevant in relation to the manner in which the practices and procedures of the UK Civil Service have both developed and are operated.

In accepting that beliefs and values are the bedrock of culture and that this has a direct impact on behaviour, the importance of culture in an organisational setting can be seen to be a key factor. This is a fact that is further emphasised by Smircich (1983), who identifies two distinct approaches based on Burrell and

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Morgan's (1979) paradigmatic framework, defining culture as something an organisation *is* and as something an organisation *has*. Smircich (1983) makes the point that when viewed as something an organisation has, culture becomes a powerful organisational tool. She contends that it shapes behaviour, gives organisational members a sense of identity and establishes recognised and accepted premises for decision-making. Smircich (1983) goes on to indicate that for those who see culture as what an organisation is, the concept is inseparable from organisations - '*Organisation is culture and culture is organisation*'. This is a view supported by Weick (1987), who illustrated this by suggesting that organisations do not have cultures, they are cultures, and that this is why culture is so difficult to change. This is underscored by Pascale (1985), who, with regard to the difficulty of changing culture, argues that, if you run up against culture when trying to redirect strategy, you should attempt to dodge it. He further implies that if you must meddle with culture directly, tread carefully, with modest expectations.

This view of the difficulty in changing culture is emphasised by Siehl and Martin (1984), who contend that there is little point in trying to control a socially constructed phenomenon which is embedded in the very roots of organisational existence. This is a view shared by Fombrun *et al.* (1984), who suggests that managing corporate culture is an awesome if not an impossible task. Krefting and Frost (1985) come to the same conclusion, making the point that if, as is clear, organisational culture is funnelled through the unconscious, it is not always orderly, proposing that it is then unlikely that efforts to manage such a culture can be precisely predicted or tightly controlled.

These observations about the strength and resilience of culture are important considerations when looking at its impact, particularly as we can see from the discourse above that culture is essentially about beliefs, values, and attitudes, and ultimately about the control of behaviour. What we can also interpret from

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the literature is that these deeply held beliefs, values and attitudes (sometimes referred to as assumptions) guide and shape what members of the group do, say and think. These assumptions become the norm, and often it is only when these 'taken for granted' assumptions are challenged that people realise that they even exist.

This lack of realisation, together with the difficulty of changing culture, is particularly important in the context of this study. However, Smircich (1983) draws attention to organisational culture as being something that can change, influence and manipulate the way an organisation operates and behaves at both an individual and organisational level. This influence and as a consequence its power, is further discussed below.

## **2.7 The influence and power of organisational culture**

As highlighted above, there are divergent views held by commentators as to what culture is. There is, however, a consensus indicated by commentators such as Kanter (1983), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) as to the power of culture. Peters and Waterman (1982) make a number of references to 'power-culture' in their seminal work, *'In Search of Excellence'*. Blanning (2002) and Bolaffi *et. al.* (2003) make similar references. Of particular note for this study is the more explicit view of Pfeffer (1981:298), who contends that 'culture is merely a representation of institutionalised (organisational) power'. This power is, as indicated by Ott (1984), a means of ensuring that a good 'cultural fit' is maintained. Ott (1984) goes on to suggest that to ensure this maintenance within an organisation, especially a large organisation, individuals will want to be aware of the dynamics of the organisation and to know how to fit in and avoid major blunders.

Kotler (1984:167) succinctly makes the point about individuals wanting to ‘fit’, stating that:

The society that people grow up in shapes their basic beliefs, values and norms. People absorb almost unconsciously a world view that defines their relationship to themselves, to others, to nature and to the universe.

**Table 2.2 - Organisational Cultural Dynamics - “The role of the founder in creating organisational culture”**

Element	Commentary
Language	Common language and consensus on conceptual categories. If members cannot communicate with and understand each other a group is impossible by definition
Boundaries	Consensus on group boundaries and criteria for inclusion and exclusion. One of the most important areas of culture is the shared consensus on who is in and who is out and by what criteria one determines membership.
Power and Status	Consensus on criteria for the allocation of power and status. Every organisation must work out its pecking order and its rules for how one gets, maintains and loses power. This area of consensus is crucial in helping members manage their own feelings of aggression.
Rewards and Punishment	Consensus on criteria for allocation of rewards and punishments. Every group must know what its heroic and sinful behaviour are: what gets rewarded with property, status and power, and what gets punished through the withdrawal of rewards and ultimately excommunication.

*Source: Adapted from Schein (1983:27-28)*

Schein’s (1983) illustration at Table 2.2 (slightly adapted by bringing together some of the elements listed by Schein), usefully provides a view on the way in which organisational cultural dynamics manifest themselves, by the use of four specific criteria – language, boundaries, power and status, and rewards and punishment. The common element in each of the criteria identified by Schein (1983) is that of consensus, and - importantly in the context of this study - the consideration of who contributes to that consensus and ultimately who makes the decision as to what that consensus should be.

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This consensus, alongside the recognition by commentators such as Schein (1992) and Hofstede (1984) that the behaviour within an organisation is strongly influenced by shared values, is compounded, O'Reilly *et. al.* (1991) contend, by the strength of the organisation's culture. Another way of looking at cultural strength is in terms of cultural norms. Essentially as described by O'Reilly *et. al.* (1991) norms vary along two dimensions, the *intensity*: amount of approval/disapproval attached to an expectation, and the *crystallisation*: prevalence with which the norm is shared.

For instance when analysing an organisation's culture, it may be that certain values are held widely but with no intensity. For example, everyone understands what top management wants, but there is no strong approval/disapproval. As O'Reilly *et. al.* (1991) make the point that it is only when there is both intensity and consensus that strong cultures exist. O'Reilly *et. al.* (1991) go on to say that to use culture over the long term effectively, organisations need also to possess certain values and assumptions about accepting change. These values, O'Reilly *et. al.* contend, must be driven by the strategic direction in which the organisation is moving. Without these, a strong culture can be a barrier to recognising the need for change, and being able to reconstitute itself even if the need is recognised.

Supporting this apparently contradictory facet of culture, Denison (1990), in a longitudinal study found evidence that suggests incoherent and weak cultures at one point in time were associated with greater organisational effectiveness in the future, and that some strong cultures eventually led to decline in corporate performance. A strong culture, Denison (1990) put forward, can therefore be a barrier to recognising the need for change and in addition to be able to institute change, even if the need was recognised.

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The influence and power of culture are key factors when considering the impact that culture has on an organisation's practices and processes. This is a point that is of particular importance to this study, which will be developed alongside the consideration of racism in later chapters.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

From the literature it is clear that the difficulty of finding terms and/or language with which to explore the concept of culture does not seem to stop people talking about it as if it were something hovering over society, influencing behaviour in a direct and uniform way. Culture, the literature suggests, is far more complex than this. Just in the same way as terms such as 'aspirations', 'peace', and 'evil' are not directly tangible or visible, neither is culture. All of these are ideas and concepts constructed from within society. This concept of culture has developed over years and is now at the forefront of many different social and commercial agendas due to efforts being made to understand society and its behaviour better. We can see that in rhetoric at least, much has taken place by way of commitments and initiatives in seeking to compartmentalise and tackle cultural issues. This can be seen by the very strong political rhetoric in the UK and elsewhere promoting a more culturally diverse society, for example. This desire, driven by political imperatives for a more culturally diverse society is perhaps emphasised by the fact that this theoretical idea, taken from social anthropology, is now seen by many to have considerable significance in areas such as employment and commerce. The way, then, in which culture has developed and is practised in organisations/teams, and its effect on certain groupings is the key aspect of this study, and is particularly relevant as the concept of an organisational culture has come to be applied to almost any size of social group from whole nations to corporations, departments and teams within an organisation.



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The sensitivity attached to addressing the issue of culture is of particular interest. A number of commentators make note of the fact that culture is difficult to measure and to discuss as it involves shared ways of perceiving the world that members of a group take for granted. Taking note of this sensitivity, in the review it became clear that the values of culture may very well reflect the national cultural values and assumptions of the country of origin, so in the UK, it would be expected that these values are geared toward westernised and indeed for the UK, 'Anglo-Saxon'<sup>16</sup> interpretations. Many of the commentators point out that these interpretations are powerful and have a wide-ranging influence over a range of practices, procedures, and policies, but have in truth changed little over the years. Culture, many commentators would argue, goes beyond the norms or values of a group in that it is more of an ultimate outcome based on repeated success and a gradual process of taking things for granted. In other words what makes something cultural is the taken for granted quality that makes the underlying assumption something that cannot be discussed. From the review it can be seen that 'culture' can therefore determine the kinds of structures, policies and practices that are thought to be natural and right.

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<sup>16</sup> Anglo-Saxon - The Anglo-Saxons were a group of Germanic tribes from Angeln, a peninsula in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, protruding into the Baltic Sea, and what is now Lower Saxony in Northern Germany, who achieved dominance in southern Britain from the mid-5th century to the mid-11th century, forming the earliest basis for the modern English nation, language and culture. In the context of this study this relates to the modern stereotypical view of – “a native or inhabitant of Britain whose native tongue is English and whose culture is strongly influenced by English culture as in WASP for 'White Anglo-Saxon Protestant'”; "(<http://wordnet.princeton.edu>) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

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What this chapter therefore shows is that in the context of this study, culture (and/or the sub-cultures described above), as many of the commentators have described, is perpetually being formed in the sense that there is constantly some kind of learning going on about how groups relate to the environment and manage internal affairs. But this ongoing evolutionary process does not change those things that are so thoroughly learned that they come to be a stable element of the 'groups' life. Importantly for this study, a number of commentators are of the view that since the basic assumptions that make up an organisation's culture serve the secondary function of stabilising much of the internal and external environment for the group, and since stability is sought as a defence against the anxiety which comes from uncertainty and confusion, these deeper parts of the culture either do not change or change only very slowly. This lack of change or slowness of change is a feature of the UK Civil Service. This is a significant barrier to the recruitment, progression and development of groups such as racial minorities.

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## **Chapter Three**

### **Race and Racism Theoretical & Conceptual Perspectives**

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### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the theoretical and conceptual perspectives of the main focus of the study, race and racism, with particular regard to their linkages and relationships. Through a review of the relevant research literature, there is a consideration of the theoretical concept of *race*, exploring its origins and characteristics, including an examination of conceptual theories of racial hierarchical division and notions of ethnic grouping superiority/inferiority. This is followed by an exploration of the issue of *racism*, looking at its definition, characteristics, meaning, and construction. The chapter concludes with an examination of the workplace complexities and sensitivities of racism.

### 3.2 The Origin and Characteristics of Race

As Goldberg (1993) identifies, the concept of race enters European social consciousness explicitly around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, more or less coterminous with European exploratory voyages of discovery, expansion and domination. The first recorded reference to the sense of Europe as a collective 'we' was in the papal letters of the mid-fifteenth century. At this time, race did not have the same meaning that it is associated with it today, as Goldberg (1993:21) explains:

The word race whilst sometimes used in translation of classical and medieval texts, the term translated is almost invariably 'species', and what is intended conceptually is not race but peoples or man generically.

Indeed the medieval texts referred to by Goldberg were religious at root and not racial. The start of the move from religious to racial is recorded in Bosch's 16<sup>th</sup> century *Garden of Earthly Delights*<sup>17</sup>, in his pictorial allusions to black devils,

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<sup>17</sup> *The Garden of Earthly Delights* features a full narrative realized from all of the surfaces. Chronologically, the creation of the world becomes imparted onto the creation of Man, followed by earthly sin, culminating in damnation. The left interior panel of Eden depicts animals living together with humans without interaction.

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and by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, whatever tensions might have existed between religious and racial modes of identity had largely been resolved in favour of the latter.

Taking forward the racial mode of identity accepted in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Lovejoy (1960:8) makes reference to the manner in which, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the classification of race arose, identifying that:

In the eighteenth century, the data that lent themselves most readily to systematic seeing, to representations by rules, were those of biology and of natural history. Extended to human affairs, the pervasive spirit of simplicity sought to reproduce for social relations the sort of simple order thought to inhere in nature.

In simple terms what Lovejoy points to is the application of categories of species (racial classifications) to human groupings on putatively inherited or environmental differences that implied a hierarchy of races supposedly on the basis of 'natural' characteristics. This informs as Goldberg (1993) identifies, concepts of inferiority and superiority as part of this racial hierarchy. In particular the superiority of whites as set out by moral rationalists such as Kant (1960) and Hume (1964). Kant (1960:111) endorsed the view of racial subordination, making the point that:

So fundamental is the difference between the [the Negro and white] races of man, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as color. . . . The blacks are vain in the Negro way, and so talkative that they must be driven apart from each other by thrashings

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Curiously, death exists, exemplified by a cat carrying a mouse and a lion eating a deer or antelope. Moving to the centre panel, animals and humans begin to coexist and intermingle. On the right side, animals torture humans, completing a transformation of "simple" creatures into anthropomorphic superiors

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There are numerous other examples of this inferiority/superiority concept, not least the views of Voltaire (1734:176) declaring that:

Bearded whites, fuzzy Negroes, the long-maned yellow races and beardless men are not descended from the same man....[Whites] are superior to these Negroes, as the Negroes are to apes and the apes to oysters.

The supposed superiority of whites, and the issue of race as a biological classification, therefore has a history dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, leading to specific racial categorisations in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This categorisation was taken forward in the nineteenth century when social theorists such as Herbert Spencer<sup>18</sup> began to apply the concept of race to social categories, and as a consequence, the classification of human beings into 'races' became a prominent aspect of categorisation. From this we see that other social theorists such as Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Arthur de Gobineau<sup>19</sup> constructed a 'school' of social racism in which the supremacy of the white race and European civilisation was dramatically featured. Resulting from this, as identified by Banton (1997), throughout the nineteenth century and most of the twentieth century, the term 'race' was used not only to distinguish between groups but also to establish a hierarchical division of races. Physical appearance, Banton (1997:34) goes on to suggest was taken as correlating to social, psychological, intellectual, moral and cultural differences 'between people and the assumed superiority of the west'

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<sup>18</sup> Herbert Spencer – Philosopher; who formed a system of philosophy based on the doctrine of evolution; he wrote *First Principles* in 1862, and *The Principles of Biology* in 1864, and published on psychology, education, sociology, and ethics; and argued for the freedom of the individual and the limitation of the state.

<sup>19</sup> Houston Stewart Chamberlain - British-born Germanophile political philosopher, whose advocacy of the racial and cultural superiority of the so-called Aryan element in European culture influenced pan-German and German nationalist thought, particularly Adolf Hitler's National Socialist movement.

Arthur de Gobineau - French diplomat and essayist. In his essay of 1855, he discusses the hierarchy of races. According to him, only the "Aryan" race, the creator of civilization, had the supreme virtues of love of freedom and honour. He believed that the Semitic races had degenerated. His essay was used by the Nazis as proof of their racial supremacy.

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The hierarchical division suggestions of Banton are supported and expanded by Barker (2000:193), who states:

The concept of race bears the traces of its origins in the biological discourses of social Darwinism which stress lines of descent and types of people. Here race refers to alleged biological and physical characteristics, the most obvious of which is skin pigmentation. These attributes frequently linked to 'intelligence' and 'capabilities' are used to rank 'racialised' groups in a hierarchy of social and material superiority and subordination.

In providing some context to this view on race, it should, however, be acknowledged that racial inequality and the perception of inferiority/superiority is nothing new and as Drake (1991:7) identifies:

The empirical evidence... supports the view that prejudice and discrimination based upon skin colour existed [prior to the White European expansion] but were not accompanied by any systematic doctrines of racial inferiority or superiority, that is, 'racism'.

Furthermore there remains a degree of denial by some of the fact that race is even an issue. This is a viewpoint put forward by Farman (1992:7), who suggests that:

The talk around race has only moved as far as its own negation; 'I am not a racist'.... becomes a common and accepted disclaimer on the tip of everyone's tongue.... this they state allows for the avoidance of deep questioning and critical thinking.

This is a point underscored by Omi and Winant (1993) who similarly are of the view that the socially constructed status of the concept of race is widely recognised, so much so that it is now often conservatives who argue that race is an illusion. This suggestion is not one that is shared by Marable (1991), the African American academic, who contends that race is an artificial social construction, which was deliberately imposed on various subordinated groups

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of people at the outset of the expansion of European capitalism. Marable (1991) further proposes that race is in fact rooted in the structures of exploitation, power and privilege, evidenced by the racism that exists within society.

Goldberg (1993:42) makes the very valid and important statement that shows the distinction and also the linkage between race and racism stating that:

It follows that race is a discursive object of racialised discourse that differs from racism. Race, nevertheless, creates the conceptual conditions of possibility, in some conjunctural conditions, for racist expression to be formulated.

The distinction is well made and assists in the understanding of how racism can arise. This understanding of how racism is formulated is of particular relevance to this study and is further elaborated upon in the next section.

### **3.3 The Definition, Characteristics and Meaning of Racism**

Gramsci (1971), Miles (1989) and Satzewich (1993) contend that the word 'racism' only began to achieve general usage as well as political and academic discussion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Gramsci (1971) explains, the use of the term was strongly influenced by the second world-war experience of anti-Semitism; the first recorded use of the term, he suggests, being in a French communication document describing the anti-Semitism 'racisme' activities of the Germans. The English term of racism was influenced by this French communication, and was first used by Ruth Benedict<sup>20</sup>, in the 1940s. As to what then is actually meant by racism today depends, as indicated by Goldberg (1993), to some degree upon one's definition of 'race'. In addition, taking note

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<sup>20</sup> Ruth Fulton Benedict was an American cultural anthropologist, widely known for her book *Patterns of Culture* (1934).



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of the views of Barker (2000) and Hewitt (1996), the meaning will also depend on the perspective from which it is being viewed.

There is, however, some consensus on a generally accepted definition of racism offered by Goldberg (1993:93), who suggests that it is:

The irrational (or prejudicial) belief in or practice of differentiating population groups on the basis of their typical phenomenal characteristics, and the hierarchical ordering of the racial groups so distinguished as superior or inferior. Typical phenomenal characteristics are largely interpreted in biological terms.

Bulmer and Solomos (1999) offer a similar, and particularly useful starting point towards a working definition of racism when they and other authors such as Wilson (1973) consider that racism is an ideology based on first beliefs that a designated racial group is either biologically or culturally inferior, and second, the use of such beliefs to rationalise or prescribe the racial group's treatment in society, as well as to explain its social position and accomplishment. This is a point underscored by Barker (2000) who implies that these racial classifications, constituted by and constructive of power, are at the root of racism. Whatever definition put forward, as Goldberg (1993) explains, underlying these definitions is the widespread presumption of racism's inherent irrationality.

In taking note of this irrationality, the working definition put forward by Bulmer and Solomos (1999) raises at least two critical issues. These are first the issue of racial biological determinism, or in simple language, the notion that whites are genetically superior to blacks, and second the use of this theory to determine the supremacy and treatment by the 'dominant' white group over the 'inferior' black group. These issues are also identified by Adnett (1989) and Marable (1991), who both make reference to the notion of the social construction of racism that provides the justification for a dominant group to discriminate against a subordinate group on a widespread basis. Hall (1991), in

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viewing racism as a social construction of difference, suggests that it is based on the idea that minor physical and genetic differences between people can be used as a basis of social differentiation. This artificial social construction, Hall (1997) suggests, means that races do not exist outside of representation but are formed in and by it in a process of social and political power struggle. As a consequence, observable characteristics such as skin colour are transformed into signifiers of race. This is a point underscored by Gilroy (1987:38-9) who argues:

Accepting that skin 'colour', however, meaningless we know it to be, has a strictly limited material basis in biology, opens up the possibility of engaging with theories of signification which can highlight the elasticity and emptiness of 'racial' signifiers as well as the ideological work which has to be done in order to turn them into signifiers of race as an open political category, for it is struggle that determines which definitions of race will prevail and the conditions under which they will endure or wither away.

Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992:70-73) take this forward contending that the specificity of racism lies in it working on the notion of ethnic groupings. They make the point that racism can be seen as a discourse and practice of inferiorising ethnic groups [racial minorities, in the study's case]. The issue of difference is emphasised by Banton (1983) who suggests that racism is orientated to a definition of 'them'.

The issue of difference and that of the artificial social construction referred to by a number of commentators above are important considerations for this study. Importantly, an authoritative view on these issues was provided in a report in the *Times Newspaper* on Wednesday 27 October 2004, which had as its headline '*Gene tests prove that we are all the same under the skin*'. The report made clear that every human being shares more than 99.9% of their DNA with everybody else, and that the tiny variations that remain differ more within

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ethnic groups than between them. The report went on to state that it was impossible to look at people's genetic code and deduce whether they were Black, Caucasian or Asian, and that there was no human population that fits the biological definition of a race. These findings, the report suggests, destroy the central argument of white supremacists and other racist groups, and refute controversial theories that attempt to link intelligence or criminality to ethnic origin. The conclusion of the report is that ethnicity is almost entirely socially and culturally constructed, and even the trait used most commonly to define it (skin colour) varies widely among people of similar ancestry. Based on this conclusive proof, which supports the contention of commentators such as Marable (1991) of the deliberate nature of the social construction of race, taken together with the views of Banton (1997), Barker (2000) and Drake (1988) on the hierarchical and inferiority/superiority propositions, we can perhaps begin to see how the perception and/or the reality of racism and racial disadvantage stems and indeed continues.

### **3.4 The Complexities and Sensitivities of Racism**

The views of writers such as Marable (1991), Banton (1983) and Hall (1991) on racism are only part of the story, given the complexities and sensitivities that exist with the term itself. Bodmer & Mckie (1994), Gilroy (1987), Li and Bolaria (1988) and Hall (1996) suggest that whilst the concept and perception of race as such may be irrelevant, the racism that stems from it is in reality an important cause of human inequality and disadvantage. The reality of this disadvantage has, however, to be looked at on the basis of the different perspectives as to what is or is not disadvantage. By way of example, a particular perspective on race often referred to as 'backlash' needs to be borne in mind in any discussion of the reality of racism or racial disadvantage. This backlash, particularly in response to race initiatives that seek to address disadvantage, is recognised by

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many equality practitioners and commentators. Hewitt (1996:33), for example, cautions that:

In examining what has changed in the way in which white people, both young and old, talk about race issues, we find a radical new theme: the theme of unfairness. By this we mean that, although there is greater awareness of race and racism and of the agendas of multiculturalism, there exists also a contrary bundle of related opinions and beliefs. These stem from the belief that ethnic minority concerns are given too much attention.

This view of unfairness by the majority white group is often accompanied by a call for similar attention and advantage to that being given to racial minorities. This 'backlash' remains to the present, indeed Schneider-Ross (2003) make the point that despite the obligations placed on public authorities by the *Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000*, its proper implementation has been hindered as a result of backlash. Schneider-Ross (2003) evidence this by explaining that a common view amongst public sector managers put forward when interviewed was that too much attention is being paid to race issues.

As well as the issue of backlash, another perspective that has practical ramifications for racial minorities is that of the perceived hierarchy among racial minority groups. This is a point well made by Barker (2000) who, as a discursive construct, takes the view that the meanings of race change and are struggled over so that different groups are differentially racialised and subjected to different racisms. As an example, he suggests that British Asians have historically been subject to different forms of stereotyping and have occupied a different place in the social and racial hierarchy from British African-Caribbeans. Importantly in the context of this study, Barker (2000) asserts that whilst British Asians maybe second-class citizens, British African-Caribbeans are on the third rung of the ladder. This is an important point that clearly identifies and underlines the fact that race issues are not simply a matter

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between black and white, and that some are more disadvantaged than others. This coupled with the potential backlash from the majority white group demonstrates the sensitivity and complexity of properly understanding, let alone dealing with the issues of race and racial disadvantage.

Gilroy (1990:264-5) argues that, 'Because racisms vary so widely and are by nature historically specific no general theory of race relations and race and politics can be sustained'. Jenkins (1986:224), in reference to the complexity of racism, correctly identifies 'that 'at the *level of folk*, or popular categorisation, it is a concept clearly redolent with meanings, some of them contradictory and many of them pernicious'. He goes on to argue that:

The problem of racism has not disappeared from organisations, at most it has gone underground, hidden underneath deep fears and anxieties about issues of race, generally present in British society..... that although the various forms of racism can be isolated for discussion purposes, in reality they form a complex dynamic group of interrelated attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that are linked to the collective belief system and are expressed in institutional policies and practices. Jenkins (1986:225).

This view of the complexity of racism is supported by Handy (1985) who also suggests that although the various forms of racism can be isolated. Another slant to this complexity is provided by writers such as Rex (1973), and Phizacklea and Miles (1980), who argue that race and racism are ideological [cultural], and if we are to achieve a satisfactory resolution to these concepts then they must be seen as concepts located within economic, political and ideological relations rather than relations between 'races'. Gabriel and Ben Tovim (1978) add to this view, suggesting that, only subsequent to this process of ideological production do specific racial ideologies intervene at the level of political practice and the economy. Hyman (1989) is more explicit in his development of this discussion by asserting that racism can be viewed as conducive to the stability of capitalism, in that concerted working class action

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is inhibited. He further argues that both racism and sexism are at times deliberately cultivated for this very reason.

From the views of commentators such as Hyman (1989), Handy (1985) and Gabriel and Ben Tovim (1978) on the complexity of racism, what we can infer is that whatever the nature of this complexity, this still leads to differential treatment and in the context of this study, racial disadvantage. This is a point taken up by Marable (1991), Adnett (1989) and Hyman (1989) who locate discussion on racial disadvantage within the realms of an historical power relationship between unequal social aggregates. They are of the view that the subordinate black racial group finds itself divorced from the levers of power and authority, not through some accidental historical event but because of exploitation. Racism therefore, they conclude, as a power relationship, can be seen as a key factor when looking at racial disadvantage in the workplace. In support of this view, Adnett (1989) identifies the important contribution made by Becker (1957) to modern studies of discrimination, highlighting two examples that he made, that are of particular relevance to this study. First the observation that the 'market is not a neutral ground for the allocation of rewards but is influenced by discrimination, and second the suggestion that 'whilst the critical interface between discrimination and the workplace must not be underestimated, it is crucial to understand that the workplace is but one of the arenas where discrimination takes place'.

Adnett (1989) supports Becker's views on workplace discrimination, and more specifically refers to the complexities involved in defining racial disadvantage and how racial disadvantage can manifest itself in the workplace. This workplace disadvantage is further explored at Chapter four.

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### 3.5 Conclusion

In looking at the theoretical concepts of race and racism, from the literature we can see that from its inception, the term race has referred to those perceived as 'other' and from its earliest use, race as a concept has taken on both natural and social qualities. From this concept then, the literature suggests that we can also take the view that racism is a condition, or more precisely, where race is a set of concepts, racisms are sets of conditions which involve promoting the exclusion of people by virtue of their being deemed members of different racial groups. This exclusion leads to discrimination against the 'different' racial groups whatever the constitution of that racial group.

The literature clearly demonstrates that this discrimination from its outset has followed an irrational independent set of logics, related to and intersecting with economic, political, legal and cultural considerations based on the superiority of whites, which, with the emergence of racial classifications and difference as a significant feature of social definition, enabled the acceptance and continuation of the lack of opportunity for racial minorities.

This social classification based on race or colour, the literature demonstrated, did not stand up to scrutiny but highlighted the cultural complexities and sensitivities involved in looking at the issues of race and racism. An example of this complexity and sensitivity can be seen in the different experiences of Asian and African-Caribbean individuals, leading to a conclusion that this was far from just a 'black/white' issue but that some racial minority groups are themselves more disadvantaged than others.

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With regard to the practical considerations of race and racism, from the literature, race can be seen as a discursive object of racialised discourse that differs from racism. Race, nevertheless, creates the conceptual conditions of possibility for racist expression to be formulated. This racist expression manifests itself in a number of ways. Amongst these, and of particular relevance to this study, are the workplace disadvantages that racial minorities face.



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## Introduction

The first section of the book is an introduction to the concept of cultural racism, which is a form of racism that is based on the idea that certain cultures are superior to others. This section discusses the history of cultural racism and its impact on society. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism is perpetuated through media, education, and social structures. The second section of the book is a chapter on the impact of cultural racism on the African American community. This chapter discusses the ways in which cultural racism has shaped the experiences of African Americans and the ways in which they have resisted it. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism has influenced the development of African American culture and identity. The third section of the book is a chapter on the impact of cultural racism on the Hispanic community. This chapter discusses the ways in which cultural racism has shaped the experiences of Hispanics and the ways in which they have resisted it. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism has influenced the development of Hispanic culture and identity. The fourth section of the book is a chapter on the impact of cultural racism on the Asian American community. This chapter discusses the ways in which cultural racism has shaped the experiences of Asian Americans and the ways in which they have resisted it. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism has influenced the development of Asian American culture and identity. The fifth section of the book is a chapter on the impact of cultural racism on the Native American community. This chapter discusses the ways in which cultural racism has shaped the experiences of Native Americans and the ways in which they have resisted it. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism has influenced the development of Native American culture and identity. The final section of the book is a chapter on the impact of cultural racism on the LGBTQ+ community. This chapter discusses the ways in which cultural racism has shaped the experiences of LGBTQ+ people and the ways in which they have resisted it. It also explores the ways in which cultural racism has influenced the development of LGBTQ+ culture and identity.

# Chapter Four

## The Impact of Cultural Racism

The impact of cultural racism is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has shaped the lives of people of color around the world. Cultural racism is a form of racism that is based on the idea that certain cultures are superior to others. This idea is often used to justify the oppression of people of color and to promote the interests of the dominant culture. Cultural racism has a long history, dating back to the early days of colonialism. At that time, European colonizers used the idea of cultural superiority to justify their exploitation of Native Americans and other indigenous peoples. In the United States, cultural racism was used to justify the enslavement of African Americans and the exclusion of Chinese immigrants. In the 20th century, cultural racism was used to justify the internment of Japanese Americans and the persecution of Native Americans. Today, cultural racism continues to shape the lives of people of color in many ways. It is used to justify the discrimination against people of color in the workplace, in housing, and in the criminal justice system. It is also used to promote the interests of the dominant culture and to marginalize the cultures of people of color. The impact of cultural racism is felt in many different ways. For people of color, it can lead to a sense of inferiority and a loss of pride in their own culture. It can also lead to a sense of anger and a desire for revenge. For the dominant culture, cultural racism can lead to a sense of superiority and a sense of entitlement. It can also lead to a sense of fear and a desire to maintain the status quo. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are represented in the media. People of color are often portrayed in a negative light, as criminals, drug dealers, and welfare recipients. This negative portrayal can lead to a sense of stigma and a loss of respect for people of color. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in the workplace. People of color are often paid less than their white counterparts and are more likely to be laid off during economic downturns. This discrimination can lead to a sense of frustration and a loss of motivation. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in the criminal justice system. People of color are more likely to be stopped, searched, and arrested than white people. They are also more likely to be sentenced to longer prison terms than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of anger and a loss of trust in the legal system. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in housing. People of color are more likely to live in segregated neighborhoods and are more likely to be evicted than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of isolation and a loss of community. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in education. People of color are more likely to be placed in remedial classes and are more likely to be suspended than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of frustration and a loss of academic achievement. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in the workplace. People of color are more likely to be hired for menial jobs and are more likely to be laid off during economic downturns. This discrimination can lead to a sense of frustration and a loss of economic stability. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in the criminal justice system. People of color are more likely to be stopped, searched, and arrested than white people. They are also more likely to be sentenced to longer prison terms than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of anger and a loss of trust in the legal system. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in housing. People of color are more likely to live in segregated neighborhoods and are more likely to be evicted than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of isolation and a loss of community. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in education. People of color are more likely to be placed in remedial classes and are more likely to be suspended than white people. This discrimination can lead to a sense of frustration and a loss of academic achievement. The impact of cultural racism is also felt in the way that people of color are treated in the workplace. People of color are more likely to be hired for menial jobs and are more likely to be laid off during economic downturns. This discrimination can lead to a sense of frustration and a loss of economic stability.

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## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines literature on the relationship between culture and racism, and in particular its impact, if any, on employment practices. There is first an evaluation of concepts and theories around cultural racism, specifically its meaning, importance and nature. To contextualise the issue of cultural racism in employment matters, this is followed by an assessment of labour market and workplace disadvantage, with a particular emphasis on its impact on racial minorities. The chapter concludes by providing an evidential focus for the study with an exploration of the impact of cultural racism on the personnel management functions that may have a bearing on career progression – specifically recruitment, selection and performance management.

## 4.2 Cultural Racism – Concepts and Theories

In conceptualising the term ‘cultural racism’, writers such as Reeves (1983) prefer to use the term ‘ideological racism’ but both the terms ‘cultural’ and ‘ideological racism’ refer to racism formulated as a set of values and ideas. These values and ideas, as indicated by writers such as Troyna and Hatcher (1992), Van Ausdale and Feagin (2002), Rogoff (2003) and Milner (1983), are often learnt from a very early age, and are in fact maintained through the ‘socialisation of the new generation’, that is children learning the cultural beliefs and values of their society as part of their upbringing. Van Ausdale and Feagin (2002), suggest that the ideas and beliefs about races and racism are part of this early learning. Commentators such as Lawrence (1982), Henry *et. al.* (1995), Hebridge (1993) and Essed (1990) start from a similar viewpoint when describing the nature and importance of cultural racism. Henry *et. al.* (1995:3), for example, are of the view that:

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Cultural racism provides the conceptual framework for the political, social and ideological structures of inequality and systems of dominance based on race ... organising, preserving and perpetuating the power structures in a society.

They suggest that cultural racism creates a 'we and they' mentality, where one's own racial group is considered to be better than that of other groups. This ubiquitous tendency to view all peoples and cultures in terms of one's own cultural standards and values is known as ethnocentrism and plays a central role in cultural racism. Henry *et. al.* (1995:37) further state that:

Cultural racism is sometimes difficult to isolate because it is deeply embedded in the society's value system. It consists of the tacit network of beliefs and values that encourage and justify discriminatory practices.

Hebridge (1993) also suggests that cultural racism in its ideological and discursive form is deeply embedded within popular discourse and is located within what has been called society's frame of reference. Hebridge (1993) considers these frames of reference as largely unacknowledged beliefs, assumptions, and feelings that underlie, sustain and inform perceptions, thoughts and actions. Lawrence (1982), builds on this, and is specific in his view of the nature of cultural racism, citing the misunderstandings of the cultural patterns of some groups as a basis for this form of racism.

Essed (1990) sets out the importance of cultural racism, arguing that it precedes other forms of racism in society, and puts forward the view that it is reflected in everyday language. Essed (1990) evidences this by pointing out that whiteness is associated with overwhelming positive connotations, while blackness is generally associated with negative connotations. This, Essed (1990) contends, is demonstrated by *Roget's Thesaurus* which has no fewer than 60 distinctively negative synonyms for blackness, 20 of which are related to race. Hall *et. al.*

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(1978) make further reference to this negativity, identifying that it may go far beyond individual beliefs and attitudes, carrying with it a predisposition to behave in negative, derogative, or discriminatory ways toward members of the targeted group. Henry *et. al.* (1995) have a similar view on the apparent negativity of blackness, making the point that cultural racism is also reflected in images generated by the mass media. Racial minorities, they suggest, are often portrayed as problems, as is the case in the arts, literature and poetry. This negativity they imply is also manifested in religious doctrines, ideologies and practices. This, as put forward by Henry *et. al.* (1995), can have important consequences within everyday cultural constructs, where ideas about race [gender and class] are produced, preserved and promoted. Moreover, these ideas form the basis for social behaviour. Henry *et. al.* (1995) contend, therefore, that understanding culture is crucial to an understanding of the marginalisation, exclusion and domination of racial minorities.

Thomas Sowell in his seminal book on race, ethnicity, culture and the policy issues that revolve around them, disagrees with this view of marginalisation, exclusion and domination of racial minorities as a result of the nature and impact of cultural racism. He considers instead that cultural difference, contrary to many of today's grand theories based on the supposedly dominant role of particular cultures, is not the issue. Sowell (1994) challenges most of the fundamental assumptions underlying the whole spectrum of 'social science' beliefs, suggesting that difference in productive skills and cultural values are the key to understanding the advancement or regression of particular groups. Sowell (1994) is adamant that cultural capital has more impact than politics, prejudice, or genetics on the social and economic fates of racial minorities. He goes further and argues that attempts to achieve equality through multiculturalism, positive action or other such policies are illusions and

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distractions, and can only make matters worse. Equality, he maintains can only be achieved by the development of cultural capital.

In the context of this study cultural capital, describes how everyone has a "cultural history", accumulated through the primary and secondary socialisation process, which includes anything that gives you an advantage or disadvantage in certain situations. For example, something as simple as your biological sex or skin colour can, under certain circumstances, be advantageous or disadvantages for your life chances. This differs from social capital which describes the pattern and intensity of networks among people and the shared values which arise from those networks. While definitions of social capital vary, the main aspects are citizenship, neighbourliness, trust, shared values, community involvement, volunteering, social networks and civic participation. cultural capital also differs from human capital which refers to the aspects of culture which provide the material requirements for life itself – for example, the specific skills, work habits, saving propensities, and attitudes toward issues such as education and entrepreneurship.

Writers such as Rex (1973), and Phizacklea and Miles (1980), take a different view from that of Sowell and are clear that the learnt cultural racism identified by Troyna and Hatcher (1992), Van Ausdale and Feagin (2002), Rogoff (2003) and Milner (1983) can have a significant impact. This impact, it is suggested, translates from the general societal level discussed above to the specific organisational context (which for this study relates specifically to the organisational workplace environment), in particular employment and progression issues for racial minorities. The significance of this impact is considered in the next section.

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### 4.3 The Impact of Cultural Racism in the Workplace

In considering the broader issues of labour force disadvantage identified by writers such as Jenkins (1986), there are a range of possible other theoretical focuses (e.g. class, disability, age etc.) which may highlight similar trends of disadvantage. These, however, are outside the scope of this study but as a comparison it is perhaps worth using as a starting point the well documented issue of labour market disadvantage for women, where economic theories focus on aspects of labour supply and demand. These labour supply side approaches have been influenced by sociological and economic explanations, embedded, for example, in the Parsonian<sup>21</sup> understanding of the family and gender roles within it. This takes note of the points made by Parsons and Bales (1956), who suggest that women are seen as being in the best position to carry out roles such as caring, whilst men are seen as bread winners. They argue that there would appear to be a clear division of labour between men and women. Therefore, men will be able to gain more experience in organisations than women. This experience will invariably lead to a competitive edge for men, thus enabling them to be more marketable than women in the world of work. This argument is clearly flawed in both empirical and theoretical terms, because economic efficiency at the household level does not any longer require household members to specialise in domestic market tasks. Although the Parsonian theory has been very much criticised, the philosophy of 'natural' family roles determining a gendered division of labour in and outside the home has been very powerful.

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<sup>21</sup> A cultural view of women as emotional is found in the Parsonian normative construction of family roles, in which women are the 'expressive expert' and men the 'instrumental expert'. These competencies are seen as an outcome of the domestic market spheres in which the genders differentially participate. (<http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~scottj/socscot7.htm>) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

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This is a point acknowledged by Rees (1992:24), who suggests that:

‘Girls’ option choices and career choices at school in effect shut off a whole range of education and training opportunities which in turn restrict their access to various occupations and industries. They are less likely to earn a living wage and will therefore be more likely to be financially dependent upon a partner or the state.

Although there is now a narrowing gap between men's and women's education levels, their labour market experiences, and the gap in wage rates have not reflected this. Rees (1992:25) continues by reference to this point stating that:

Occupational differences in human capital explain less than half the gap between men's and women's wage rates. It is the arrangement of work into gender segregated sectors which is crucial here: a major segregation in the UK is the limitation of opportunities for employment.

This conclusion of the limitation of employment opportunities by segregation made by Rees is of specific relevance to this study as it draws on a model originally applied to race segregation in the United States, imported into the United Kingdom by Barron and Norris (1976) who adapted the model to account for gender segregation. The conclusion both supports and reinforces the reality of labour market disadvantage for racial minorities shown in published data available through the *Labour Force Survey* (LFS)<sup>22</sup>. By way of demonstration of this disadvantage and acknowledgement of the limitation of opportunities referred to by Rees (1992), Tables 4.1 to 4.5 below provide race and gender comparisons covering four areas relevant to the focus of this study, those of employment, unemployment, managerial positions and the public sector.

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<sup>22</sup> The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a quarterly sample survey of households living at private addresses in Great Britain. Its purpose is to provide information on the UK labour market that can then be used to develop, manage, evaluate and report on labour market policies. The questionnaire design, sample selection, and interviewing are carried out by the Social and Vital Statistics Division of the Office for National Statistics (ONS). NB. ONS publishes full UK LFS results. However, the fieldwork is carried out separately by ONS for GB, and by the Central Survey Unit of the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Department of Trade and Investment (DETINI).

The statistics at Table 4.1 show that the employment rates for ethnic minorities are generally lower than those for Whites (Black Men 65% - White Men 80%). Women are less likely to be employed than men are and this holds for all ethnic groups.

*Table 4.1 – UK Employment Comparisons 2002:  
Men and Women by Ethnic Origin – Proportion in Employment*

Ethnic Group	Women		Men		All	
	Nos (‘000)	% (of Pop)	Nos (‘000)	% (of Pop)	Nos (‘000)	% (of Pop)
<i>All People of working Age</i>	17,588	100	19,410	100	36,997	100
<i>All in Employment</i>	12,218	69	15,314	79	27,531	74
<i>White</i>	11,497	<b>71</b>	14,315	<b>80</b>	25,812	<b>76</b>
<i>Mixed</i>	66	56	63	64	129	59
<i>Asian/ Asian British</i>	321	46	526	68	846	57
<i>Indian</i>	193	60	259	73	452	67
<i>Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</i>	70	25	179	61	248	43
<i>Black / Black British</i>	213	<b>57</b>	238	<b>65</b>	451	<b>61</b>
<i>African</i>	78	49	97	62	175	55
<i>Caribbean</i>	116	63	128	66	244	65
<i>Chinese</i>	37	53	47	67	85	60
<i>Other ethnic group</i>	83	48	120	60	203	54

*Source: Labour Force Survey (Spring 2002 – UK) - All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)*



The statistics at Table 4.2 show that unemployment rates for women and men from ethnic minorities are substantially higher than those for Whites, the highest rates being found for Africans and Pakistani/ Bangladeshi people, who are three times as likely to be unemployed as White people. Women are generally less likely to be unemployed than men are and this holds for all ethnic groups, apart from Indian women.

*Table 4.2 - UK Unemployment Comparisons 2002:  
Economically Active who are unemployed - Men and Women by Ethnic Origin*

Ethnic Group	Women		Men		All	
	Nos ('000)	%	Nos ('000)	%	Nos ('000)	%
<i>All ILO<sup>23</sup> unemployed</i>	574	4.5	923	5.7	1497	5.2
<i>White</i>	496	4.1	790	5.2	1286	4.7
<i>Mixed</i>	10	13.4	11	15.5	22	14.4
<i>Asian/ Asian British</i>	29	8.2	56	9.7	85	9.2
<i>Indian</i>	14	6.8	16	5.7	30	6.2
<i>Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</i>	12	15.1	33	15.6	45	15.4
<i>Black / Black British</i>	27	11.3	42	15.0	69	13.3
<i>African</i>	14	15.0	17	15.0	31	15.0
<i>Caribbean</i>	10	8.2	23	15.1	33	11.9
<i>Chinese</i>	*	-	*	*	*	*
<i>Other ethnic group</i>	11	11.6	22	15.2	32	13.8

Source: Labour Force Survey (Spring 2002 - UK) - All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59) Note: (\* - fewer than 10000 estimate not known)

<sup>23</sup> Official estimates of unemployment are produced by ONS based upon the ILO (International Labour Organisation) definition. A separate series - the claimant count - measures how many unemployed people are claiming unemployment-related benefits. The ILO unemployment measure is a count of jobless people who want to work, are available to work, and are actively seeking employment. Unemployment rates are calculated using data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), so it is subject to sampling differences.

The statistics at Table 4.3 show that White males are more likely to be in a managerial and/or supervisory position and less likely to be in non managerial posts than their ethnic minority counterparts. Women are generally less likely to be in managerial or supervisory positions than men are, and this holds for all ethnic groups.

*Table 4.3 - UK Employment Comparisons 2002:  
Managerial Responsibility - Male and Female by Ethnic Origin*

	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Indian</i>	<i>Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>All</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Male</b>						
<i>Managers</i>	23	13	17	12	21	23
<i>Foremen</i>	12	11	8	*	11	12
<i>Not Managers</i>	65	76	75	81	68	65
<i>All</i>	12.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	12.6
<b>Female</b>						
<i>Managers</i>	14	12	10	*	12	14
<i>Foremen</i>	11	14	13	*	13	11
<i>Not Managers</i>	74	75	77	82	76	74
<i>All</i>	10.7	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	12.6

*Source: Labour Force Survey (Spring 2002 - UK) - All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)*

The statistics at Table 4.4 show that women are generally more likely than men to work in the public sector. Compared with the all women average, Indian women are slightly less likely to do so, and Black women and those from other ethnic groups, more likely. A similar trend applies to men. Pakistani /Bangladeshi men are less likely to work in the public sector, and Black men and those from other ethnic groups more likely.

**Table 4.4 - UK Employment Comparisons 2002:  
Public Sector - Male and Female by Ethnic Origin**

Ethnic Group	Women		Men		All	
	Nos ('000)	% Of all in Employment	Nos ('000)	% Of all in Employment	Nos ('000)	% Of all in Employment
<i>All in Employment</i>	12,218	100	15,314	100	27,531	100
<i>All working in the Public Sector</i>	3,954	33	2,368	16	6,322	23
<i>White</i>	3,716	<b>32</b>	2,213	<b>16</b>	5,928	<b>23</b>
<i>Mixed</i>	22	33	11	17	33	26
<i>Asian/ Asian British</i>	97	30	72	14	169	20
<i>Indian</i>	56	29	38	15	95	21
<i>Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</i>	23	33	15	9	39	16
<i>Black / Black British</i>	85	<b>40</b>	42	<b>18</b>	127	<b>28</b>
<i>African</i>	28	37	17	18	45	26
<i>Caribbean</i>	50	44	24	19	74	31
<i>Chinese</i>	*	-	*	*	10	11
<i>Other ethnic group</i>	30	36	26	22	56	27

Source: Labour Force Survey (Spring 2002 - UK) - All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

Note: (\*- fewer than 10000 estimate not known)

Table 4.5 provides a summary of the 2004 economic activity, employment, and unemployment statistics, and in addition provides a comparison with the 2001 statistics. These statistics show that whilst there has been a slight improvement, unemployment rates for women and men from ethnic minorities are still substantially higher than those for white men and women. With regard to the employment rates, whilst again there has been a small improvement in the comparative figures, these are marginal and the employment rates for ethnic minority men and women remain significantly below that of their white counterparts - (Black Men 65% to 65.4% - White Men 80% to 80%). There has been little change with regard to the economic activity rate but of note is the

fact that the economic activity rate for black men has in fact decreased between 2001 and 2004 by nearly 3 %.

*Table 4.5 - UK Employment Comparisons 2001 to 2004:  
Economic Activity; Employment and Unemployment by Ethnic Origin*

	Economic Activity rate %	Employment rate %	Unemployment Rate %
<b>ALL</b>			
<i>All Origins</i>			
Spring 2001	78.3	74.5	4.7
Spring 2004	78.2	74.5	4.6
<i>White</i>			
Spring 2001	79.2	75.7	4.4
Spring 2004	79.4	75.9	4.2
<i>All Ethnic Minority Groups</i>			
Spring 2001	64.3	57.1	11.1
Spring 2004	65.9	59.3	9.9
<i>Black or Black British</i>			
Spring 2001	70.9	61.6	12.9
Spring 2004	70.8	62.8	11.0
<b>MALES</b>			
<i>All Origins</i>			
Spring 2001	83.6	79.2	5.2
Spring 2004	83.2	79.0	5.0
<i>White</i>			
Spring 2001	84.1	80.0	4.8
Spring 2004	83.9	80.0	4.5
<i>All Ethnic Minority Groups</i>			
Spring 2001	74.7	65.9	11.7
Spring 2004	74.9	67.1	10.2
<i>Black or Black British</i>			
Spring 2001	77.4	66.1	14.5
Spring 2004	74.0	65.4	11.3
<b>FEMALES</b>			
<i>All Origins</i>			
Spring 2001	72.7	69.6	4.1
Spring 2004	73.0	69.8	4.2
<i>White</i>			
Spring 2001	73.9	71.0	3.8
Spring 2004	74.5	71.6	3.8
<i>All Ethnic Minority Groups</i>			
Spring 2001	54.6	48.9	10.3
Spring 2004	57.2	51.7	9.6
<i>Black or Black British</i>			
Spring 2001	65.8	58.1	11.4
Spring 2004	68.1	60.6	10.8

*Source: Labour Force Survey Spring 2001 and Spring 2004*

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The picture that emerges from these statistics<sup>24</sup> is that for both gender and race, whilst in some areas there is improvement, both in the past and in the present labour force, disadvantage is evident. This statistical disadvantage, it can be argued, could be due to a host of factors. For example, factors such as location, social class and educational attainment are often cited as contributing to this disadvantage. Commentators such as Jenkins (1986), Kandola and Fullerton (1994:102-111) and Coussey and Jackson (1991:94-95) acknowledge these contributory factors but make the point that even taking account of such factors there remain significant differential outcomes for racial minorities that cannot be explained by these factors alone, arguing that these differentials can only be accounted for by discrimination and racism.

With regard to the focus of this study, the impact of cultural racism, this disadvantage is well illustrated in the above statistical information where it can be seen that black<sup>25</sup> men are less likely to be in employment, more likely to be unemployed, less likely to hold a managerial, professional or technical position, and more likely to be working in the public sector than white males or females. The statistics would therefore appear to reinforce the message that the 'cultural' occupational order referred to by commentators such as Lawrence (1982), Henry *et. al.* (1995), Hebridge (1993), Essed (1991) and Essed (1996) reflects the disadvantage experienced by racial minorities more widely in society.

Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993) consider, however, that statistics such as these do not provide an insight into the whole story of labour force disadvantage.

With regard to the specificity of cultural racism in the labour market, they argue that this form of racism uses the notion of the undesirability of groups, in the

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<sup>24</sup> The choice of the snapshot (2001-2004) and comparison (gender, race) are based on the specific area of interest of this study, and are by way of illustration, building on previous research by writers such as Becker 1957; Brooks 1975; Smith 1981; Brooks 1983; and Jenkins 1986 which identified labour market disadvantage for women and racial minorities.

<sup>25</sup> The Labour Force Survey's definition of 'Black groups' includes Black African, Black Caribbean, and a group designated as 'Other Black' but excluding those of mixed origin. LFS uses separate groupings for those of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin.

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forms in which they exist. This they contend can put into practice the feelings of opposition and therefore demonstrable racist effects. Central to this are the practices and their outcomes, as Anthias and Yuval -Davis (1993:70-73) further argue:

Not all practices ... lead to the subordination of black groups, because they are racist practices ... for the structural disadvantages of groups in the labour market ... may be the product of broader class, gender, and state processes linked to locality, skills ... and so on. ... These aspects of racism must be included in any definition whose object is not only the academic trajectory of a concept, but the formulation of policies and strategies for undermining and correcting it.

Williams (1989:20) makes the point that the origins of racism in the labour market are the product of slavery, and that it is functional to capitalism and capitalist needs. He makes the point that slavery and colonialism produced racism as a system of economic justification that was actively structured. Thus (black) racism is allocated the role of rationalising and reinforcing exploitation required by the economic system. This is underscored by Goldberg (1993) who makes the point that racism appeals 'ex-hypothesi' to the concept of race as a basis for discrimination. Goldberg (1993:123) goes on to argue that racism has no rationalised basis, apart from:

being invoked as the rationalised grounds for enslavement .....  
For while slavery may be explained largely in economic terms, one must insist in asking why ... racial difference came to define fitness for enslavement

This view of 'enslavement' based on race is not, however, shared by all and indeed Sowell (1994:186) quotes David Eltis (1993:1400) who makes the point that:

Slavery until recently was universal in two senses. Most settled societies incorporated the institution into their social structures, and few peoples in the world have not constituted a major source of slaves at one time or another.

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Referring more specifically to the economic legacy of enslavement, Sowell (1994:215) puts forward a counter to the view of disadvantage due to racism observing that, ‘Among the many negative aftermaths of slavery has been a set of counterproductive attitudes to work, among both slaves and their descendants’. As a consequence, Sowell (1994) asserts that the disadvantage suffered by racial minorities may in fact be brought on by their own attitude and approach. Sowell (1994) suggests that there appears to be a double standard when it comes to the issue of who in fact is disadvantaged, using as an example the under representation of whites in professional basketball, which he attributes to nothing other than the unusual interest and skill in basketball amongst blacks.

What Sowell appears to be suggesting is that if the interest is there, then racial minorities can in fact succeed at anything they put their mind to, but this is often stifled by their attitude, as part of this preferring to take on the role of the ‘victim’. Pilkington (1998) reinforces this, critically examining the analyses on disadvantage and discrimination of commentators such as Jones (1993) and Modood *et. al.* (1997), arguing that ‘ethnic diversity is as evident as racial disadvantage’, and pointing to evidence that shows that ethnic minorities have made important advances relative to the majority ethnic group. Pilkington implies that the contention that ethnic minority groups en bloc or even singly are racially disadvantaged is not substantiated. He concludes in a similar vein to Sowell, that some groups are more successful than others, but that there needs to be an acknowledgement that people are not merely victims but active agents with cultural capital, and that the coexistence of racial discrimination and disadvantage on the one hand and ethnic diversity and ethnic minority progress on the other hand becomes explicable.

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Whilst having different perspectives, both Sowell and Pilkington accept the fact that as with racism, racial disadvantage / discrimination is a complex issue, Sowell (1994:87) explaining that:

Discrimination is easier to define in concept than to determine in practice, numerous demonstrable differences between groups in skills, education and experience, for example, make it difficult to tell whether inter-group differences reflect productivity differences or are arbitrary.

By way of a reason for disadvantage, Sowell (1994:83) goes on to say that:

In racially and culturally heterogeneous societies, employment prospects for individuals and groups often vary not only with their own skills and work patterns but also with their acceptability to co-workers, customers or employers.

The views of Pilkington and Sowell on the nature and rationale of racial disadvantage are not shared by most commentators who write on this subject but they do provide a useful alternative perspective to what is agreed by all as a complex issue. By way of demonstration of this complexity within the Civil Service, the evidence of Cabinet papers from a Conservative Government in 1954 shows the determination to keep racial minorities out of the Service (*The Times, Thursday 28 November 1985*). It is interesting to note that it was less than forty years later, in 1990, that a Conservative Government introduced a programme within the Civil Service designed to encourage ethnic minorities' access to and promotion within the Service. *The Programme for Action on Race* referred to at Chapter one, provides a starting point timeline for this study.

Historically, the picture of disadvantage and racism in employment goes beyond the need to overcome barriers to secure access to employment, and extends to the issues of workplace policies and practices. Jenkins and Solomos (1989), and Smith (1981), suggest that this need for a review of policies, albeit for different



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reasons than those put forward by Jenkins and Solomos (1989), and Smith (1981), are shared by Pilkington (2003), who suggests that acceptance of the fact that ethnic minority groups are not uniformly disadvantaged necessitates a re-examination of equal opportunity policies based on the assumption of common disadvantage. Jenkins and Solomos (1989), Smith (1981), Brooks (1983), Jenkins (1986) and Edwards (1995), whilst not sharing the views of Pilkington (2003), identify that amongst the factors that can lead to workplace disadvantage is the impact of cultural racism on personnel functions. This impact in the areas of recruitment, selection and performance management are further considered in the next section.

#### **4.4 Impact of Cultural Racism on Personnel Functions**

The personnel function controls many of the important employment processes and procedures, these include the social processes that shape and influence the policies and culture of an organisation. A point endorsed by Hoecklin (1995:134) who implies that as part of the personnel function and processes of an organisation, personnel managers have great potential influence over developing the organisation's equal opportunities policies and indeed its culture. Brooks (2003) supports this view and makes the point that personnel managers often have an advisory function and are involved in discussions with senior managers about policies and outcomes that the organisation requires and how they can be best achieved. Greene and Kirton (2000) make the point that there is also a role for the Personnel Department to be the 'stewards' of the organisation's policies, and that they play an important role which will help senior managers develop and nurture a culture suitable to achieving their policy goals. Torrington *et. al* (2002) go further, suggesting that personnel also generally have some responsibility for providing training and development courses. These courses have been developed on the basis of the values and

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beliefs of the organisation, and as a consequence are a powerful influence and provide an opportunity to teach the history of the organisation or the heroes that have inspired it or are inspiring it now ('story telling'). In noting the influence of personnel, Brooks (2003) suggests that the most important of all the personnel roles is its ability to influence reward systems. Torrington, Hall, and Taylor (2002) add that these reward systems generally are designed and planned so they are consistent with the norms and beliefs and values that are central to the culture.

From the above we can see that many aspects of human resource management/personnel functions can affect and also can be directly affected by the organisation's culture. This culture, as identified by Jewson and Mason (1993:224), is generally '*liberal in approach*' with regard to its equal opportunities policy and practice. Indeed as Hoecklin (1995) and Nkomo (1992) point out, the very expression 'human resources' is derived from a cultural framework in which humans are considered to be instruments of production. This consideration, both go on to indicate, to some extent, sums up the nature of the Anglo-Saxon concept of personnel management and provides the context in which the areas of recruitment, selection, development, and performance management operate.

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#### 4.4.1 Recruitment

As Hoecklin (1995:122) sets out, the Personnel Department of both public and private sector organisations usually has responsibility for 'managing' the recruitment process of the organisation, and can ensure that it recruits those who will support and be sympathetic to its culture. This responsibility, Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) suggest, is generally executed within a liberal stance. As with Civil Service recruitment, this tends to be based on the principle of 'the best person for the job', but there is a tendency to require the 'best person' to 'fit', if they are to be successful. This in itself can be seen to be cultural racism at work, as in this key process, the 'fit' needed would invariably be based on the cultural requirements of the organisation as constituted by those (generally white and male) who are involved in the decision making process. This can and it is suggested does lead to recruitment disadvantage for racial minorities. This disadvantage is indicated in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 below through statistical examples in both the private and public sector.

In the public sector example at Table 4.6, the 2004 Civil Service entrant statistics compared to the 2004 racial minority Civil Service staff numbers show that in 15 of the 27 Civil Service Departments and Agencies (with a few notable exceptions<sup>26</sup>), there was a lower representation (averaging 5.3% overall) of racial minority entrants. This lower entrant representation and the reasons for it, whilst outside the specific scope of the study, is an obvious concern, which may very well relate to the perceptions held by racial minorities of the Civil Service. These perceptions are therefore sought as part of the data gathering exercise and where appropriate, analysed in greater detail below.

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<sup>26</sup> The exceptions include the Home Office and Cabinet Office where there is an expectation that as the Departments with responsibility for leading on diversity and race issues within the Civil Service, that there should be mechanisms in place for better representation of racial minorities.

*Table 4.6: Entrants to the UK Civil Service by Department and Ethnic Origin; 2003-2004 - Non-industrial and industrial staff*

Department (including agencies)	White	Ethnic minority	Other <sup>27</sup>	All entrants	White and other entrants (2004) as % of all entrants	Ethnic minority entrants (2004) as % of all entrants
Cabinet Office	190	40	70	300	86.7	13.3
Security and Intelligence Services	0	0	200	200	100.0	0.0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	30	10	30	70	85.7	14.3
Ministry of Defence	3,890	180	4,530	8,600	97.9	2.1
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	110	10	240	360	97.2	2.8
Department for Education and Skills	40	10	180	230	95.7	4.3
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	120	10	470	600	98.3	1.7
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	10	0	0	10	100.0	0.0
Department of Health	30	20	280	330	93.9	6.1
Home Office	810	300	1,770	2,880	89.6	10.4
HM Prison Service	4,050	410	600	5,060	91.9	8.1
Department for International Development	90	20	100	210	90.5	9.5
Crown Prosecution Service	410	90	340	830	90.2	10.8
Treasury Solicitor's Department	70	30	20	120	75.0	25.0
Department for Constitutional Affairs	420	100	730	1,250	92.0	8.0
Department of Trade and Industry	360	50	360	770	93.5	6.5
Department for Transport	1,170	80	610	1,850	95.7	4.3
HM Treasury	70	10	20	100	90.0	10.0
HM Customs and Excise	320	50	970	1,340	96.3	3.7
Inland Revenue	4,550	720	9,430	14,710	95.1	4.9
Office for National Statistics	300	20	50	370	94.6	5.4
Department for Work and Pensions	6,030	540	4,790	11,360	95.2	4.8
Health and Safety Executive	50	10	50	110	90.9	9.1
Northern Ireland Office	0	0	10	10	100.0	0.0
Scottish Executive	330	10	410	760	98.7	1.3
National Assembly for Wales	190	0	10	210	100.0	0.0
Other Departments	1,250	190	490	1,930	90.2	9.8
<b>All Departments</b>	<b>24,900</b>	<b>2,910</b>	<b>26,730</b>	<b>54,530</b>	<b>94.7</b>	<b>5.3</b>

Source: Civil Service Statistics 2004

<sup>27</sup> Other – Not reported or not recorded

In the private sector example below<sup>28</sup>, the statistics of graduate recruitment of a leading UK legal organisation at Table 4.7 provides a more detailed but similar picture of outcomes in terms of ethnicity, showing that from this specific recruitment exercise, consistent with the profession outcomes generally, that the majority of successful graduate recruits are from the White ethnic group and mainly female<sup>29</sup>. This situation starts from the point of application (87.8% - White and Other, 3.8% - Black, 8.4% - Asian), right through to acceptances (94.0% - White and Other, 3.0% - Black, 3.0% - Asian). A particular feature of the failure of the Asian and Black candidates was their lack of success in the Assessment Centre process.

*Table 4.7: Legal organisations' Graduate Recruitment Statistics at each stage of recruitment process for September 2003 intake*

	TOTAL APPLICANTS				ASSESSMENT CENTRE ATTENDEES				PANEL ATTENDEES				OFFERS				ACCEPTANCES			
	MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE	
	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%	nos	%
WHITE	457	38.3	734	61.6	41	39.4	63	60.5	16	32.6	33	67.3	6	18.7	26	81.2	5	17.2	24	82.7
BLACK AFRICAN	12	35.2	22	64.7	0	0.0	3	100	0	0.0	2	100	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.0	1	100
BLACK CARIBBEAN	6	28.5	15	71.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
BLACK OTHER	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
INDIAN	26	36.6	45	63.3	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
PAKISTANI	10	34.4	19	65.5	1	25.0	3	75.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.00	1	100
ANGLADESH I	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
CHINESE	4	16.0	21	84.0	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
OTHER	36	31.8	77	68.1	1	20.0	4	80.0	1	33.3	2	66.6	0	0.0	2	100	0	0.0	2	100
TOTALS	555	37.2	935	62.7	45	37.2	76	62.8	18	32.1	38	67.8	6	16.6	30	83.3	5	15.1	28	84.8

Source: *Independent statistical analysis of the organisation's 2003 Graduate Recruitment process*<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> This example was chosen as the researcher was directly commissioned to undertake this task and as a consequence had first hand knowledge of the process

<sup>29</sup> This was an issue first brought up in 2002 during the Law Society's annual conference where a talk was held on 'Diversity and Equality – Broadening Opportunity for Solicitors', and is an issue being given plenty of lip service by the legal profession at the moment.

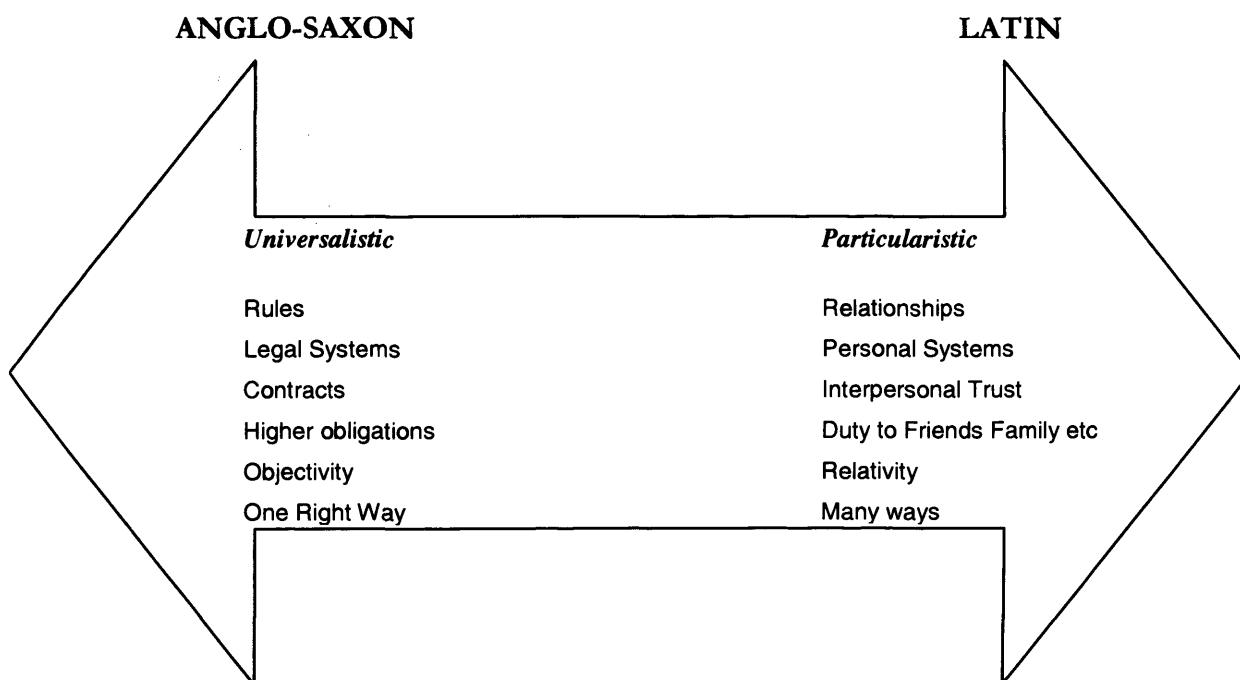
<sup>30</sup> An independent recruitment analysis undertaken by equality consultants CW Associates on behalf of a leading law firm, following the government criticisms of the law profession graduate recruitment practices: Specifically concerns set out by Lord Herman Ouseley, the former Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, who has criticised the legal profession on more than one occasion, arguing that "law firms seeking public sector contracts should have to prove that they operate and recruit staff in accordance with diversity and

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#### 4.4.2 Selection

As Brewer (1995) outlines, approaches to selection vary significantly across cultures. There are differences not only in the priorities that are given to technical and interpersonal capabilities, but also in the ways that candidates are tested and interviewed for the desired qualities. By way of example, both Hoecklin (1995:8) and Nkomo (1992) suggests that in the Anglo-Saxon culture, what is generally tested is how much the individual can contribute to the tasks of the organisation. In these cultures, assessment centres, intelligence tests and measurements of competencies are the norm. Shackleton and Fletcher (1992) compare this to Latin cultures, which, they contend (illustrated at Figure 4.1 below), tend to have a more particularistic approach, more concerned with personality, communication and social skills than the Anglo-Saxon notion of 'intelligence'.

*Figure 4.1 - Culture and Selection*



*Source: Derived from Shackleton and Fletcher (1992:82)*

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equality policies and principles". (Law Careers Net 2004 - <http://www.lawcareers.net/>) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

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There are few statistical comparisons of selection practices used across cultures, but a survey was conducted by Shackleton and Fletcher (1992), which compared selection methods between France and the UK. They are of the view that universalistic and achievement oriented cultures tend to rely more on measurements about individuals' intellectual or technical capabilities in order to assess a 'fit'. More particularistic cultures on the other hand, they contend, rely more on personality and potential. Of particular relevance for this study is the assumption that the use of promotion boards, panel interviews and intelligence tests in the UK assumes that the qualities being tested are objective measurable qualities that are either there or not. The attempt to select against standards established and rooted in one culture means a distinct disadvantage to those whose background may be from another cultural perspective. This is particularly true when the qualities identified for selection are culture and value specific, for example, the competencies identified as essential by the Civil Service. The interpretations and importance that people from different cultures give to these qualities can be very different from those intended. In certain Departments in the Civil Service, for example, this is made worse by the selection based on general competencies for each grade that bear little relevance to what is actually required to be able to do the job.

#### **4.4.3 Performance Management**

Performance management policies are generally associated with the issue of progression<sup>31</sup> within an organisation, and are concerned with performance appraisal within the context of the organisation, the team and the individual. This is a point emphasised by Fombrun *et al.* (1984), who suggests that the performance appraisal process is seen as of key importance in most established models of Human Resource Management and may be directly or indirectly

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<sup>31</sup> A definition of 'Progression', in the context of this study is provided in the glossary

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connected to payment systems as well as managing performance outcomes. Armstrong and Baron (2000) suggest that there is no one right way of managing performance, and make the point that the approach taken depends on the context of the organisation - its culture, structure, technology - the views of stakeholders and the type of people involved. Latham and Wexley (1994) make the point that performance appraisal is the key to effective human resources management. They identified selection, performance appraisal, training and motivation as the four key processes necessary for ensuring the proper management of an organisation's human resources. Furthermore, they argue that performance appraisal is the most important of these four, because it is the prerequisite for establishing the other three. In other words, it is the key that is needed for the others to function effectively. Randell (1984) reinforces the importance of performance appraisals, making the point, however, that the term can mean different things in different situations, and highlighting the formal and informal approaches to performance appraisals in organisations which may have a multiplicity of purposes, for example, evaluation, auditing, training, and controlling. All of which, as Barlow (1994:499-517) infers, will have an impact on the progression and career development opportunities for the individual based usually against a fixed set of criteria which enables the organisation to determine and reward those who 'fit'. Barlow (1994) goes on to say that in these organisations, performance is monitored and measured according to the norms of the organisation as administered (generally) by a powerful personnel department. As part of this performance measurement, Newton and Findlay (1996) contend that there is a need to identify potential and to determine the extent to which the individual is serving the goals of the organisation and how far the individual demonstrates the behaviour (derived from the beliefs and values) that the organisation considers as appropriate.



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This process by its very nature has to be subjective and assumes that potential and performance are objective and measurable. As Rose and Miller (1992) argue, whether or not the organisation considers that its progression process is satisfactory, this does not stop the organisation from declaring and believing that its behaviour/practices/policies are objective and measurable but also that they are fair and open to all. The impact of culture on the performance management practices and policies is true for staff at all levels within an organisation, culture playing an overriding and determining role in the career development of individuals, particularly to positions of influence and power. Research by Liff and Wacjman (1996) helps to shed some light on the impact of culture on individuals' conceptions of career, and makes reference to the possible disadvantage of certain groups. A key aspect of this, they consider, is the performance appraisal system. An important consideration for this study is the fact that performance appraisal is a central plank of the Civil Service performance management systems, and is intended to help identify qualities against which to appraise select, reward and promote.

As revealed by Liff and Wacjman (1996), individuals from different cultures attach different meanings and levels of importance to managerial qualities. Taking this view forward and applying the concept of dualities to performance appraisal suggests that defining appraisal criteria is not simply a matter of identifying qualities that can be used universally, or alternatively allowing managers to develop their own qualities against which to appraise. Rather, it is recognising that there are differences in qualities that are valued in different cultures and that for each quality that can be identified, there is an equally attractive opposite. Recognising the limitations of performance management systems is important but this recognition is often absent in organisations such as the Civil Service who for reasons of 'fairness' apply a universal set of standards conforming to the norms of the organisation. This again relates back

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to what these norms are and how they have been derived. In the case of the UK Civil Service, they are clearly Anglo-Saxon in nature and derived from a white dominated military perspective that has changed little over the years. The impact of these norms with regard to personnel functions is one that leads to less favourable treatment of particular groups, and can in the context of this study be seen as a subtle form of cultural racism which disadvantages racial minorities in the labour market. This disadvantage has been well documented and researched by commentators such as Modood *et al.* (1997), and more recently re-emphasised by the Prime Minister, (Blair 2003), in his speech at the launch of the *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market* report in March 2003.

In widening the workplace disadvantage considerations, Modood *et al.* (1997), and the TUC's 1995 report '*Black and Betrayed*'<sup>32</sup>, have provided measures of the pay differentials between Black and White workers, once employment status has been achieved, which support the notion of workplace disadvantage. Metcalf (2000) identified how unionised racial minority workers received higher pay and suffered less pay discrimination than their non-union counterparts. There are a number of theories put forward to explain these differentials, amongst these are labour market segmentation theories that have often been used to explain the existence of non-competing groups. Modood *et al.* (1997) highlight this differential, making reference to the different experiences of ethnic groups. Brewer (1995:47-68) describes labour market segmentation as the compartmentalisation and isolation of different groups of participants in the labour market. The explanations of segregation put forward by writers such as Doeringer and Piore (1971) and Gordon, Reich and Edwards (1982) only appear to underline the racial disadvantage faced in wider society by racial minorities that mirrors that faced in the workplace and in the labour market as a

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<sup>32</sup> The TUC's 1995 Economic and Social Affairs Department report on black workers' experience of unemployment and low pay in 1994-95

whole, as a result of being different. Jordan and Weedon (1995) support this view, contending that whilst racism certainly is a discourse about difference, it is almost assuredly also a discourse of disadvantage and brutality.

The gaining of higher levels of educational qualifications, according to conventional rhetoric, is one way in which individuals can enhance their 'employability' and 'suitability'. Although this aspect is outside of the brief of this study it has some resonance with the career progression focus of this study, as highlighted by the Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, in his 17th Annual Martin Luther King Memorial Lecture - "Waking from the Dream". In his speech Mr Phillips, makes the points that ethnic minorities are over represented in higher education (15% of students compared to 12% or thereabouts in the age cohort). As shown at Table 4.8, certain groupings fare better than their white counterparts.

**Table 4.8 : Highest qualification, by ethnic group, Great Britain, 2001/02 (%)**

	White British	Black Caribbean	Black African	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese
Degree or equivalent	15.3	9.5	21.0	22.2	10.7	7.7	23.0
Higher education (below degree level)	8.5	9.1	10.1	5.3	3.0	-	6.2
A-level or equivalent	24.8	22.6	14.6	18.2	13.4	10.3	13.1
GCSE passes A*-C or equivalent	23.2	25.2	11.6	15.6	16.3	15.3	8.4
Other qualifications	12.0	16.6	27.4	20.4	22.7	22.0	29.7
No qualifications	16.2	17.0	15.3	18.3	33.8	43.9	19.6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Office for National Statistics 2002: Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey*

However, despite faring better, as Brennan and McGeever 1990's study of ethnic minority graduates indicates, they are more likely to experience unemployment, face more difficulty in obtaining suitable employment, are less satisfied in the jobs they obtain, and are less likely to obtain training and

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promotion, than their white counterparts. This, as commentators such as Marable (1991), Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) and Banton (1983) have highlighted, is based specifically on skin colour. Indeed, Rushdie (1998), in a scathing essay, suggests that Britain is now two entirely different worlds and the one you inherit is determined by the colour of your skin. This inheritance, Alibhai-Brown (2000) argues is significant. She makes reference to the '*culture of Britain*' as being influenced by the supposed shared 'British' culture. Alibhai-Brown (2000) makes the point that theorists have risen out of the fog in unprecedented numbers to explain all, adding with a degree of irony that they do so if they still speak to a homogeneous country with a bedrock of shared and understood values and experiences. The views of Rushdie and Alibhai-Brown are of particular relevance to this study as they clearly link British culture with the disadvantage faced by racial minorities.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

Having looked at culture and racism separately, what we can see from the literature reviewed on cultural racism is that it is based primarily on ideology and values, and is a deeply embedded, largely unacknowledged form of racism that has existed for a very long time. It creates a "we and they" mentality, which can and does have disadvantageous consequences for the "they", in the context of this study - racial minorities.

Cultural racism it is clear can affect negatively a range of interactions, including the operation of the labour market. This disadvantage in common with a number of other equality strands, statistically at least, is slow in showing any significant improvement. In respect of racial disadvantage, with regard to unemployment (Table 4.2), for example, the statistics indicate that black men are particularly disadvantaged.

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Cultural racism can and does impact upon the personnel function in organisations, where the cultural values of those responsible for this function ensure that those wishing to join the organisation or progress share those values. For an organisation such as the Civil Service, this is based in an embedded culture that is long standing and that persists to the present. Given the importance of the performance appraisal system to career progression identified above, it is primarily this aspect that the study will analyse.

The next chapter looks at the Civil Service history, operation and culture and considers the impact that this embedded culture has with regard to career progression by its racial minorities.

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## 1.1 Introduction

The UK Civil Service is a permanent body of employees of the Crown, the central government, and other public bodies, which provides the administrative and operational support for the government. It is a key part of the state apparatus, responsible for the day-to-day running of the government and the implementation of government policy. The Civil Service is a unique institution, combining the characteristics of a public sector employer with the requirements of a government department. It is a body that is both public and private, and its operations are subject to a high degree of transparency and accountability.

# Chapter Five

## The UK Civil Service: History, Operation and Culture

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## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of a key agency of the state, the central government bureaucracy known as the UK Civil Service. Through an examination of the research literature, the chapter first reviews the history, structure and code of practice of the UK Civil Service. It then provides an overview of the theoretical and practical implementation of its mode of operation. Taking note of the contributions on organisational culture, race, racism and racial disadvantage from previous chapters, the chapter concludes with a discussion on the perceived embedded organisational culture of the UK Civil Service and the influence and impact that this culture may have on the recruitment, but particularly the career progression opportunities for racial minorities within it.

## 5.2 History and Reform of the UK Civil Service

The early origins of the Civil Service, as Pyper (1999), Dowding (1995) and Stenton (1971) suggest, can be discerned in the courts of the Anglo-Saxon kings, where administration emerged as a distinct activity, requiring the employment of full time clerks who would accompany the king as he moved about the realm. Stenton (1971:349) makes the point that essentially:

... these administrators were the officers of the royal household whose functions have persisted despite the turbulent constitutional development of the UK which has now led to a parliamentary system of government and a constitutional monarchy.

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In charting the history of the Civil Service, Stenton (1971) explains that up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the state administration was not seen as a single service: patronage was dispensed by a number of separate political authorities, who headed up the various sections of the then royal household. Many positions, he suggests, were little more than sinecures. Appointments were filled on the basis of nepotism, with little attention to intellectual capacity. Stenton (1971) goes on to outline the fact that there were many who lamented the failings of the service, making specific reference to a campaign led by Burke and Fox<sup>33</sup> which attacked the sinecures and other malpractices of the state administration. As Campbell (1965) indicates, it was, however, the impact of the industrial revolution and the rise of the new bourgeoisie (the new middle-class 'elite') which really spawned the modern service. A critical element shaping this new elite's thinking was, as Campbell (1965) explains, the experience of the empire, particularly the Indian Empire.

Campbell (1965) identifies this experience as a catalyst for the model for the present, centrally administered Civil Service, found in the Indian Civil Service (ICS), the instrument of British sovereignty in India.<sup>34</sup> Campbell (1965) explains that the ICS had evolved from the East India Company, under the

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<sup>33</sup> Edmund Burke was one of the eighteenth century's leading statesmen, political thinkers and writers. Originally a Whig, he showed liberal support for a number of causes. Despite his early reputation as a reformer, Burke expressed fears that revolutionary ideals would violently destroy essential British traditions and institutions. These views led him to break with the Whigs and side with the Tories, for whom he became a figurehead. (<http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/burke.html>) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

Charles James Fox (1749-1806), A Whig statesman, Fox held office briefly as a Tory then led the opposition through a long political life. He championed reform. (<http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/terrace/adv03/eight/peoples/fox.htm>) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

<sup>34</sup> It is worth noting that William Wilberforce who as the hero of the anti-slavery campaign, thought that Britain's burgeoning empire should impose Christian values and laws upon the world - and not respect local laws.



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inspiration of the poet and historian, Lord Macaulay<sup>35</sup>, to become a complex machine for the exercise of British colonial rule. The leadership of the ICS, paraphrasing Forster (1947), was made up of young bureaucratic conquistadors prepared themselves to rule a race about which they knew nothing, in a climate for which they were singularly ill suited, by means of the newly revived public school and exclusive university system (Oxford/Cambridge), whose studies were largely confined to the classics. These public schools Forster (1972) went on to suggest, sought to place a stamp of conformity on their alumni through the study of the classics and a hierarchical system that simultaneously stressed a natural right to rule and passive obedience.

Lord Macaulay, as Campbell (1965) points out, had emphasised the importance of examinations in selecting candidates, but did not believe that these needed to be in relevant disciplines, preferring to use the classics as the best judge of all round intelligence. Madgwick (1976:120) quotes Lord Macaulay's 1854 report<sup>36</sup> on the selection and examination of candidates for the Indian Civil Service:

We believe that men who have been engaged, up to twenty-one or twenty-two, in studies which have no immediate connection with the business of any profession, and of which the effect is merely to open, to invigorate, and to enrich the mind will generally be found in the business of every profession superior to men who have, at eighteen or nineteen, devoted themselves to the special studies of their calling. The most illustrious English jurists have been men who never opened a law book till after the close of a distinguished academical career; nor is there any reason to believe that they would have been greater lawyers

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<sup>35</sup> Lord Macaulay (1800-59) - nineteenth century Whig politician and historian - son of Zachary (the noted philanthropist and slave-trade abolitionist). The MP for Edinburgh for a number of years.  
(<http://cepa.newschool.edu/het/profiles/macaulay.htm>) (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

<sup>36</sup> This educational justification in Lord Macaulay's report, it should be noted, is in fact where the 'generalist' principle of employment within the Civil Service stems, particularly within the senior management structures.

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if they had passed in drawing plans and conveyances the time which they give to Thucydides, to Cicero, and to Newton.

As a consequence of the agreed need for reform of the UK Administration, and the identification of an established existing model to call upon, Campbell (1965) is of the view that the obvious conclusion reached was that the ICS model seemed to the establishment in the UK to offer the very best possible model upon which to reform the central administration function, ensuring at the same time that its values and beliefs predominated and as a consequence controlling those inferior to themselves. These conclusions, in particular the values, beliefs and control referred to by Campbell are key factors for this study, and provide a clear link to the relationship of a dominant culture and its impact on those who are considered lesser or different. This was particularly the case for the leadership requirements. Forster (1947) referred to those who led the ICS at that time as those with no particular skills, who confidently sailed away to command a vast subcontinent of people whom they regarded as their social, racial and intellectual inferiors. More recently, politicians such as Castle (1973) and Cunningham (1999)<sup>37</sup>, in calling for reforms at the senior management level of the Civil Service have suggested that some resonance can be found in the statement made by Forster with today's Civil Service leaders.

Madgwick (1976) outlines the fact that the reforms being sought were taken forward by William Gladstone (the then Chancellor of the Exchequer). Gladstone, Madgwick (1976) explains, commissioned Northcote and Trevelyan<sup>38</sup> to come up with recommendations to reform and revamp the workings of the

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<sup>37</sup> Mr Jack Cunningham, the Labour Cabinet Minister with responsibility for the Civil Service in 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Sir Stafford Northcote and Sir Charles Trevelyan - Mid-Victorian reformers

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'corrupt, patronaged and inefficient state administration'. The fact that Sir Charles Trevelyan, as Campbell (1965) identifies, was a zealous member of the ICS and son-in-law of Lord Macaulay, and was the driving force behind the report, said a great deal about the approach and nature of the reforms.

Northcote and Trevelyan produced their official report, seen as a vehicle of reform for the Civil Service, in 1854. Based on the ICS model, the Northcote and Trevelyan report, as Madgwick (1976:115) identifies, recommended four specific changes:

- the separation of the intellectual from the mechanical side of administration;
- the unification of the Service, with unified recruitment and interdepartmental promotion;
- recruitment by competitive examination, not by patronage; and
- promotion by merit

Madgwick (1976) goes on to explain that these recommendations took some 70 years to be adopted. The Civil Service Commission was set up in 1855 and in 1870 the first competitive recruitment was established. In 1919 the separate Departments of State were in effect unified under the Treasury to form a single home Civil Service. Campbell (1965) further clarifies the manifestation of the recommendations by commenting on the evolving Civil Service characteristics and operation in hierarchical terms, ranging from clerical drudgery at the bottom to policy making responsibilities for those at the top. Recruitment was to reflect these distinctions. Men of iron would labour at the lower levels, while the upper echelons were to be reserved for the public school - Oxbridge elite.

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As Morley (1903:649) comments:

The report was warmly welcomed by Gladstone, who did not conceal his motives, which were stated to be to ensure that this elite would have 'command over all the higher part of the Civil Service' which up to this time they have never enjoyed.

Campbell (1965) therefore identifies that a crucial feature of the reform was that 'merit' via examinations should replace patronage and nepotism in recruitment. However, as intended by Gladstone, what essentially the reforms provided was a new form of patronage and nepotism. As the Civil Service examinations were to be geared to the Oxbridge syllabus, particularly the classics, this device Campbell (1965) correctly suggests, would mean that the public schools would ensure their continued cultural dominance and would assume the mission of manufacturing a ruling elite. This ruling elite, Theakston (1995), Madgwick (1976) and Rose (1969) contend, still exists today. This is supported by a 2001 *Sunday Times* survey<sup>39</sup>, which found that senior positions in society are still dominated by public school men who graduated from Oxford and Cambridge. In its review of the Civil Service senior positions, the survey went on to highlight the fact that an analysis of the 216 Civil Servants belonging to the three highest ranks revealed that 100 were ex-Oxbridge. This was, however, an improvement from 1950, when over 70% of officials of fairly similar rank, were ex-Oxbridge. A specific example quoted was the Foreign Office, where of the 25 officials, an incredible 24 were ex-Oxbridge. The survey further demonstrated that the top most pinnacles of public sector officialdom still, however, showed a broadly "traditional" educational profile.

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<sup>39</sup> Sunday Times November 2001 – A question of upbringing - Summarised by John Rimington (SourceUK) – 10/12/2001

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Of the 22 Permanent Secretaries, two-thirds were ex-Oxbridge. The 2001 *Sunday Times* survey's overwhelming conclusion was that Oxbridge was still regnant, but that the traditional patterns were progressively breaking up, and as a final point, the survey noted that the distribution between Oxford and Cambridge for Permanent Secretaries was 6-6.

Campbell (1965) suggests that the Northcote and Trevelyan reforms produced the basis for the principal characteristics of today's Civil Service. Since the reforms, there have been numerous attempts to make changes to the Civil Service [the Ridley Commission of 1890; the Royal Commission of 1910 under Lord McDonnell; the 1918 Committee under Viscount Gladstone; the 1929 Royal Commission under Lord Tomlin; the 1953 Royal Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Raymond Priestley], each looking at specific aspects of the Civil Service such as recruitment, structure, salary and operation. However, as Campbell (1965) points out, these only contributed limited changes to the Northcote and Trevelyan reforms.

In 1965, however, the Government Select Committee on Estimates published a report on Recruitment to the Civil Service, in which a recommendation was made that: '*A Committee ... should be appointed to initiate research upon, to examine and to report upon the structure, recruitment and management of the Civil Service*<sup>40</sup>'. On 8th February 1966, the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson announced in the House of Commons the appointment of a Committee on the Civil Service (which became known as the Fulton Committee) '*to examine the structure, recruitment and*

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<sup>40</sup> Select Committee on Procedure 19 May 1965 - Printed in its 4th Report of Session 1964-65, HC 303, pp 51-68

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*management, including training, of the Home Civil Service, and to make recommendations*<sup>41</sup>.

The Committee was not entirely happy with its terms of reference, which excluded the machinery of Government, and subsequently reported that they found that '*at many points of our enquiry ... this imposed limits on our work; questions about the number and size of Departments, and their relationships with each other and the Cabinet Office, bear closely on the work and organisation of the Civil Service*<sup>42</sup>. Its membership, however, was typical of similar committees at that time, and included distinguished academics, businessmen and civil servants as well as two members of Parliament. Not one woman was included, needless to say neither were there any ethnic minorities. This, however, as Madgwick (1976) suggests, was the most important attempt at significant reform of the Civil Service, and as identified by Madgwick (1976), has had some impact in reshaping the Civil Service.

The Committee findings in Lord Fulton's 1968 *Report of the Committee on the Civil Service* are of particular relevance to this study, as can be seen from a comment in its opening paragraph, which stated that:

The Home Civil Service today is still fundamentally the product of the nineteenth century philosophy<sup>43</sup> of the Northcote and Trevelyan Report. The tasks it faces are those of the second half of the twentieth century.

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<sup>41</sup> Select Committee on Procedure 19 May 1965 - Printed in its 4th Report of Session 1964-65, HC 303, pp 51-68

<sup>42</sup> Select Committee on Public Service Report PART 3: Changes in the Public Service Since 1967

<sup>43</sup> For the purpose of this study I have interpreted Philosophy as 'Values'

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Specifically as Madgwick (1976:116) identifies, the Committee noted six major defects:

- the Service is too much based on the philosophy of the amateur (the generalist or all rounder);
- the system of classes (grades) impedes the efficient use of individuals; the specialist classes, e.g. scientists, accountants, doctors, lawyers are denied opportunities for full administrative (managerial) responsibility;
- too few civil servants are or see themselves as skilled managers;
- there is not enough contact between the Service and the community it serves;
- personnel management and career planning are inadequate.

The Committee, Madgwick (1976) goes on to explain, proposed a basic guiding principle for the development of the Civil Service: 'look at the job first', indicating a need to move from the generalist nature of the service to a more specialist mode of operation. The Wilson Government accepted immediately some of the proposals, for example, the establishment of a new Civil Service Department, the modification of the grading structure and the establishment of a Civil Service College, and although many of the changes that took place in the Civil Service over the next thirty years had their origins in the recommendations of Lord Fulton's 1968 Report, the far-reaching impact that the report was intended to have, in for example, the generalist nature of the service, is as commentators such as Schneider-Ross (1999) indicate, still awaited. Indeed a Government review in 1997 of the Fulton recommendations, 30 years on, *Public Service Committee Report*<sup>44</sup> came to the view that 'Thirty years on the guiding principles of Fulton, have yet to have the impact that was intended'. A

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld199798/ldselect/ldpubs/rv/055/psrep05.htm> (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

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key question posed in the review was ‘why had things as in the case of the Northcote and Trevelyan reforms, taken so long to implement’. *The Select Committee on Public Administration - Seventh Report (2001)* in analysing the implementation of the Fulton recommendations in the light of the 1997 review, importantly for this study, makes the point that:

The Civil Service has wrapped up the liberal approach to change proposed by Fulton and has absorbed its limited potential impact, and taken the task of reformation into its own ‘capable’ and cautious hands, again ensuring the continued cultural dominance that has been in place from its beginning.

The Select Committee Report also welcomed the most recent attempt at Civil Service reform, the *Modernising Government* initiative, which, whilst not seeking fundamental reform of the Civil Service, was hailed as central to the Government's programme of renewal and reform of public services. The Prime Minister at a Labour Party conference<sup>45</sup> in October 1998 set out a range of public service objectives, including a number of objectives aimed at achieving greater diversity within the public service so that it can better meet the varying needs of what he described as ‘Britain’s multicultural and diverse society’. The Prime Minister went on to state that he considered that tackling under-representation alone was not enough, and that a truly effective diverse organisation was one in which the differences individuals bring are valued and used. Importantly for the focus of this study, he emphasised that there had to be a change of culture, which needed to be led from the top and driven throughout the organisation. The implementation of the *Modernising Government* objectives are still ongoing, but as with the Fulton Recommendations, progress

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<sup>45</sup> Labour Party Conference Blackpool - 2 October 1998



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is slow and as identified by Schneider-Ross (2003), faces a number of similar barriers to previous initiatives.

The above provides a clear recognition of the need for change, but also the slow pace of change in an organisation such as the Civil Service.

### 5.3 The UK Civil Service its Structure, and Operation

The UK Civil Service is concerned with the conduct of the whole range of Government activities, as they affect the country, ranging from policy formulation to carrying out the day to day duties of public administration. As identified in the *Civil Service Management Code*<sup>46</sup>, the Civil Service Departments and Agencies are the main instruments for implementing Government policy when Parliament has passed the necessary legislation, and for advising Ministers.

The Civil Service employs around 2% of the UK workforce, with a further 18% working in the wider public sector, including the NHS and local government. The highest number of Civil Servants recorded was in 1976 when (on a full-time equivalent basis) there were 751,000 staff. Since then the number of permanent civil servants has fallen by around 32% to 512,400 in April 2003. However, in the year to April 2003 the numbers rose by 17,370 (3.5%), these increases were accounted for in the main by delivery of increased volumes of work and the provision of new services<sup>47</sup>. In 2003, the Department of Work

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<sup>46</sup>[http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management\\_information/management/management\\_code/publications/doc](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/management/management_code/publications/doc) ( Last accessed 10 August 2006)

<sup>47</sup> These included - Ofsted - continued growth due to the expansion for the regulation and inspection of childminding and day care, and the inspection of further education for 16-19 year olds; **Foreign & Commonwealth Office** - increased work owing to the Iraq War; **Inland Revenue** - staff have been recruited

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and Pensions was the largest single Department, employing over a quarter of all Civil Servants (28.2%), followed by the Inland Revenue (18.9%), the Ministry of Defence (12.9%), the Home Office (12.8%) and Customs and Excise (5.9%). Around 20% of all permanent civil servants work in London, a rise of 10,140 in the 6 years to April 2003. This significant drop in Civil Service staff numbers since 1976, (despite the recent increases) as put forward by Rimington (2002) is a reflection of the policy of successive Governments, whether Labour or Conservative, of reducing Civil Service staff numbers in part to control Public Sector Borrowing Requirements and to 'improve efficiency'. A number of other factors have influenced overall trends in Civil Service staff numbers in recent years. These include privatisation, contracting out and the changing work volumes in those sections of the Civil Service providing public delivery; for example, increasing staff numbers in the Department for Work and Pensions. However, based on recent statements from the government, this increase in Civil Service staff numbers in 2003 appears likely to be a blip. This is a fact reported in a February 2004 *Guardian* newspaper article, 'The Sir Humphreys of Whitehall', where, in a major speech on Civil Service reform, the Prime Minister made clear his determination to see a major shake-up of Whitehall, suggesting that many practices had not changed since the Northcote-Trevelyan report which he referred to as laying the basis of the modern Civil Service. Amongst a number of proposals, the Prime Minister stated that under-performing civil servants at all levels would be sacked; and that top civil servants would be kept

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due to the continued expansion of the contact centers and the preparation for the new Tax Credits; **Crown Prosecution Service** - to meet its commitment to increase its force and reflect its changing role within the Criminal Justice System.

([http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/contents\\_for\\_civil\\_service\\_statistics\\_2003\\_report/index.asp](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2003_report/index.asp)) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

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on their toes by giving them private sector-style four-year contracts. The Prime Minister went on to make the point that:

These are important developments which strengthen the Civil Service's capacity to be in touch and to deliver, ... Whitehall should be slimmed down as central government follows the example of business, in which the centre has become smaller ... The number of civil servants with specialist skills ... should be increased, ending the days when "generalists" held sway in Whitehall - The talented amateur is simply not equipped for complex, specialised tasks.

The Prime Minister's comments reflect the thinking of Sir Peter Gershon<sup>48</sup>, the head of the government's efficiency review, who in a report published in July 2004 advised the Prime Minister that 80,000 generalist Whitehall jobs could be cut by 2006.

Apart from the rise in numbers working in London and the South East, the regional distribution of civil servants has not changed significantly over the 6-year period to April 2003. In Wales, the share of Civil Service staff remained around 6%. This regional distribution is, however, now likely to change following the publication of the Lyons Report<sup>49</sup>. The report to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown and the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, confirmed that

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<sup>48</sup> Releasing resources for the front line: independent review of public sector efficiency (The Stationery Office 07/04 976945 ISBN: 1-84532-032-8) - This document sets out the conclusions of Sir Peter Gershon's review of public sector efficiency. In particular, it sets out the scope for further efficiencies that he identified within the public sector's back office, procurement, transaction service and policy-making functions. Sir Peter also identified opportunities for increasing the productive time of professionals working in schools, hospitals and other frontline public services, and makes a series of cross-cutting recommendations to further embed efficiency across the public sector.

<sup>49</sup> In April 2003, the Chancellor and Deputy Prime Minister asked Sir Michael Lyons, Director of the Institute of Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham, to conduct an independent study into the scope for relocating a substantial number of public sector activities from London and the South East to other parts of the United Kingdom. Producing the final report - *Well Placed to Deliver? - Shaping the Pattern of Government Service* (ISBN:1-84532-009-3, - [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/lyonsreview](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/lyonsreview))

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Departments had identified about 27,000 posts which could go from London and the South East. Of these, 19,700 were candidates for relocation, whilst 7,500 were expected to disappear as part of efficiency improvements. The Report recommended that the Chancellor should take forward the relocation plans urgently in the context of the forthcoming Spending Review, potentially saving £2 billion over a 15 year period.

Among the 512,400 civil servants nationally there is a core of senior managers and policy advisers – the Senior Civil Service (SCS). The creation of the SCS in April 1996 brought together some 3,000 staff, formerly in Grades 2 to 5 or their equivalents, into a single service wide group with central personnel management. This group, now numbering some 3,800, is responsible for ‘sustaining core Civil Service values, and for serving the collective interest of Government with a focus and loyalty wider than their own Departments and Agencies’<sup>50</sup>. Responsibility for management of the Senior Civil Service is principally a matter for Departments and Agencies. However, some terms and conditions are determined centrally and the Cabinet Office assists Departments and Agencies to develop expertise and promote cohesion across the Senior Civil Service, through a common broad management framework and by encouraging mobility between Departments and Agencies. Much of this is achieved through provision of central programmes, support and co-operation rather than by applying central rules or requirements. The Prime Minister appoints Permanent Secretaries (on the recommendation of the Head of the Home Civil Service). Other appointments to the SCS must be approved by the

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<sup>50</sup> Comment by Sir Andrew Turnbull, Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service, to the Public Administration Committee on 9 November 2002.

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Prime Minister, again on the recommendation of the Head of the Home Civil Service. Of interest with regard to appointments to the SCS is the role and influence that could be exerted by a single individual, the Head of the Home Civil Service, all of whom to date have been Oxbridge graduates.

To understand the operation of the Civil Service organisation, it is perhaps important to start with its code of practice, as this sets out the constitutional framework within which all civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. The code is modelled on a draft originally put forward by the House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee. It can be argued that the values that civil servants are therefore expected to uphold, and the culture that this leads to, is that of the small elite group who drafted the code and ensured its ministerial acceptance. The current code (Appendix A) came into force on 1 January 1996, and forms part of the terms and conditions employment of every civil servant. It was revised on 13 May 1999<sup>51</sup> to take account of devolution in Scotland and Wales<sup>52</sup>.

#### **5.4 The Culture of the UK Civil Service**

Taking note of its history, and the limited success in the reform highlighted above, the prevailing cultural norms of the Civil Service, is perhaps understandable. What is surprising, however, as pointed out by Lord Fulton's 1968 *Report of the Committee on the Civil Service*, is the fact that, as the world has changed from the background against which the Northcote and Trevelyan

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<sup>51</sup> The Cabinet Office decided that the Code should be accessible only via the Internet from 1 April 2000. Notification of amendments are therefore sent to Departments, Agencies and other users by e-mail. The consolidated version of the Code available on the Internet is revised simultaneously.

<sup>52</sup> As the main research location of the study was Wales the impact of devolution was carefully considered, but was found to be little different to the embedded UK Civil Service policy and practice.

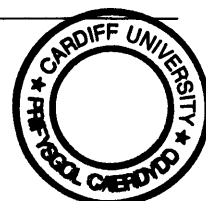
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reforms had been painted, the model, including its long established culture and values, has persisted. Madgwick (1994) and Kingdom (1991) both suggest that like many other institutions of modern British politics, the Civil Service is not static (but static in nature), and despite changes in structure, operation and responsibilities, its culture and influence over policy have remained largely unaffected. This influence, they contend, provides a measure of control and power that should not be underestimated, and importantly this power is exercised based on the cultural attitudes and beliefs of a small elite minority. The three statements below support and add to this viewpoint.

First, the Labour Minister Barbara Castle, providing a view on the power of the Civil Service, writes in the *Sunday Times* in 1973:

I have no doubt that the Civil Service is a state within a state to an extent that the trade union movement could never aspire to be. The Civil Service is also highly aware of its own excellence. It is extremely status-conscious. In fact if any government in this country tried to undermine that status we would certainly see a thing or two ... So I think that there is a crying need for the Civil Service to be trained and retrained and re-re-re-trained in two things. The first is in accepting the supremacy of the political function in a democracy over the administration function. And the second is getting it into the mind of the Minister! ... I believe that you have the absolute power as a Civil Service, because of your excellence, to make life impossible for any government which radically tries to alter the Civil Service. We are talking about government by consent. This is what the current democratic argument is about and your consent above all is necessary ... I think you are the largest negative power in the country ... Nobody is saying - I'm not saying it anyway - that the Civil Service is crudely political, sabotaging Labour governments. I'm saying that by definition that there are certain



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jobs that you cannot do and should not attempt to do, in order to do the jobs that you do.

Secondly, the former Labour Leader of the House of Commons, Richard Crossman, states with regard to the power of the Civil Service (1972:73):

The other danger that we face is that Departments get together and dictate to the politicians behind the scenes in Whitehall. I have said something about Cabinet committees. I have not revealed to you that parallel to each Cabinet committee is an official committee ... who will seek as far as possible to achieve an official solution which they recommend to their relevant Minister, rather than have the risk of Ministers making their own decisions... Even as a Minister, if Whitehall gangs up on you it is very difficult to get your policy through, or even to get a fair hearing for a new idea.

Finally, Samuel Brittan the *Financial Times* commentator and author, (1969: 332-335) provides an insight into the internal power of Civil Service managers, indicating that:

In principle there are many opportunities for dissenting views to reach the top, but a civil servant of any ambition or common sense would not want to acquire a reputation for being troublesome or unhelpful, particularly if it was not in line with what the powers that be wanted ... One must never forget that the same superior officials to whom junior staff are supposed to be free to offer radical policy suggestions make regular reports on which their future careers depend.

Increasingly, then, critics see Civil Service bureaucrats as ill suited to the changes taking place, yet the old system, which includes the cultural dominance of this small elite, is tenaciously defended in maintaining an establishment grip on the central institutions of state.

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## 5.5 Recruitment and Progression

Recruitment into the Home Civil Service is governed by the Civil Service Order in Council 1995. The Order in Council sets out the legal basis for the Civil Service recruitment policies and practice and requires the Civil Service Commissioners to provide a recruitment code on the interpretation and application of the principles for recruitment into the Civil Service. The principles and code are contained within '*The Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code*', and are mandatory and must be followed when any post is opened to competition from outside the Civil Service. The principles, in short, are that all appointments must be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. This has been the basis of Civil Service recruitment policy for over a century, and should underpin the maintenance of a Civil Service that avoids any form of unfair discrimination by finding the best available person for the job and putting all appointments above suspicion of patronage. With regard to progression, Departments and Agencies have authority to determine promotion and lateral transfer arrangements for their own staff and as with recruitment, this is subject to all promotions and lateral transfers following from a considered decision as to the fitness of individuals, on merit, to undertake the duties concerned.

Disadvantage in recruitment and progression for racial minorities in the public sector is emphasised by Susan Corby (1999) in her general study of equal opportunities in public sector employment. Corby (1999:95) provides an important and convincing argument that 'Progress towards equality is threatened by actions affecting the public services generally'. The discourse on



racial inequality in the public sector used by Corby (1999) is characterised by its focus on statistics relating to the numbers of racial minorities particularly in the more senior levels. Progress in relation to racial minorities in senior positions (Table 5.1) appears to have been limited. This apparent lack of significant progress is a key element of this study and is analysed in detail in Chapter eleven.

*Table 5.1 – Senior Civil Service<sup>53</sup> – Ethnic Origin Comparison*

	White / Other				Ethnic Minorities <sup>54</sup>			
	SCS		Total		SCS		Total	
	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%
<b>1989</b>	n/a	98.2	378949	95.8	n/a	1.8	16103	4.2
<b>1997</b>	3681	98.6	437066	94.3	51	1.4	22217	5.7
<b>2004</b>	4390	97.3	520680	93.9	120	2.7	33430	6.1

*Source: Civil Service Data Summary - 1989 to 2004<sup>55</sup>*

Corby (1994) also relates this lack of progress to senior positions to women in the workplace, making use of the term ‘glass ceiling’ to describe this phenomenon. This is a view underscored by a survey into the changing culture of the Civil Service undertaken by Sophie Watson. Most of the women civil servants she interviewed were aware of the lack of progress for women to senior positions, one of these suggesting that:

These days the actual constraints have gone but there is just this something, this glass ceiling which you can’t see and because you can’t see it, it is very difficult to do anything about, which

<sup>53</sup> Senior Civil Service - The Senior Civil Service (SCS) was introduced on 1 April 1996. It covers most staff in former Grades 2 to 5. The data, where SCS figures are given, are based on the SCS responsibility level, and include some staff outside the SCS but with similar responsibilities, including senior Diplomatic Service staff.

<sup>54</sup> As percentage of all staff

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/archived\\_data/archived\\_data\\_on\\_ethnicity/index.asp](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/archived_data/archived_data_on_ethnicity/index.asp) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

has stopped women getting into the very top, the boardroom level which is to do with the male networks. Watson (1992:41)

As can be seen in Table 5.2 in relation to the number of female staff (52.3%), the percentage of women in senior positions (25.8%) appears to support the 'glass ceiling' observations.

*Table 5.2 – Senior Civil Service Senior Management – Gender Comparison*

	Male				Female			
	SCS		Total		SCS		Total	
	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%
<b>1984</b>	3381	94.1	364422	58.1	212	5.9	263205	41.9
<b>1997</b>	3219	86.6	264656	51.4	497	13.4	250164	48.6
<b>2004</b>	3350	72.2	264140	47.7	1160	27.8	289970	52.3

*Civil Service Data Summary - 1984 to 2004*<sup>56</sup>

Coussey and Jackson (1991: 94-95) also make specific reference to this phenomenon explaining that the term:

Glass ceiling is used to describe the level at which, in most organisations, women and ethnic minorities seem to cease to progress ... Few women and ethnic minorities are found at executive and senior decision-making levels.

This, Coussey and Jackson (1991) suggest, can lead to the failure of racial minority people to apply for promotion and result in low expectations and failure to achieve their full potential. As part of its commitment to a more representative workforce, the Prime Minister in 2002 set the Civil Service a

<sup>56</sup>[http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/archived\\_data/archived\\_data\\_on\\_gender/index.asp](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/archived_data/archived_data_on_gender/index.asp) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

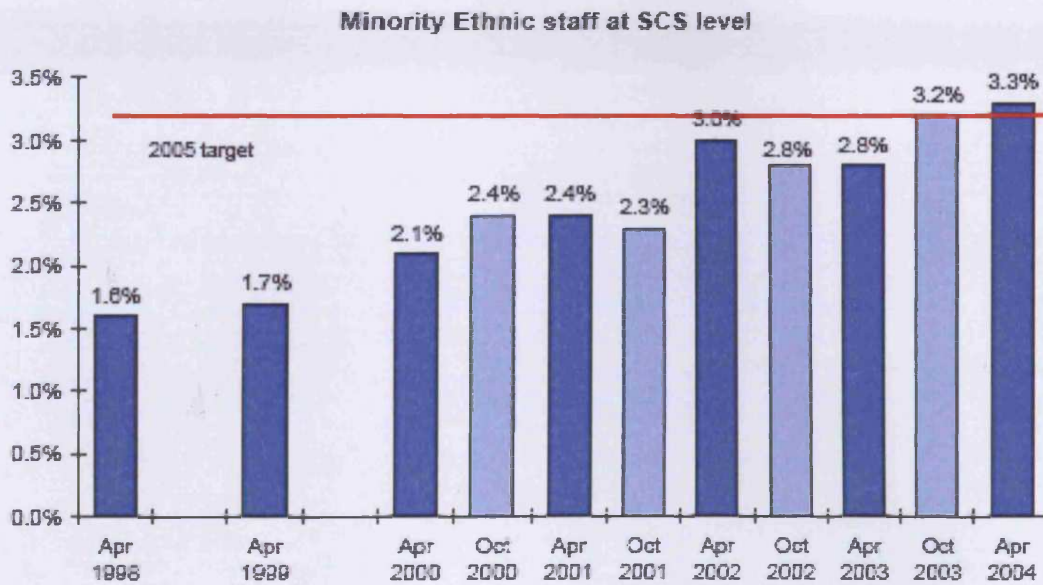
number of aspirational senior Civil Service targets to be achieved by 2005.

These are listed in the *Civil Service Diversity Website*<sup>57</sup> as:

- 35% of the SCS to be women; (27.8% at April 04)
- 25% of top 600 posts to be filled by women; (24.4% at April 04)
- 3.2% of the SCS to be from ethnic minority backgrounds; (3.3% at April 04)
- 3% of the SCS to be people with disabilities. (2.3% at April 04)

The progress toward these targets for racial minorities and women are reflected in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 below.

*Figure 5.1 – Civil Service Ethnic Minority Targets*

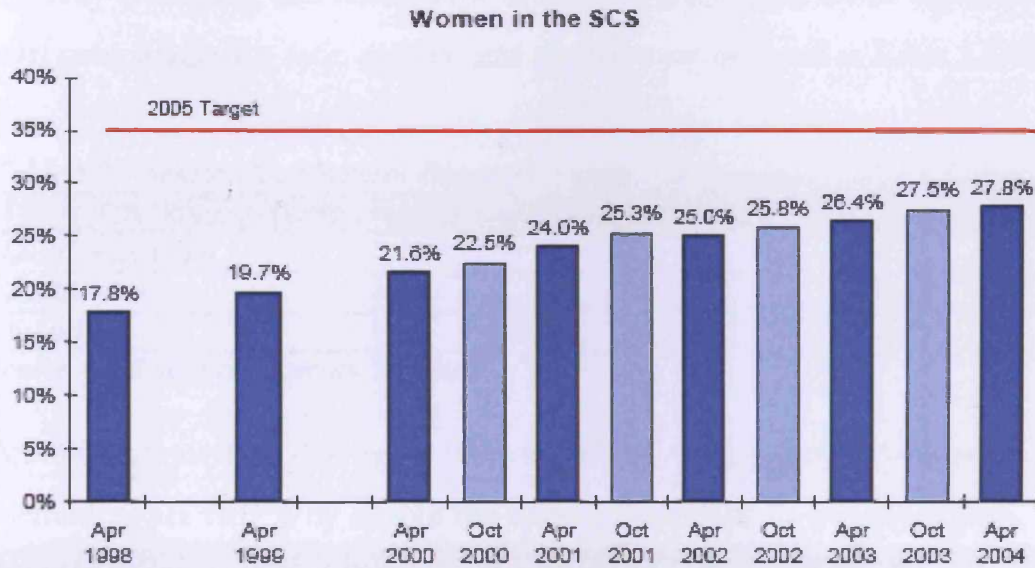


Source *Civil Service Website*<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.diversity-whatworks.gov.uk/> (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

<sup>58</sup> [http://www.diversitywhatworks.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/publications/pdf/ethnicity\\_oct03.pdf](http://www.diversitywhatworks.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/publications/pdf/ethnicity_oct03.pdf) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

Figure 5.2 – Civil Service Gender Targets



Source *Civil Service Diversity Website*<sup>59</sup>

These statistics show progress toward the SCS targets set by the Prime Minister, and as indicated by the Civil Service diversity champion on the *Civil Service Diversity Website* in October 2004<sup>60</sup>, a commitment to achieving them:

I have seen the Civil Service change very much for the better in recent years, concentrating on making a real difference to public services. But we are still too far away from properly representing our communities, particularly at the senior levels of the Civil Service. We must make greater strides in this area, and as we do, we shall be more effective. *Martin Narey (Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service and Civil Service Diversity Champion)*

<sup>59</sup>[http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/archived\\_data/archived\\_data\\_on\\_gender/index.asp](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/archived_data/archived_data_on_gender/index.asp) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.diversity-whatworks.gov.uk/> (Last accessed 10 August 2006)



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Given the above representation of commitment expressed by the Civil Service diversity champion, and taking note of the SCS targets, the actual representative staff percentages for race, gender, and disability are outlined at Table 5.3 below.

*Table 5.3 - Senior Civil Service Diversity Targets Comparisons (2004-5 Targets)*

	<i>Actual (%) of staff</i>	<i>Target (%)</i>
<i>Racial minorities</i>	8.2	3.2
<i>Gender</i>	52.3	35.0
<i>Disability</i>	4.2	3.0

*Source- Civil Service Diversity Website<sup>61</sup>*

An obvious question that arises from the above, is whether the ‘targets’ in themselves are fair? Why should the targets not reflect the actual numbers, and does this not continue the under representation and indeed disadvantage of these groups. These questions are further explored in the analysis and conclusion of the study.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

From the literature it is clear that the origins and history that has shaped the modern Civil Service points to a long standing embedded culture, initiated and developed by a small elite group, the vast majority of whom retain their power and influence through the operation of a well established code of practice which they write and perpetuate. The original classical ‘Oxbridge’ requirements have continued to the present time as has the same basic cultural values and

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<sup>61</sup>[http://www.diversitywhatworks.gov.uk/management\\_information/statistical\\_information/statistics/publications/pdf/ethnicity\\_oct03.pdf](http://www.diversitywhatworks.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/publications/pdf/ethnicity_oct03.pdf) (Last accessed 10 August 2006)

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norms that are maintained by the 'heirs' of the original elite group, whose influence and power continues, despite many attempts at reform.

As identified more generally in the earlier chapters, the picture that emerges within the Civil Service is not one of outright discrimination and prejudice, but a suggestion that the cultural values of this elite group, made up of overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-aged men, impact directly on the policies, practices and ultimately the behaviour of today's Civil Service. It is the impact of these policies, practices and behaviour as demonstrated by the Civil Service performance appraisal system that provides the context for this study - the opportunities for progression for racial minorities within the Civil Service.

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## Chapter Six

# Study Justification and Research Design

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## **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapters reviewed the research literature on organisational culture, race, racism, and racial disadvantage, concluding at Chapter five by making links to the Civil Service. This chapter concentrates on the study's research questions, design and methodological considerations. First it sets out the literature derived justification for the study including the specific research questions to be addressed. The main concepts of the study are then conceptualised and operationalised. A critique of the research design strategy selected for this study is then provided, looking in particular at the different forms of research (exploratory, descriptive, causal), and research approaches (qualitative, quantitative). The chapter concludes with an exploration of the research methods that could be used when researching issues such as race, and includes a rationale and justification for the data collection approaches of interview and questionnaire, selected for this study.

## **6.2 Literature derived justification for the study**

The literature review surveyed research in the individual areas of race, racism, racial disadvantage and culture but there has been little specific research on the interaction and relationship between them, particularly with regard to the focus of this study, the UK Civil Service. The links identified by commentators such as Lawrence (1982), Jenkins and Solomos (1989), and Essed (1990) in the preceding chapters and the conclusion drawn in chapters four and five of the significant impact and influence that culture can have with regard to racial disadvantage, provides a clear justification for this study. Rather than a reflective statistical analysis of the impact and influence of culture on racial disadvantage, the study seeks to understand this relationship better through an evidential response to two specific research questions:



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- i. To what extent does the organisational culture of the Civil Service help or hinder progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service? – Specifically:
- *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service influence its race equality policies and create career progression problems for its racial minority staff?*
    - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*
  - *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service limit its commitment to race equality and create career progression problems for its racial minority staff?*
    - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*
  - *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service impact on its practices and procedures that create appraisal problems for its racial minority staff?*
    - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*
- ii. To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in career development and progression in the Civil Service? – Specifically:
- *Have racial minorities experienced career progression disadvantages as a consequence of the Civil Service ‘culture’?*
    - *If so what are the experiences and what can be done to address them?*
  - *Have racial minorities experienced a lack of career progression opportunities as a consequence of the Civil Service ‘culture’?*
    - *If so what are the experiences and what can be done to address them?*
  - *Has the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service created performance appraisal barriers for racial minorities?*
    - *If so what are these barriers and what can be done to address them?*

These questions take note of the views of Strauss and Corbin (1990) who make the point that relationships between concepts are often poorly understood or conceptually undeveloped. This view, whilst not specifically referring to questions of race and culture, is considered relevant and appropriate to this study as it is apparent that there remain gaps in the body of knowledge that exists of how and why racial disadvantage occurs. The questions are therefore designed to meet a need to improve knowledge of the understanding of the cause and effect of racial disadvantage in career progression generally, and more particularly in the Civil Service. Obtaining this knowledge and understanding in what is acknowledged to be a complex social process, is achieved both by a review of the available statistical information and by gathering the views,

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experiences and perceptions of appropriate individuals, to the questions, through a number of data collection processes.

### **6.3 Operationalisation of the main concepts of the study**

When looking at an issue such as disadvantage, Babbie (1989) points out that it is important to note the reservations that exist about the ability of social scientists to measure aspects of human social existence such as discrimination, prejudice and disadvantage. However, Babbie (1989:105), also argues that anything that exists can be measured without exception; this includes, he suggests, concepts, the description he gives to terms such as disadvantage and discrimination. He describes these concepts as made up terms used to represent a whole collection of apparently related phenomena that have been observed in the course of life. Although the observations and experiences are real, these concepts in reality are in his view only social constructions. Babbie (1989) seeks to clarify this view by using as an example, the concept of ‘discrimination’ which he considers exists as a commonly used term but the only direct measurement that can be made of the term relates to the number of letters it contains and the number of syllables that it has, and what it begins with. This is a point underscored by Kaplan (1964), who in relation to research distinguishes three classes of things that scientists measure:

- Direct observations - simple and direct observations, for example, the colour of an apple;
- Indirect observations - observations of past social actions, for example, history, books or minutes of meetings;
- Concepts - theoretical creations based on observations but which cannot be observed directly or indirectly, for example, IQ.

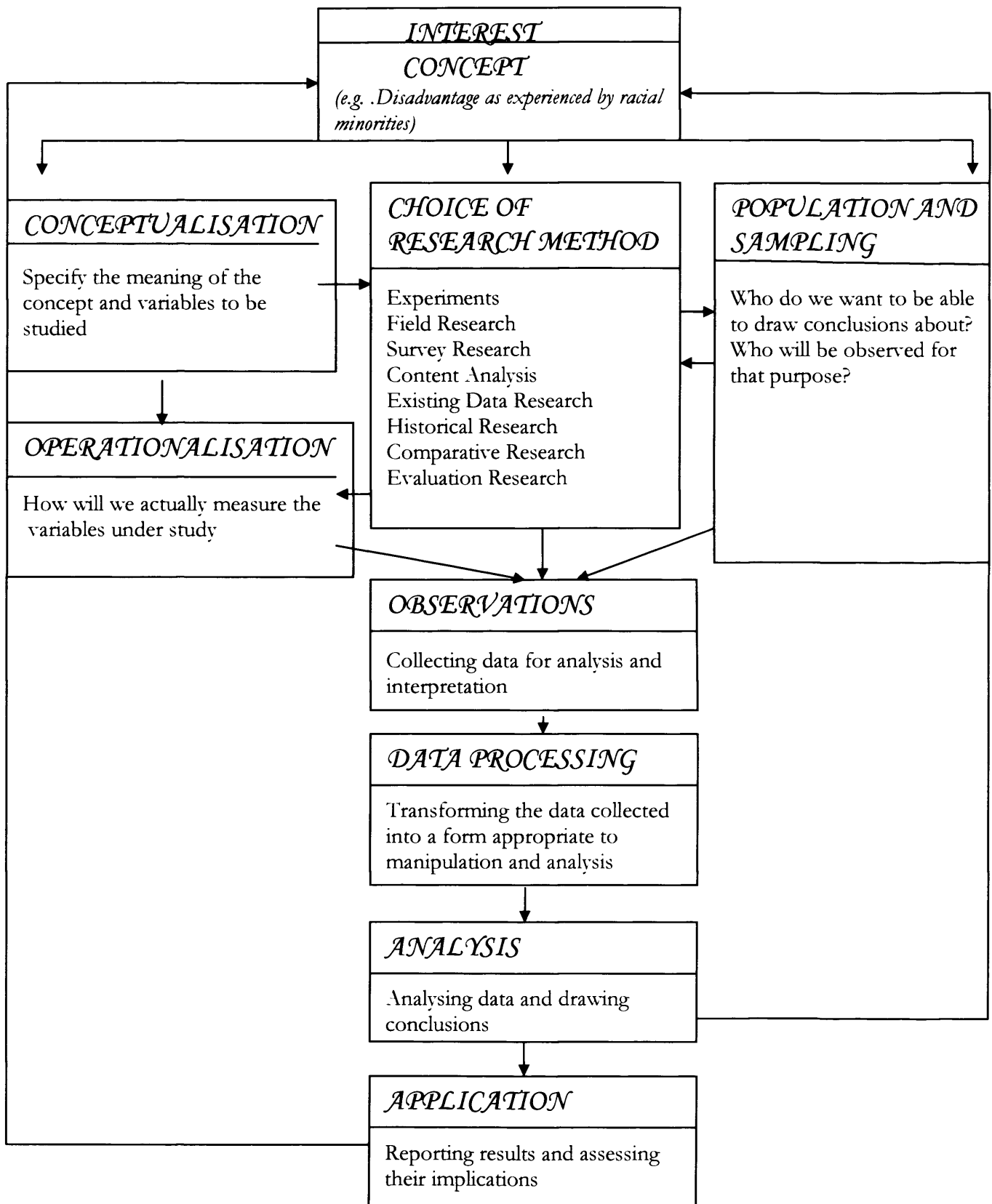
Kaplan (1964:49) also describes a concept ‘as a family of conceptions’, and further notes that as a class of the measurements that he describes, as a ‘a construct, created from one’s own conception of it, and that cannot be

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observed directly or indirectly, because it does not exist'. Babbie (1989) sums this up by making the point that even granting that concepts such as disadvantage and discrimination are not 'real', ultimately social scientists can still create order in handling them. It is an order he suggests that is based on utility and not on ultimate truth. Thus Babbie (1989) concludes social scientists can measure anything that is real and even things that are not.

Terms such as disadvantage can give rise to a wide range of understanding as to its meaning, and as a consequence misunderstandings and conflicts about its interpretation. To deal with this, as identified by the Babbie (1989) social research model (see Figure 6.1), is the need to operationalise the research objective concepts. Babbie (1989) defines conceptualisation as the process through which the researcher can specify precisely what a particular term means, and the sorting out of the kinds of observations and measurements that will be appropriate to the research. The end product is the specification of a set of indicators of what the researcher has in mind, indicating the presence or absence of the concept that is being studied. Operationalisation, Babbie (1989) suggests, is the development of specific research procedures (operations) that will result in empirical observations representing those concepts in the real world. Importantly, operationalisation he notes, begins in study design and continues throughout the research project, including the analysis of the data. Indeed, as indicated at Figure 6.1, operationalisation is inseparable from the actual data collection process. The social researcher, Babbie (1989) considers, has a wide variety of options available when it comes to measuring a concept – through data collection methods, surveys and experiments. Given the sensitivities and potential for misunderstanding that surrounds an issue such as racial discrimination, the conceptualisation and operationalisation considerations highlighted above were important inputs to the development of research design for this study.

Figure 6.1 – Social Science Research Process



Source- Modified from Babbie ( 1989:94)

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## 6.4 Research Design

As indicated by Oppenheim (2000), the literature on research design is extensive, and its importance is significant, suggesting that 'it is the blueprint that is followed in completing a study'. This is a view shared by Churchill (1991:46), who defines research design as, 'the framework or plan for a study used as a guide in collecting and analysing data. Babbie (1989) identifies two main aspects of research design, first specifying precisely what is to be found out and second, determining the best way to do that. This involves he proposes, a set of decisions regarding what topic is to be studied, among what population, with what research methods and for what purpose. In short, as Babbie (1989) explains, research design addresses the planning of scientific research - 'designing a strategy for finding out something'. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) add to this, suggesting that research design is intended to ensure that the study will be relevant to the research context and will utilise appropriate procedures. This is a point also made by Ghauri *et. al.* (1995), who, in their explanation of the make up of research design suggest that social scientists identify three main forms of research design – exploratory, descriptive and causal.

Exploratory research design, Aaker and Day (1983) explain, provides a platform from which initial ideas can be explored and concepts clarified. Exploratory research is therefore concerned with the exposure of insights and ideas. In this sense, as Sellitz *et. al.* (1976) point out, exploratory research is frequently considered as appropriate for the deconstruction of comprehensive research problems into more definite and precise research hypotheses and is commonly viewed, as indicated by Ghauri *et. al.* (1995), as a process of clarifying or prioritising poorly defined or understood concepts rather than the actual testing of generalities.

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Descriptive research design, as identified by Dubin (1978), is used where a researcher wishes to examine certain features of a particular group, or generate some form of prediction, and is often concerned with the frequency of occurrence or association between two or more variables. Churchill (1991) suggests that a descriptive design is appropriate where the aim of the research is to describe group characteristics, estimate the behaviour of a proportion of a population or to make broad predictions.

‘Causal’ research Stolzenberg (1983) considers requires that the research problem under examination is well structured, and that ‘causal’ research design investigates cause and effect issues, with an objective of isolating causes and assessing the extent to which causes relate to effects. The central issue for causal research therefore, is to isolate ‘cause’ and determine the extent to which such a ‘cause’ relates to ‘effect.’

The identification and selection of the most appropriate research form for a given study is naturally related to the objectives of the study, the nature of the variables and/or the associations between variables and the context of the study. The three forms of design were therefore considered taking note of these factors, and although each provided aspects which could have been used (and indeed in some ways are used) for this study, the exploratory form of design was selected, not least, as indicated by Ghauri *et. al.* (1995), to assist in the clarification or prioritisation of a poorly defined or understood concept, in this instance the causes of racial disadvantage.

Part of the initial consideration was that the emphasis of this study would be based on a grounded theory approach, which in itself has a bias towards qualitative research. This approach had a particular attraction for this research project because (as set out by Miles and Huberman (1994)) of its strengths regarding the sensitivity, meaning and focus on interpretation. Strauss and

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Corbin (1996:273) indicate that, ‘grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed’. This takes note of the views of Bryman (1988) who asserts that the subject of research requires an appreciation of the ‘actors’ socially constructed reality with the aim of obtaining ideographic findings and rich and deep data. For this study the appreciation comes from the individual perspectives of Civil Service managers, Civil Service racial minority individuals and directors of equality organisation. A review of the literature on research methodology suggests that the most appropriate approach for this type of study is a mainly qualitative approach. The rationale and reasons for this approach are further considered below.

#### **6.4.1 Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative methods of research continue to have a significant impact on research into topics such as employment relationships and workplace culture. Importantly in the context of this study, as set out by Salaman (1992), employment relationships provide a rich set of researchable issues, centred, Rollinson (1993) indicates, on the processes by which employees and the employed adjust to the needs and wants of each other. Such complex processes, Van Maanen (1979) suggests, are especially suited to the range of techniques encompassed by the umbrella term “qualitative”. In the social sciences a line is frequently drawn between qualitative and quantitative methods of research. Bogdan and Taylor (1975), for example, argue that the division is deep and relates to fundamental theoretical and epistemological issues. Bryman (1988) explains that much quantitative research arises from a positivist model that is centred on the search for objective truth, the use of scientific methods, and the systematic measurement of phenomena. The emphasis, Bryman suggests, is on discovering statistical relationships that allow generalisations to

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be made or that point to specific links between elements of a problem.

Qualitative research, by contrast, Bryman (1988) explains, is generally part of a phenomenological tradition that does not recognise the existence of unambiguous objectivity. Bryman (1988) goes on to imply that quantitative scholars place great faith in the rational basis of their data and analytical techniques and are also more likely to acknowledge multiple interpretations.

Qualitative methods of research, as identified by Pettigrew (1992), are particularly appropriate for studies of culture, power, and change. Pettigrew argues that the qualitative approach to studying employment relationships has been at its most useful and to have distinct advantages in subject areas such as culture. These advantages are also recognised by Eisenhardt (1989), who adds that the relative openness of qualitative research methods should mean that data and interpretations often fall outside conventional thinking and are more readily developed. In addition Eisenhardt (1989) explains that research methods that allow data and tentative frameworks to influence one another during the research process are well suited to hypothesis generation and concept building. This concept building is an important consideration for this study, as is the advantage identified by Pettigrew (1992) of the open-ended and iterative character of qualitative research, which enables the full appreciation of processes in depth.

The methods that are commonly employed by qualitative researchers are interviews, observation, survey and the case study (which itself typically involves both interviews and observation). Taking note of the exploratory form, and qualitative nature of research design adopted for this study, the most effective way of gathering the necessary qualitative data was considered to be through interviews with key stakeholders, supplemented by a targeted



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quantitative questionnaire survey. These methods of interview and questionnaire are further described below.

#### 6.4.2 Interviews

Kvale (1996) asserts that interviews are first, and most obviously, a way of finding out about people (attitudes, knowledge, views and behaviour). Shipman (1972:76) asserts that, 'If you want an answer, ask a question...The asking of questions is the main source of social scientific information about everyday behaviour'. In different ways Rubin and Rubin (2004), Lazer (1996), and Lazer (1974) define an interview as a conversation directed to definite purpose other than satisfaction in the conversation itself, and a means of conducting a survey which is essentially a conversation and an instrument of data collection. Shipman (1972) builds on this explaining that interviews are an encounter between two particular people, and are regarded as an information gathering tool, designed to minimise the local, concrete, immediate circumstances of the particular encounter. This is a point emphasised by Cohen *et al.* (2000:269) who suggests that the research interview is:

As two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information

We can see, then, that an interview is not simply a conversation. It is, rather, a pseudo-conversation and in order to be successful for data gathering, it must, as identified (over 50 years ago, but still relevant today) by Goode and Hatt (1952:191), 'have all the warmth and personality exchange of a conversation with the clarity and guidelines of scientific searching'. This requirement as set out by Cohen *et al.* (2000) means that the interview must be seen as a specialised pattern of verbal interaction – initiated for a specific purpose, and focussed on some specific content areas, with the aim as detailed by Bell (1987:74) '*to follow*

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*up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives*'. In addition to this, as Easterby-Smith (1991) suggests, the aim of interview based research is to allow informants to describe their organisational existence from their own perspective and using their own language. As Bailey (1982) points out, interviews have the major advantage of flexibility, that is, they allow the researcher to probe for more specific answers, reword questions, or repeat questions that the informant has misunderstood. Another advantage recognised by Bailey (1982) is that since the majority of individuals are more confident of their verbal abilities rather than their written skills, interviewing techniques achieve a higher response rate on requests for interview than, for example, questionnaires. There are, however, also disadvantages. These disadvantages, as recorded by Jones (1985) include cost implications, time problems, inconvenience, lack of anonymity, non-standardised wording, and a lack of accessibility to informants. Despite these disadvantages it is clear that in studies such as this, the benefits of exploration and adaptation far outweigh these disadvantages.

Interviews, in general then, are about gathering information from an individual(s) facilitated by the development of rapport. The logical view that might readily be drawn from this is that the interview is an unproblematic instrument of data retrieval. It is, however, widely recognised that the assumptions and actions of the researcher, and his/her reflexivity influence the product of the research at every stage of the process. Part of good qualitative research is to acknowledge and incorporate such reflexivity both within the conduct of the research and writing it up. The social desirability<sup>62</sup> skills and objectivity therefore required by interviewers can be very demanding. For example, from my own personal experience as a racial minority interviewer, on occasions, establishing personal credibility with white managers of

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<sup>62</sup> Acceptance as a credible interviewer – whilst recognising the possible impact that my ethnicity, position (as an 'insider') and role (equality 'expert') may have in the responses provided.

organisations, yet retaining independence of judgement was a major challenge. Maintaining trust, avoiding the projection of assumptions on to respondents, and handling the social interaction (including non-verbal signs) that interviewing involves are all part of the interviewer's craft that can help establish personal credibility, and ensure good data collection.

### 6.4.3 Questionnaire Survey

In looking at questionnaire design, Bradburn *et al.* (1979) make the point that it is crucial that the questionnaire developed is appropriate for its purpose (i.e. to collect and quantify data). Churchill (1991) presents a procedure for developing a questionnaire based on the earlier work of Kornhauser and Sheatsley (1976), which provides a clear step-by-step series of guidelines with a concise direction for the rigorous and systematic formulation of the questionnaire.

*Table 6.1 - Questionnaire development steps*

Step	Action	Comment
1	Information sought	The identification of the boundaries of study and the definition of the information which the questionnaire seeks.
2	Type of questionnaire and method of administration	Once the precise boundaries of the research project have been identified and defined, the 2 <sup>nd</sup> stage is to decide how the information should be gathered.
3	Individual question content	Establish the preliminary content of each individual question.
4	Forms of response	Having established the preliminary content of each individual question – Consideration as to the form of response required
5	Question wording	The construction of clear reliable questions
6	Question sequence	The correct sequencing of questions to avoid adverse response
7	Physical questionnaire characteristic	Consideration of the appropriate physical design of the questionnaire
8	Re-examination and revision	The need for iteration and where necessary adaptation
9	Pre-testing	A thorough pre-test before the survey proper

*Source - (Adapted from) Churchill (1991:193-207)*

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Given the clarity and coherence of Churchill's (1991) outline, it was considered suitable as the basis for the development of the questionnaire in this study. This outline was slightly adapted is represented in table form at Table 6.1.

Oppenheim (1992) makes the point that as well as suitability for collecting descriptive factual data (such as demographics), the questionnaire is generally appropriate for eliciting attitudes and perceptions. As Babbie (1995) sets out, data collection by questionnaire has a number of benefits, amongst these are that it facilitates the process of obtaining a large number of respondents, it assures respondents of a certain degree of anonymity and it possesses a high degree of standardisation for data analysis purposes. Kerlinger (1986), however, highlights problems associated with the questionnaire technique, in particular the researcher's lack of control over the questionnaire completion process, and the low response rate often associated with questionnaire survey. De Vaus (2002) adds to this, suggesting that a further disadvantage is the possibility of sampling bias and the lack of flexibility, particularly the inability to check the response given. Taking note of these advantages and disadvantages, the use of a questionnaire, albeit as a limited data collection method, was still considered appropriate, as its inclusion enhances the results collected from the interviews that make up the main data collection methods for this study.

#### **6.4.4 Triangulation**

As described by Denzin (1989), the term 'triangulation', is used in a research context to describe the use of a variety of data sources or methods to examine a specific phenomenon either simultaneously or sequentially in order to produce a more accurate account of the phenomenon under investigation. The term itself was first coined in 1966 by Webb *et. al.* and presumes a priori that no one data collection method could ever be sufficient. Abrahamson (1983) explains that triangulation avoids the research becoming 'method-bound', a point

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underscored by Miles and Huberman (1994:267) who make the case for triangulation by stating that:

Triangulation is not so much a tactic as a way of life. If you self-consciously set out to collect and double check findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence, the verification process will largely be built into data collection as you go. In effect, triangulation is a way to get to the findings in the first place - by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources by using different methods and by squaring the findings with others it needs to be squared with.

Commentators such as Patton (1990) also assert that triangulation can make findings more robust, can maximise understanding of the same research topic, and also increases the scope, depth, and 'accuracy' of a study. Denzin (1989) suggests that the use of multiple indicators, particularly where there is a high degree of consonance between them, is the key to this 'accuracy' and good data quality control, making the point that triangulation provides the benefits of enhancing and cross-checking against information gathered through other means.

In looking at this issue of accuracy Gorman and Clayton (1997) make the important point that whilst triangulation enables the utilisation of multiple methods to interpret a single set of data, it is the range of different perspectives obtained that provides most benefit. This viewpoint with regard to the range of perspectives is an important issue to consider, as it goes against the traditional concept of triangulation put forward by writers such as Fiske and Campbell (1959), who were of the view that a successful triangulation study used different methods to arrive at the same answer to a single theoretical question.

Commentators such as McFee (1992) and Gorman and Clayton (1997), address this 'same answer' notion, suggesting that there 'is no one truth', but simply perspectives which to paraphrase 'can shine the light on the theoretical question

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from different angles'. This is a view that I share, and consider that this is particularly the case when dealing with subjective issues such as disadvantage and discrimination.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This chapter considered the research process for this study, and included a discussion on the literature derived justification for the study. Conceptualisation and operationalisation issues were considered, identifying that concepts are mental images used as summary devices for bringing together observations and experiences that seem to have something in common, and in the context of research do not have any other meaning than the one that the researcher gives it. The only justification for giving any concept a particular meaning is utility. These concepts through an operationalisation process permits the researcher to study and draw conclusions about concepts even when there is no agreement on how those concepts should be defined. Taking note of the conceptualisation and operationalisation issues, the research design identified the reasons and rationale that led to an exploratory form of design, utilising a qualitative approach to data collection. The data collection methods of interview and questionnaire survey were discussed, in particular the strengths and weaknesses of each, including the importance of triangulation as a means of data verification. The study now turns its attention to the manner in which the research was undertaken.

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Introduction

The chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research methods used in the study. It discusses the various techniques employed to collect and analyze data, including interviews, focus groups, and content analysis. The chapter also addresses the ethical considerations that guided the research process and the steps taken to ensure the integrity and reliability of the findings.

## Chapter Seven

### Research Methods

The research methods section details the procedures used to gather and analyze data. It begins with a description of the study's design, which is a qualitative approach. The data collection methods include semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The analysis process involves content analysis to identify themes and patterns in the data. The chapter also discusses the ethical approval process and the measures taken to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

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The data analysis was conducted using the following steps: 1. Transcription of all interviews and focus group discussions. 2. Initial coding of the data to identify key themes. 3. Development of a codebook based on the initial coding. 4. Final coding and analysis of the data to identify patterns and themes.

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## 7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter set out the research questions and the research design for this study. This chapter provides a descriptive assessment of the methods and tools used to undertake the research<sup>63</sup>. Structured around the research questions, and guided by the research design intentions and principles highlighted at Chapter six, this chapter systematically sets out and describes data management considerations. It then looks at the approach chosen and undertaken with regard to the data collection, data reduction, data presentation and data verification.

## 7.2 Data Management

With regard to qualitative data management an important point made by Wolcott (1994) is the fact that it is the common experience of researchers carrying out qualitative analysis that such work requires careful and complex management of large amounts of texts, codes, memos, notes and so on. He goes on to suggest that the prerequisite of really effective qualitative analysis is efficient, consistent and systematic data management.

To provide the efficient, consistent and systematic data management that Wolcott refers to, in a study of this nature, Babbie (1989) points out that in the collection and management of data on concepts such as discrimination, issues such as sampling, bias, reliability, validity and ethics need to be carefully considered. This is a point well made, given the potential for subjectivity and sensitivity. Careful attention was therefore paid to these data management issues, details of the considerations and approach follows.

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<sup>63</sup> The distinction between the research design at chapter 6 and the research methods in this chapter Hakim (1987) suggests is that research design is a mix of intentions, actions, philosophy, and choice, whereas research methods are the systematic application of data collection instruments.



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## 7.2.1 Sampling and Bias

### 7.2.1.1 Sampling

Oppenheim (1992) makes clear that sampling first involves the defining of the population which is to be observed (the survey population), and then from this definition, a sample, which constitutes a microcosm of this survey population, can then be chosen. The make up of this microcosm Moser and Kalton (1985:60) make clear 'is to provide a segment of a particular population, which is representative of that population'. Oppenheim (1992:45) adds to this, indicating that there are three main sampling considerations:

The research objectives; the final tabulations required in the data analysis; and, the practicalities of obtaining such a sample, that is, what is actually possible given time and administrative constraints.

For this study, the survey population constituted the Departments and Agencies<sup>64</sup> that made up the UK Civil Service in April 1999, the 20,573 (5.6%) Civil Service racial minority staff at April 1999 and some 40 statutory and voluntary sector equality related organisations identified, also in April 1999. Taking note of the Moser and Kalton (1985:60) and Oppenheim (1992:45) representative and realism considerations, a list of all the Civil Service organisations including those operating in Wales was obtained from the Cabinet Office. From this list, ten organisations were selected by utilising a modified theoretical sampling<sup>65</sup> procedure. Two organisations declined to be interviewed and were sent a specially adapted interview schedule. Despite a number of reminders, information was not forthcoming from them. As a consequence, the

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<sup>64</sup> On 1 April 1999 there were 107 Executive Agencies in the Home Civil Service. HM Customs and Excise, Crown Prosecution Service, Inland Revenue and Serious Fraud Office also operate on Next Steps lines. 77 per cent of civil servants work in these organisations.

<sup>65</sup> Theoretical sampling - is a term coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the context of social research, the goal of which is not the representative capture of all possible variations (probabilistic sampling), but to gain a deeper understanding of analysed cases and facilitate the development of analytic frame and concepts used in the research. Theoretical sampling hinges upon the selection of "respondents" on the basis of relevant categories, issues, themes, or concepts that emerge prior to and during data collection (Minichiello 1995).

findings for the interviews with the Civil Service bodies are based on eight of the ten organisations approached. The ten organisations were selected based on a sample frame which sought to achieve an even spread, within Wales<sup>66</sup> of location, organisation size, and of central government type (Table 7.1). To ensure the confidentiality of the interviews, where appropriate the eight organisations surveyed are referred to as Organisations A-H throughout the findings and analysis chapters. For each organisation selected, following a telephone conversation(s) within the personnel section of the organisation, an access letter (Appendix C) was sent to the identified participant.

*Table 7.1: Characteristics of the Civil Service Organisations*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Government Type</b>
<b>A</b>	1000+	Agency
<b>B</b>	50+	Department Sub-Office
<b>C</b>	30+	Department Sub-Office
<b>D</b>	600+	Agency
<b>E</b>	150+	Department Sub-Office
<b>F</b>	3000+	Department
<b>G</b>	60+	Department Sub-Office
<b>H</b>	400+	Department

Sixty ethnic minority staff were interviewed, selected from a list of ethnic minority Civil Servants supplied by the Public and Commercial Service (PCS) Trade Union National Black Members' Committee, based on a sample frame which sought to achieve a spread of location, and of central government type, and most importantly seniority level within their organisations. The seniority levels of those selected ranged across the Civil Service grade structures from the Administrative Assistant to the G7 grades or their equivalents.

- Grade 7 x 2
- Senior Executive Officers x 2
- Higher Executive Officer x 4
- Executive Officer x 25
- Administrative Officer x 21
- Administrative Assistant x 6

<sup>66</sup> Ultimately the sample frame from the Civil Service bodies was drawn primarily from South Wales.

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Following an initial discussion by way of explanation with the selected individuals at the PCS Black Members Conference, an access letter (Appendix C) was provided to each participant, followed by the interview once the individual had taken the time to read and digest the contents of the interview schedule. All of the individuals were very keen to participate in the study and there were therefore no interview refusals from this group of participants.

The five equality organisations interviewed were selected based on the simple criterion of those considered to be able to provide the most relevant and informed view of the subject area (Table 7.2). The organisations covered the equality strands of race, disability and gender from both the voluntary and statutory sector. To ensure the confidentiality of the interviews, where appropriate these organisations are referred to as organisations I-M throughout the findings and analysis chapters. For each organisation selected, following a telephone conversation with the head of the organisation, an access letter (Appendix C) was sent to the identified participant.

**Table 7.2: Characteristics of the Equality Organisations**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Equality Strand</b>	<b>Organisation Type</b>
I	Race	Voluntary
J	Gender	Statutory
K	Race	Voluntary
L	Disability	Voluntary
M	Race	Statutory

As part of the data gathering exercise in addition to the semi-structured interviews undertaken, a total of 24 questionnaires (eight to each interview group) were also sent out nationally (Table 7.3). This sample was based on equality contacts known to the researcher from working relationships established over a number of years. As a consequence following an initial telephone discussion with these contacts the questionnaires were sent to either the contacts themselves or in the case of the CS organisations, a specific individual within the organisation identified by the contact<sup>67</sup>.

*Table 7.3: Characteristics of the Questionnaire Survey Respondents*

	<b>CS Organisation Location</b>	<b>Equality Organisation Location</b>	<b>Racial Minority Individual Location</b>
1	London	Bristol	London
2	Manchester	London	Liverpool
3	Bristol	Manchester	Manchester
4	London	Midlands	Bristol
5	Midlands	Midlands	London
6	Midlands	London	Midlands
7	London	South West	Midlands
8	Liverpool	North Wales	London

The full sample population settled upon and their personal characteristics are shown at Tables 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7 below.

*Table 7.4: Survey Population – Data Collection Type and Gender*

Survey Population						
Interview Groups	Interviews	Gender		Questionnaires	Gender	
		M	F		M	F
Civil Service Organisations	8	7	1	8	5	3
Racial Minorities	60	42	18	8	3	5
Equality Organisations	5	4	1	8	6	2

<sup>67</sup> Effectively the selection of participants by 'snowballing' technique - targeting these individuals and asking them of others who they would consider should be interviewed because of their role within the organisation.

**Table 7.5 : Survey Interview Population - Age**

Interview Groups	Total	18-25		26-35		36-45		46-55		56-65	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Civil Service Organisations	8	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	3	-
Racial Minorities	60	2	2	4	6	20	5	12	5	4	-
Equality Organisations	5	-	-	1	-	1	1	2	-	-	-

**Table 7.6: Survey Interview Population - Length of time in the Civil Service /post**

Interview Groups	Total	1-5		6-10		11-20		21-30		31+	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Civil Service Organisations	8	1	-	1	1	2	-	2	-	1	-
Racial Minorities	60	11	10	25	4	4	4	2	-	-	-
Equality Organisations	5	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-

**Table 7.7: Survey Interview Population - Ethnic Origin**

Interview Groups	Total		White		Asian		Chinese		African Caribbean	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Civil Service Organisations	7	1	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Racial Minorities	42	18	0	0	8	2	1	0	33	1
Equality Organisations	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	1

As can be seen from these tables, although the number of respondents was relatively small it did, however, provide the cross section of views considered necessary to meet the compare and contrast objectives of the research, taking particular note of the theoretical sampling frame objectives and the considerations of practicalities, and what is actually possible given time/administrative constraints as outlined by Oppenheim (1992) above. The sample therefore reflects a wide range of perspectives and views from relevant respondent groups and individuals.

Of note was the significant difference in the survey population between men (53) and women (20), in addition the younger age range of the racial minority respondents and the comparatively shorter period that this group had been in the Civil Service.

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### 7.2.1.2 Bias

With regard to the issue of bias, as Moser and Kalton (1985:146) point out, ‘statistically a large sample size does not always guarantee an accuracy of results, as it does not reduce bias in the selection procedure’. They go on to suggest that bias occurs, and creates most difficulty where its potential effect is not accounted for. This study involved a number of stages where there was the potential for bias, such as devising an appropriate research design, and selecting a representative sample. Therefore, taking note of the views of Moser and Kalton, (1985), at each of the various stages great care was taken and consideration given to the potential for bias, and action taken where necessary to limit any possible effect.

For example, as can be seen from the personal characteristics of the respondent sample at Table 7.4, there is a gender skew of 53 (68%) male interview respondents to 20 (32%) female interview respondents. Given the race specific nature of the study it was considered that the potential for bias of this skew was limited<sup>68</sup>. However, in the analysis and conclusion chapters, whilst outside the scope of this study, this skew is acknowledged as part of the underlying issues of the relative disadvantage within organisational settings that women face with regards to status comparisons with their male counterparts, which includes importantly their status and opportunities within the Trade Union.

Taking note of the strong trade union respondent element in this study, another potential for bias related to the fact that the sample of the racial minority individual respondents were all PCS trade unionists<sup>69</sup>. The potential for bias

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<sup>68</sup> This consideration was subsequently proved correct, as in the analysis of findings, apart from some minor differences within the Civil Service Organisations, there appeared to be no material difference in responses between male/female respondents.

<sup>69</sup> The PCS remains the main Civil Service union with a membership in 2004 of nearly 325,000, it is however reported by the PCS that data on ethnic origin is known for only about half of its members. Where members

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with particular regard to the possibility of a particular viewpoint from 'trade union activists' was again considered, but as with the gender issue, any bias was considered to be limited, particularly as the questions posed sought in the main personal experiences. The make up and nature of the PCS Black members group at that time was such that a very broad range of black members attended the black members' conferences, the vast majority of whom had little direct affiliation or indeed trust in the union, but saw the conference primarily as a means to network and share experiences with other racial minority civil servants.

Similar considerations were given for the potential for bias with regard to age, status, ethnic origin and length of service, but as with gender and trade union status, given the personal individual perspectives from a varied sample of participants, and the consistency and commonality of views<sup>70</sup> from the different respondent groups gave a degree of reassurance and confidence about the validity of the sample. As a consequence any potential bias was considered to be limited.

## **7.2.2 Reliability, Validity and Ethics**

### **7.2.2.1 Reliability**

Babbie (1989) describes reliability in the abstract as a matter of whether a particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result each time. Taking note of this description, in looking at the issue of

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have provided this information (90.2%) have classified themselves as "white", with a total 9.8% classifying themselves in other ways, the most common of which is "Asian". Given the 'other' classification, PCS themselves have identified the fact that the percentage of ethnic minority members appear to be much lower than the 9.8% figure that is cited. In addition it is suggested that it is impossible to know whether the figures provided fully represent the ethnicity pattern of PCS membership as a whole, given that 50% failed to supply this information

<sup>70</sup> For example there was no discernable difference in the views and comments of the 11 Asian and 49 African-Caribbean respondents

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reliability, the wisdom of Mark Twain<sup>71</sup> that there are three kinds of lies, "*lies, damn lies and statistics,*" is perhaps an appropriate starting point in the examination of how much reliance can be given to information about the demography of racial and ethnic groups. Price (1969:223), for example, makes reference to the problems associated with numerical accuracy citing 'the changing levels of under-numeration at different levels and from one census to the next'. In a longitudinal study of census information Farley (1984:13) takes this further, arguing that:

An issue that cannot be fully explored in a demographic study is racial discrimination, it is impossible to "prove", the presence or absence of discrimination, and demographic studies can provide only partial answers to questions about the underlying causes of racial change.

Bean and Frisbee (1978:2) in relation to ethnic minority classifications contend that:

To be meaningful, research into the determinants of demographic variation by race, ethnicity, or minority group status must involve, at a minimum, some reasonable determination of variables that may be expected to afford some degree of explanatory power.

This is a point made by Ladner (1973, xxiii) who indicates that studies of race have often been distorted by having been centred in the perspectives and experiences of dominant group members, and argues that:

Blacks have always been measured against an alien set of norms. As a result they have been considered to be a deviation from the ambiguous white middle-class model, which itself has not always been clearly defined.

Two points arise from the above. First, reliability does not ensure accuracy anymore than precision ensures it, and second the criterion of specific reliable

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<sup>71</sup> Mark Twain's Notebooks and Journals - edited by Robert Pack Browning, Michael B. Frank and Lin Salamo in 1979.



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measures can often diminish the richness of meaning that general concepts have. To achieve the richness of meaning considered necessary for this study, careful consideration was given to the conceptual framework and of particular importance as indicated by Babbie (1989) the meaning and definition of the terminology utilised by the researcher. For completeness a list of the relevant terminology around the issue of race, and the definitions used by the researcher are provided in the glossary above.

Taking note of the above conceptual framework and terminology in order to limit criticisms of reliability, and as Merton *et al.* (1990) recommend, to improve potential reliability, the interviews were transcribed and used jointly with audio-tape recordings and interview notes. Furthermore, as Yin (1994) suggests, improvements to reliability are dependent on a systematic approach to qualitative data collection and analysis. Hence, the reliability of the results and findings presented at chapters eight, nine and ten was enhanced for this study by the use of an iterative, systematic process of qualitative transcript-based data analysis, as recommended by Turner (1981) and as outlined at 7.3.1 below.

#### **7.2.2.2 Validity**

Babbie (1989) describes validity as the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration.

Babbie (1989) goes on to note that a particular empirical measure may or may not be in line with our common agreements and our individual mental images associated with a particular concept. Babbie refers to this as *'face validity'*.

Carmines and Zeller (1979) discuss three other types of validity which are of relevance to this study. First, *criterion-related validity* (also called *predictive validity*).

This refers to some external criterion, which with regard to behaviour may serve as a gauge of criterion validity for the many attitudinal measures in social

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research. For example, do prejudiced people discriminate against minorities? Second, *content validity*, this refers to the degree to which a measure covers the range of meanings included within the concept. For example, if we say we are measuring discrimination in general, do our measurements reflect discrimination against racial and ethnic groups, religious minorities, women the elderly and so on? Finally, *construct validity*: this refers to the way a measure relates to other variables within a system of theoretical relationships. For example, you may have considered that hospital patients satisfied with the hospital food are less likely to complain about their hospital stay than patients dissatisfied with the hospital food if your measure of satisfaction with the hospital service relates to hospital food, this expectation constitutes evidence of your measures construct validity. However, if satisfied and dissatisfied patients were equally likely to complain, that would challenge the validity of your measure. In short, validity refers to the extent to which a specific measure provides data that relate to commonly accepted meanings of a particular concept. In the context of this study careful consideration was needed and given to the conceptual framework and terminology used throughout the study to help adequately reflect the real meaning of the identified concepts. The validity consideration set out above, also provided additional justification for the need of a range of respondent groups as multiple sources of evidence.

### **7.2.2.3 Ethics**

The question of research ethics concerns the experience of subjects participating in a scientific investigation, and requires the humane and just treatment of all interview subjects. As asserted by Saks *et al.* (2002), the ethical question involves value judgments about the feelings of research interview subjects, and also involves value judgments about the role of research in society.

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As Sugarman *et. al.* (1998:19-30) set out, the ethical requirements of social research are rooted in the principle that:

individuals should be treated as autonomous agents and . . .  
that persons with diminished autonomy are entitled to  
protection . . . respect for persons requires that subjects, to  
the degree that they are capable, be given the opportunity to  
choose what shall or shall not happen to them.

Taking a thoughtful ethical stand can therefore be a challenging but necessary task. Throughout the research process, the researcher was very conscious of this challenge, given the ethical issues that arise in undertaking studies of a sensitive and personal nature of this type. This was supplemented by an understanding and acknowledgement of the need to respect the requirements of the Official Secrets Act<sup>72</sup> with regard to personal data, and in addition to the principles of honesty, openness and transparency. The researcher sought throughout to ensure that there was due regard to these challenges, principles and to the key ethical considerations of consent, anonymity, confidentiality, dissemination.

With regard to the principles of honesty, openness and transparency, for example, the manner in which data were collected from the interviews and then disseminated allowed for reflection and evaluation by the respondents before publication. As far as the ethical considerations were concerned, the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality was provided but among these ethical considerations, the most important is perhaps that of informed consent

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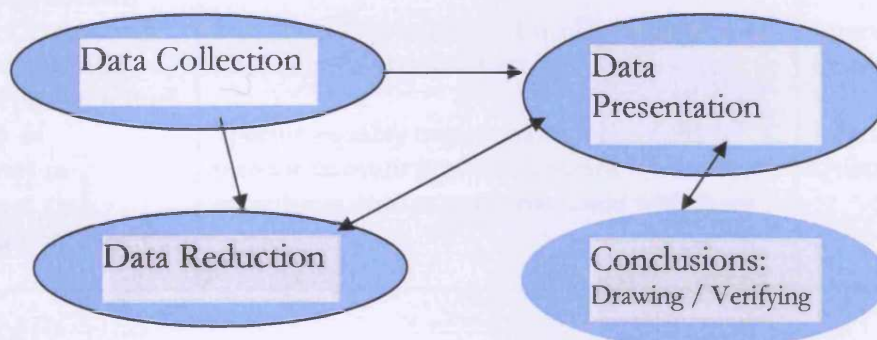
<sup>72</sup> Official Secrets Act – UK Act of Parliament 1989, prohibiting the disclosure of confidential material from government sources by employees; it remains an absolute offence for a member or former member of the security and intelligence services (or those working closely with them) to disclose information about their work. The Act also contains provision to make an offence the “wrongful communication of information”. This is extremely broad, including “any information which has been obtained by the accused ‘owing to his position as a person who holds or has held office under His Majesty [or contracted to His Majesty in any way]’.” The 1989 Act replaced Section 2 of an Act of 1911. Prosecution under criminal law is now reserved for the disclosure of material that the government claims is seriously harmful to national security.

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(Fischman, 2000), which meant that the general nature, risks, and benefits of research participation were explained to each potential interviewee before the interview process began. Specifically the researcher advised the interviewees at the outset of the tasks they were expected to perform, making the point that if they agreed to participate, they do so giving informed consent, thus providing the opportunity to withdraw. Fortunately all respondents agreed, indicating voluntary participation in this research.

In concluding this section on data collection management considerations, we can see that all research designs and methodologies are limited by boundaries such as sample, bias, reliability, validity and ethics. At each stage of this research tactics and techniques were adopted by the researcher to consider and deal appropriately with these issues. These tactics and techniques were greatly influenced and informed by discussions with those providing supervision and guidance to the researcher. Building on the data collection management considerations, Miles and Huberman (1994) set out four components of qualitative data analysis (Figure 7.1) – data collection, data reduction, data presentation and the drawing together of conclusions.

*Figure 7.1 - Components of Data analysis - Interactive Model*



*Source: Adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994:12)*

A discussion of each of these components follows.

### 7.3 Data Collection

In providing a response to the research questions identified in Chapter six, three main primary data sources were utilised:

- Personnel and equality managers in selected Civil Service organisations primarily in South Wales;
- Individual racial minority Civil Service staff members nationally; and
- Selected equality organisations primarily in South Wales who could provide relevant input to the study.

The relationship between the principal research questions, the sources of information and the main collection method utilised are shown in table form at Table 7.8.

*Table 7.8 – Data Collection Relationship*

Research Question	Source	Collection Method
To what extent does the organisational culture of the civil service help or hinder the progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the civil service?	Individual Racial Minority Civil Service staff members, both nationally and in South Wales	Interview Questionnaire
	Personnel Directors and Equality Managers of a number of Civil Service organisations	Interview Questionnaire
	Specific equality organisations who could provide a relevant perspective.	Interview Questionnaire
To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the civil service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in recruitment and progression in the civil service?	Individual Racial Minority Civil Service staff members, both nationally and in South Wales	Interview Questionnaire
	Personnel Directors and Equality Managers of Civil Service organisations	Interview Questionnaire
	Specific equality organisations who could provide relevant input with regard to complaints and/or concerns raised with them	Interview Questionnaire

The collection instruments for this study included two surveys: a quantitative questionnaire and a qualitative semi-structured interview. This approach enabled specific access to different groups and as a consequence, different

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perspectives on the research questions were identified. Access was gained to most respondents through both direct and indirect contacts established during the researcher's many years as a civil servant working in the equality arena. These established contacts proved extremely useful in the respondents accepting the interview invitations (73 of the 75 invitations were accepted and the interviews completed on the agreed date and time) and also in respondents completing the questionnaires (all 24 of the questionnaires sent out were completed and returned within a month of their receipt). The established contacts did also have the potential to create difficulties in two particular aspects, first as identified by Sherif (2001:436-447), the researcher being identified as an 'insider', and as a consequence greater care being taken by respondents in the responses provided to the researcher. Second, as Taylor and Bogdan (1984) indicate, the researcher bringing their own baggage and experiences which potentially may influence and bias the proceedings. The researcher was aware of the possibility of carrying baggage and carefully considered this at every stage of the data collection exercise. In the main, the researcher was far enough removed from the respondents not to be seen as an insider, yet close enough for the respondents to enter into a good, open and honest dialogue.

Where appropriate, secondary data sources such as departmental reports, policy documents, and articles were used to provide a contextual framework of the relevant Department. The primary data collection source, however, was that of interview. Details of the interview considerations and approach follows.

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### 7.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were held with the three groups identified as the primary data sources. The Civil Service personnel and equality managers, the individual racial minority Civil Service staff members, and the selected equality organisations. The interviews with these different groups were undertaken in the same general manner outlined below. The specific issues that arose for each of the groups interviewed are also detailed.

#### 7.3.1.1 General Interview Considerations

The interviews for this study were conducted in an informal interactive manner and were designed to produce oral views and perceptions of the situation as perceived by respondents, in particular with regard to the impact of equality initiatives and also how these initiatives might improve the situation. As Cohen *et al.* (2000) suggest, this allowed the interviews to be open and flexible. The interviews undertaken were relatively unstructured containing open-ended questions to allow participants to describe and explain using their own language and jargon (given my own understanding of the jargon used). As a consequence 'themes' were identified for each interview in order to provide a loose structure for questioning. Moreover, whilst there was deviation from the sequence in order to follow interesting lines of inquiry and to facilitate unbroken discussion, for each interview, all of the prescribed issues were covered. So as Jones (1985) notes, although researchers are to some extent tied to their frameworks, efforts should be made to ensure that they are not bound by them.

All of the interviews were conducted individually, in order as Chisnall (1986) set out, to facilitate the collection of deep, rich data, to avoid group pressures and

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to improve trust and rapport as well as the ability to directly ascribe responses to single individuals. The approach taken was to explain the purpose of the interview, the reason they were being interviewed, give assurance on anonymity followed by a request for permission to record the session. The vast majority of the interviews, but not all, were audio-tape recorded in order to enable the interviewer to concentrate on responses, develop themes and make notes of non-verbal behaviour. The reason for adopting this flexible approach was the awareness of the researcher that some respondents might be more comfortable and open speaking off tape. As Cohen *et al.* (2000: 279) point out:

The ethical dimension... needs to be borne in mind, ensuring... informed consent guarantees of confidentiality, beneficence and non-maleficence.

A small minority of interviewees asked for parts of the interview not to be recorded. In addition to the flexible approach, whilst the norm was to record as much of the interview as possible, discretion was used and the audio-tape switched off if the informants asked not to have certain answers recorded or when respondents appeared nervous or agitated.

Interviewing, as with most other research methods, can result in various biases. For example, the characteristics of the interviewer were recognised as a potential source of bias. The researcher is black, male and 'young' and whilst nothing could be done to disguise these facts, the potential of bias due to the interviewer's personal characteristics was considered at great length and care was taken with data obtained from respondents of a non-similar background. Consequently, depending on the respondent group, the interviewer was careful to tailor speech and dress accordingly. For example, with regard to dressing accordingly, to impress the Civil Service and Equality Organisations a suit and shirt and tie was always worn presenting what could be seen as a professional more formal profile. With the racial minority individuals both with regard to the



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environment in which the interviews were conducted and the perceived negative reaction to the wearing of a shirt and tie, a much more casual mode of dress was adopted. The care taken resulted in the vast majority of cases of an open and welcoming attitude from the outset.

The free format of the interviews enabled probing where necessary by the interviewer and instant clarification of ambiguous or unclear statements. Whilst all the questions on the interview schedule were covered, the open format also enabled a number of other related issues that were of importance to the interviewee to be addressed. This is an approach supported by Mellon (1990:48), who makes the point that 'by such an approach a list of issues to be explored can be reviewed and expanded, as more is learned about the research topic'. Busha and Harter (1980) suggest that this offers a flexible approach to the 'unpredictability' of the personal interview situation.

Using the interview schedules therefore as a basis, both factual and interpretative information were obtained from the interviews. Note taking was undertaken throughout each interview session, and clarification of information in some cases conducted by telephone. The scribbled written notes from the interviews recorded on the interview schedules were expanded, retyped, checked against the audio tape recordings (if taped), and the responses collated to provide summary reports. Merton *et. al.* (1990) recommend this approach, implying that to improve potential reliability interviews should be transcribed and used jointly with audio-tape recordings and interview notes.

### **7.3.1.2 Civil Service organisations - Interview Considerations**

The interviews with the selected Civil Service organisations were held with either the Personnel or Equal Opportunities Manager of the organisation. The choice was left to the organisation and mainly depended on who was available

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on the date and time agreed. All the interviews were held at the offices of the Civil Service organisations. The interview schedule (Appendix B), contained questions to be answered on behalf of the organisation and others seeking individual viewpoints based on the interviewees' own experiences. The interviews lasted between 1 and 2½ hours, and sought to ascertain specifically the interviewees' perceptions on the progression opportunities for the racial minority staff in their organisation.

The interviews, all carried out by myself, were conducted in an informal semi-structured manner between July and October 1999, with a follow up with one of the organisations in October 2001. Information about equal opportunity policies, action plans, and the requested statistical information were obtained throughout the same period.

Having been a civil servant for some 25 years, I felt that I was in a very good position both to understand the workings of the Civil Service and also as a black male to understand the nuances of racial oppression. These credentials and relevant experience should have been sufficient to be able to undertake the necessary research for this study effectively. However, in all the interviews with this group, I was conscious of the fact that I may have been at a disadvantage with regard to the power relationship with the managers interviewed. A point identified by Blauner and Wellman (1973) who argue that research occurs in the context of power relationships, between the researcher and research subjects. In conducting the interviews, I needed to be aware of and understand this power relationship between the exclusively white Personnel / Equal Opportunity Managers and a racial minority interviewer asking questions on sensitive and often difficult to grasp race matters. Blauner and Wellman (1973: 329) describe this situation stating that:

There are certain aspects of racial phenomena, however, that are particularly difficult, if not impossible, for a member of the oppressing group to grasp empirically and formulate



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### **7.3.1.3 Equality Organisations - Interview Considerations**

The interviews with the Equality Organisations were conducted in the main with the directors of the organisation. All the interviews were held at the offices of the equality organisations. The interview schedules (Appendix B) contained questions to be answered on behalf of the organisation, but in the main, questions sought individual viewpoints based on the interviewees' own experiences. The interviews lasted between 1½ and 2 hours, and sought to ascertain specifically the interviewees' perceptions on the progression opportunities for racial minorities generally and in the Civil Service specifically.

The interviews, all carried out by myself, were conducted in an informal semi-structured manner between October and December 1999, with a follow up with one of the organisations in October 2001. As with the Civil Service organisations, each individual interviewed came with their own value systems, but it was clear that given the equality work arena in which they operated, this respondent group were very comfortable in relating and sharing their views with a young black researcher. All those interviewed were therefore very open and forthcoming in their views, providing reasoned and balanced viewpoints. They made clear, where appropriate, their lack of knowledge about subject areas but also provided evidence to support the responses given.

### **7.3.1.4 Racial Minority Individuals - Interview Considerations**

The interviews with the racial minority individuals took place at two PCS National Black Members conferences in October 1998 and November 1999, with a follow up with five of the individuals in October 2001. The interview schedules (Appendix B) contained questions of a personal nature seeking the interviewees' individual viewpoints. The interviews lasted between 2 and 3

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hours, and sought to ascertain specifically the interviewees' perceptions and experiences with regard to recruitment and progression opportunities for racial minorities within the Civil Service. Each individual again came with their own value systems and views, but unlike the situation with the Civil Service organisations, all those interviewed were totally comfortable with the researcher, were very open and forthcoming in their views, and provided graphic details of their experiences and second hand accounts of their racial minority colleagues' experiences. This may have partly been due to the more social environment in which the interviews were conducted but more importantly a greater sense of trust based primarily on skin colour.

The interview findings and results of all three groups looking in particular at the progression perceptions of those interviewed are set out at chapters nine and ten, and analysed at chapter eleven.

### **7.3.2 Questionnaire Survey**

The questionnaire survey (Appendix D), was sent to eight selected individuals/organisations from all three interview groups (Civil Service organisations, racial minority individuals, equality organisations). The main purpose of the questionnaire was as a means of verification and clarification of the information obtained from the interviews.

It was important to ensure that the questionnaire was 'user friendly' to encourage a high response rate. To achieve this, the questionnaire package included a letter of introduction (Appendix C), which was used as a means of identifying the researcher, and the area of research to the potential participants.

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The letter, on Cardiff Business School letter-head<sup>73</sup>, explained why the survey was being undertaken, and by whom, and stressed its importance, as well as assuring respondent confidentiality. The incentive of a summary of the findings was offered to all respondents of the survey, with the aim of both reducing the non-response rate and establishing rapport, or as Silver (1992:21) suggests, to improve the 'chat-up' process. The questionnaires were primarily intended to generate views from a wider range of participants. Because of the previous contacts made and by following up the initial request with a telephone request, it was possible to get a high response rate.

The first page of the questionnaire consisted of instructions concerned with the completion of the questionnaire for the respondents. The next page related to perceptions of the Civil Service in terms of equal opportunities, career development, and so on. Most questions were closed with multiple response check lists, but a few were open-ended so as not to restrict the respondents' answers and to allow for a qualitative input. As Silver (1992:20) indicates, 'This allows for some useful 'quotes' to flesh out and enrich the quantitative results'. The final page was developed to collect any specific comments and general demographic information about the respondents: gender, ethnicity and organisational position. Data in this section were used as part of the sampling verification process.

The questionnaire findings and results of all three groups are provided at Chapters nine and ten, and supplement the results from the interviews.

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<sup>73</sup> It should be noted that this study started at the Cardiff Business School, the researcher transferring in March 2003 to the School of Social Sciences (SOCSI)

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## 7.4 Data Reduction

The purpose of reducing and analysing data is to obtain usable and useful information. The reduction and analysis, irrespective of whether the data is qualitative or quantitative, may:

- describe and summarise the data
- identify relationships between variables
- compare variables
- identify the difference between variables
- forecast outcomes.

The manner in which the administration and analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data is now described:

### 7.4.1 Qualitative Data - Administration and Analysis of Data

Qualitative research based primarily on interviews invariably involves the analysis of large amounts of audio recorded semi-structured or constructed text. There appears to be a general consensus of agreement within methodological literature that reliance on memory or hand written notes is insufficient and as Churchill (1991) recommends, full transcripts of interviews should be made as quickly as possible after the interview, which should not only include the interview text, but also the researcher's own views and observations. This general consensus was followed by the researcher, and full transcripts of the interviews were made including observations.

The systematic process of qualitative transcript-based data analysis adopted for this study involved the following stages:

- Organisation and indexing of data for easy retrieval and identification;
- Anonymising of sensitive data;
- Coding; and
- Identification of themes.

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To facilitate systematic analysis, the transcribed data were coupled with the observations referred to above and also the available documentation. In undertaking the data administration process of the transcripts, it was important to organise and classify the range of data collected from the interviews. The flexible semi-structured format adopted for the interviews greatly assisted this organisation and classification of the interview data as it allowed for the easy extraction and stratification of the themes emerging from the data collection process. To help capture the respondents understanding of, for example, the terms and definitions used, these themes were obtained through a reflective two way process which allowed the respondent space to initially air their own thoughts, and where appropriate to have these thoughts challenged, and then an opportunity to restate or amend the initial views.

For security the word processed files were backed up and stored independently, and each interview was given a code number and a secure file was created to link the code numbers to the original informants. To ensure anonymity of any sensitive data the names and other identifiable material were removed from the transcripts.

Whilst the use of a computer software package was considered for the coding and analysis process, a manual process was, however, adopted. This involved in very simple terms the colour coding of each identified theme. This was not a complex analysis given the limited number of themes, and the narrow discourse analysis<sup>74</sup>. Flow charts and diagrams were also utilised to support the analysis.

The identification of the themes and emergent concepts led in some circumstances to re-coding in order to develop better defined themes. Using this type of framework approach, it was of note that some of the themes

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<sup>74</sup> Discourse analysis is a general term for a number of approaches to analysing written, spoken or signed language use. The objects of discourse analysis, are variously defined in terms of the coherent sequences of sentences, propositions, speech acts or turns-at-talk.



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emerging from the data were some of the issues identified at the start of the research. This to a degree confirmed the importance of the identified themes and the need for their further exploration. As part of this further exploration there was a need to address and deal with the divergent views of the different respondent groups as an element of the manual analysis of the themes. These divergent views provided the opportunity to obtain a deeper understanding of the data and a fresh insight as the data were viewed from these different perspectives.

#### **7.4.2 Quantitative Data - Administration and Analysis of Data**

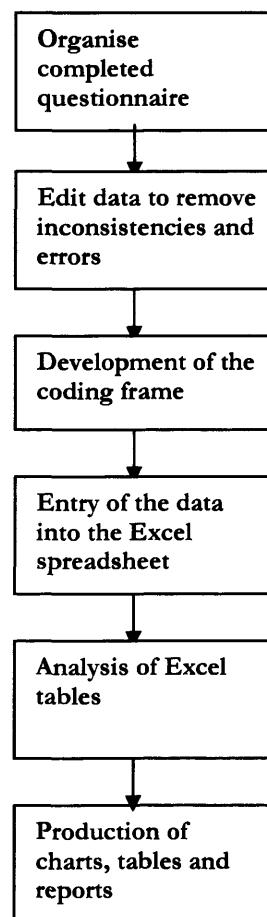
The strengths and limitations of quantitative research techniques were explored at 6.4.3. A particular issue identified in that exploration is the fact that quantitative research can often generate a mass of numbers that need to be summarised, described and analysed. Characteristics of the data may be described and explored by drawing graphs and charts, doing cross tabulations and calculating means and standard deviations. Further analysis would build on these initial findings, seeking patterns and relationships in the data by perhaps performing multiple regression, or an analysis of variance. For this study, however, the small number of questionnaires meant that there was a need for only a limited administration and analysis exercise.

In undertaking the data administration process of the questionnaire data from this study, the closed questions were asked in accordance with clear instructions. The answers were indicated by inserting a number or ticking the appropriate boxes, as a consequence allowing for the relatively easy extraction of the identified themes

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The small number of questionnaires meant that there was not a mass of numbers to analyse and as a consequence not the need for an expansive exploration of the questionnaire data. The specific questionnaire questions are set out at Appendix D, the responses to these were quantitatively coded and the resulting data matrix analysed. A review of the various forms of quantitative data analyses found a variety of different tools available. In the analysis of data of this nature Catterall and Maclaron (1995) suggest that the use of tools such as SPSS are particularly suited, the SPSS statistical package was therefore considered but after careful deliberation given the limited amount of data, the analysis was undertaken utilising the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. This involved the steps outlined at Figure 7.2.

*Figure 7.2: Steps undertaken in the Quantitative Data Analysis Process*



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These steps greatly assisted in the identification of the quantitative data themes which enabled the simple comparison with the qualitative data themes and as a consequence with the analysis process as a whole.

## **7.5 Data Presentation**

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of some of the findings, where appropriate the respondents are identified in the findings and analysis chapters via pseudonyms (Organisation A, Mr X etc). Yin (1994) proposes that for sensitive and complex data, a presentation format of this nature is appropriate. Whilst the research questions were used as a starting point for the findings and results, the data themes obtained from the qualitative and quantitative data analysis exercises were considered individually in the results and findings at chapters nine and ten. These themes were then presented and analysed with regard to the relevant research question in the analysis at chapter eleven. The identification and presentation of these themes proved somewhat easier than anticipated: two distinct but related aspects could be established, those of *influence* set out in Chapter nine, and *practice*, set out in Chapter ten.

## **7.6 Data Verification**

As part of the drawing together and verification process, the outcomes and conclusions were tested for their plausibility, sturdiness and validity. To assist in this process a follow up exercise with one equality organisation, one Civil Service organisation and five racial minority individuals was also undertaken in October 2001. This approach takes note of the views of Glaser and Strauss (1967), who in my view correctly suggest that any final conclusions may not appear until the data collection component is actually over. This follow up

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confirmed that little of substance had changed since the initial interviews and generally confirmed the original issues and concerns that had previously been highlighted.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

In a descriptive manner this chapter outlined the practical issues associated with the data management and data collection for this study. This included an outline of the consideration of issues such as sampling, bias, reliability, validity and ethics. These considerations proved invaluable in guiding the approach taken with regard to the surveys undertaken. This approach provided the means for the effective management and administration of the data collected, and also greatly assisted in the analysis and presentation of the data which now follows.

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Abstract

Abstract

## Chapter Eight

# Statistical Findings and Results

Abstract

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Abstract

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## 8.1 Introduction

Through a secondary analysis of relevant Civil Service statistics, this chapter provides contextual background data on career progression for racial minorities. This official Civil Service workforce information provides a statistical timeline of quantitative data pertinent to this study. Specifically, the Civil Service ethnic minority data on headcounts, gender balance, status, promotion and equality strands comparisons. This timeline starts in 1989<sup>75</sup>, uses data from the *1997 Civil Service Data Summary* as a mid-point, and ends with data from the published *2004 Civil Service Statistics*<sup>76</sup>. The chapter concludes with an overall summary which sets out the emerging findings from these statistical data.

## 8.2 Considerations

In the reading of the Civil Service data, care needs to be taken in two particular regards. First, that the statistical calculations are not based on complete data sets that fully identify the number of racial minority individuals, for example, in 1989, based on the Departmental returns received, it was estimated by the Civil Service Statistical Division that less than 50% of staff had recorded their ethnic origin, in 1997, 72% and 2004, 83.7%. Second, taking note of this incomplete set of information, another important consideration is the fact that the statistical data provided by the Civil Service Statistical Division is on the basis of the recorded BME<sup>77</sup> numbers against the total 'known ethnic origin' numbers, and not on the basis of the BME numbers against the total numbers.

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<sup>75</sup> 1989 is the base year for ethnic minority people as it is the first year service-wide ethnic origin data was collected

<sup>76</sup> At the time of writing, the last available information set published by the Civil Service Statistical Division

<sup>77</sup> BME Definition for the purpose of this study includes; Mixed Ethnicity; Asian/Asian British; Black/Black British; and Chinese/Other ethnic group

**Table 8.1 – Non-Industrial Staff in the UK Civil Service – BME comparison**

Staff in all Departments	Total		White		BME Nos.		BME %			
	All Staff	SCS	All Staff	SCS	All Staff	SCS	Against All		Against Known	
							All Staff	SCS	All Staff	SCS
1989	569215	3155	545308	3111	23907	44	4.2	1.4	4.2	1.4
1997	459283	3732*	365402	3103	22217	51	4.8	1.4	5.7	1.6
2004	554110	4510*	375110	3550	33430	130	6.0	2.7	8.3	3.3

Source: CS Statistics 1989, Equal Opportunities in the CS Data Summary 1997, CS Statistics 2004

Notes: \*Includes – Other SCS = The Senior Civil Service (Grade 5 and above)

As shown at Table 8.1 above, the ‘known ethnic origin’ method used by the Civil Service Statistical Division has the effect of inflating the BME percentages<sup>78</sup>.

Even with the relatively small BME numbers at the Senior Civil Service level, what can be seen is a significant percentage difference (0.6% in 2004). Taking note of these differences, it is considered that this methodology does not provide an accurate picture. Previous research by commentators such as Schneider-Ross<sup>79</sup> have indicated that the vast majority of those not providing details of ethnic origin are in fact white, an observation that has also been the researcher’s own experience<sup>80</sup>.

### 8.3 Headcounts

The Cabinet Office information is reproduced at Table 8.2 below. It shows that nationally the proportion of ethnic minority staff in the Civil Service<sup>81</sup> increased from 4.2% in 1989, to 4.8% in 1997 and 6.0% in 2004. This compares with

<sup>78</sup> As a result of the calculation of the BME numbers against the smaller total numbers of those where the origin is known.

<sup>79</sup> Schneider-Ross Report (1999) *Succeeding in the Civil Service*, London: Cabinet Office Press Office

<sup>80</sup> A reason given for this by many is that of privacy and the fear of ‘big brother’!

<sup>81</sup> The 1989 statistics were based on the more accurate methodology of BME numbers against the total staff number. From then on, the statistics have been based on the methodology of excluding ‘others’ from the calculation. As a consequence the ‘official’ 1997 Civil Service data summary in fact records a higher percentage of 5.7% Ethnic Minorities staff, as does the 2004 CS statistics, which records a higher percentage of 8.3% Ethnic Minorities staff.

4.0% of the UK economically active population<sup>82</sup> in Spring 1989, 5.3% of the economically active population in Spring 1997, and 7.3% of the economically active population in Spring 2004.

*Table 8.2 – Non-Industrial BME Staff in the UK Civil Service - Economically Active comparison*

Staff in all Departments	BME % Against All		BME % Against Known		BME% Economically Active
	All Staff	SCS	All Staff	SCS	
1989	4.2	1.4	4.2	1.4	4.0
1997	4.8	1.4	5.7	1.6	5.3
2004	6.0	2.7	8.3	3.3	7.3

*Source: CS Statistics 1989, Equal Opportunities in the CS Data Summary 1997, CS Statistics 2004*

*Notes: Economically Active figures from the UK Labour Force Survey Spring 1989, Spring 1997, and Spring 2004*

As can be seen from Table 8.2, using the ‘known ethnic origin’ and not the ‘total ethnic origin’ method, makes a difference to the BME percentages both working in the Civil Service and at the senior levels within the Civil Service. From the perspective of the ‘against known’ figures, it can be seen that the ethnic minority staff in the Civil Service can now be considered to be roughly proportionate with the economically active ethnic minority population. As can be seen from Table 8.2 and detailed at Table 8.3, whilst there has been an improvement in general staffing terms, the numbers of ethnic minority staff at more senior levels remain well below the representative level, whichever method is used. The vast majority of the ethnic minority staff still remain in the lower grades. This is a fact acknowledged in the Civil Service data summary publications.

<sup>82</sup> The economically active population comprises all persons above a certain age, who furnish the supply of labour for the productive activities, during a specified time-reference period. It includes all persons who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed (employees or self employed) or the unemployed.



**Table 8.3- Non-Industrial Staff in the UK Civil Service by Ethnic Origin and Level**

	All		White		BME		Other (non response)	
	Nos.	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
<b>1989</b>								
SCS	3155	3111	98.6	44	1.4	N/R**	N/R	
Grade 6	N/A*	N/A	97.8	N/A	2.2	N/R	N/R	
Grade 7	N/A	N/A	98.8	N/A	1.2	N/R	N/R	
SEO	N/A	N/A	98.8	N/A	1.2	N/R	N/R	
HEO	N/A	N/A	98.3	N/A	1.7	N/R	N/R	
EO	N/A	N/A	97.1	N/A	2.9	N/R	N/R	
AO	N/A	N/A	94.4	N/A	5.6	N/R	N/R	
AA	N/A	N/A	93.5	N/A	6.5	N/R	N/R	
<b>Total</b>	<b>569215</b>	<b>545308</b>	<b>95.8</b>	<b>23097</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>N/R</b>	<b>N/R</b>	
<b>1997</b>								
SCS	3732	3103	83.1	51	1.4	578	15.5	
Grade 6	4891	4038	82.6	120	2.5	733	15.0	
Grade 7	15184	13135	86.5	261	1.7	1788	11.8	
SEO	23014	19326	84.0	558	2.4	3130	13.6	
HEO	48550	39432	81.2	1044	2.2	8074	16.6	
EO	111825	86418	77.3	4386	3.9	21021	18.8	
AO	176342	141670	80.3	11006	6.2	23666	13.4	
AA	75745	58280	76.9	4791	6.3	12674	16.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>459283</b>	<b>365402</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>22217</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>71664</b>	<b>15.6</b>	
<b>2004</b>								
SCS	4510	3550	78.7	130	2.7	840	18.6	
Grade 6 /7	26830	19790	73.8	760	3.8	6020	22.4	
SEO /HEO	91580	66730	72.9	3570	4.5	20700	22.6	
EO	137160	95040	69.3	7330	6.7	32870	24.0	
AO/AA	260330	170500	65.5	16090	7.1	71450	27.4	
Unknown	13310	8410	63.2	170	1.6	4690	35.2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>533710</b>	<b>364010</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>28000</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>136580</b>	<b>25.7</b>	

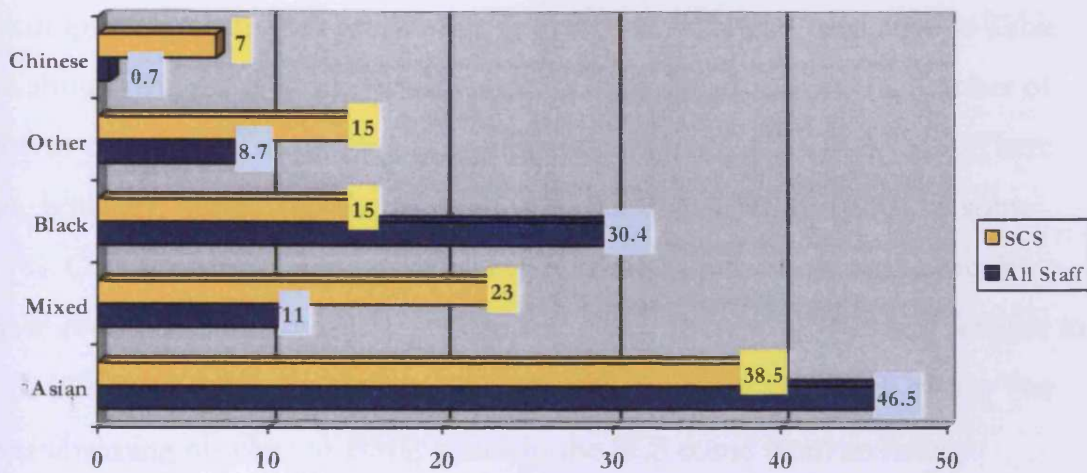
Source: CS Statistics 1989, Equal Opportunities in the CS Data Summary 1997, CS Statistics 2004

\* N/A - Not Available, \*\*N/R - Not Recorded

\* SCS - Senior Management; Grade6 to SEO - Middle Management; HEO to EO - Junior Management; AO to AA - Clerical

Table 8.4 and Figure 8.1 below provide a more detailed ethnic minority breakdown for 2004 and show that both with regard to overall staff numbers and those at the higher grades, the Asian group are more significant numerically and in percentage terms, representing 46.5% of all BME staff (Mixed 11%, Other 8.7%, Black 30.4% and Chinese 0.67%) and 38.5% of the SCS grades (Mixed 23%, Other 15%, Black 15% and Chinese 7%).

Figure 8.1 - Civil Service Ethnic Minority Groups Comparison – 2004 Percentages



Source: CS Statistics 2004

Table 8.4- Staff in the UK Civil Service by Ethnic Origin and Level - 2004

2004	All	White	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	Other BME	Non Response	BME % of All
SCS	4510	3550	50	20	10	30	20	840	2.7
Grade 6 and 7	26830	19790	440	190	40	200	170	6020	3.9
SEO and HEO	91580	66730	1710	1220	130	600	480	20700	4.5
EO	137160	95040	4180	3100	220	950	800	32870	6.7
AO and AA	260330	170500	9030	5600	430	1930	1390	71450	7.1
Unknown	13310	8410	70	40	20	30	50	4690	1.6
All Non-Industrial	533710	364010	15470	10170	840	3730	2910	136580	6.2
All Industrial	20400	11080	50	110	10	70	80	9010	1.6
All Staff	554,110	375,090	15,520	10,280	850	3,800	2,990	145,590	6.0

Source: CS Statistics 2004

Of note is the difference for the black group, making up 30.4% of the BME staff and only 15% of BMEs within the SCS. This apparent representation imbalance was referred to by many of the racial minority respondents for this research, and is further considered below.

## 8.4 Gender Balance

A comparison of the gender balance for BME staff in 1997 and 2004 at Table 8.5 shows that at the more senior grades (Grade 7 and above), the number of men in comparison to women is significantly higher (74.7% to 25.3%). There has, however, been a narrowing of the gap between 1997 and 2004 by some 4.7%. Of note from these statistics is that at the SCS level there is a much more even balance between the Asian and Black females (57% Asian females to 43% African-Caribbean females) than that of the Asian and Black males. The overwhelming number of BME males in the SCS come from an Asian background (72% Asian males to 28% African-Caribbean males). This apparent ethnic origin imbalance within the BME gender categories as indicated above is a major cause of concern within the African-Caribbean Civil Service staff group, and is therefore analysed in greater detail at Chapter eleven.

*Table 8.5- National Non Industrial BME Staff by Responsibility Level - 1997 and 2004*

	1997					2004				
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	Nos.			As % of BME staff in level		Nos.			As % of BME staff in level	
SCS	46	5	51	90.2	9.8	103	27	130	79.2	20.8
Grade 6	101	19	120	84.2	15.8	562	198	760	73.9	26.1
Grade 7	196	65	261	75.1	24.9					
SEO	379	179	558	67.9	32.1	2006	1564	3570	56.2	43.8
HEO	675	369	1044	64.7	35.3					
EO	2009	2377	4386	45.8	54.2	3310	4020	7330	45.1	54.9
AO	3700	7306	11006	33.6	66.4	5190	10900	16090	32.3	67.7
AA	1491	3300	4791	31.1	68.9					
Total	8597	13620	22217	38.7	61.3	11171	16709	28000	39.9	60.1
Above G7	343	89	432	79.4	20.6	665	225	890	74.7	25.3
Above EO	3406	3014	6420	53.1	46.9	5981	5809	11790	50.7	49.3

*Source: Equal Opportunities in the Civil Service Data Summary 1997 and CS statistics 2004*

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## 8.5 Status

A closer look at the SCS statistics for 1994<sup>83</sup>, (Table 8.6) reveals an interesting and concerning picture, in that the vast majority (55 of the 61) of ethnic minorities in the senior management grades were in fact specialists (doctors, solicitors, accountants, and scientists) who were appointed for their specific skills with little or no direct 'management' responsibility, and who therefore cannot arguably be classed as genuine career civil servants. Despite a number of direct requests for information from the Civil Service Statistics Division, the researcher was advised that 'due to the sensitivity and the possible lack of anonymity' of the information, that it would not be possible for the Civil Service Statistics Division to supply up to date figures on the disciplines of the BME senior civil servants. However, based on the researcher's own investigations and the responses from the Civil Service organisations interviewed, there is little to suggest that the situation has changed greatly in the 10 years following the 1994 exercise. Indeed this apparent lack of BME career civil servants was another issue raised by the racial minority individuals interviewed for this study, and if correct, would be of great concern, and cast doubt over the validity of the statements of BME progress at senior levels made by the Civil Service. This concern is looked at in greater detail in the analysis at Chapter eleven.

*Table 8.6- UK Civil Service Ethnic Minority Staff at Grade 5 or above by Discipline (1994)*

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
Administrator	6	-	-
Economist	*	-	-
Engineer	*	-	-
Lawyer	6	-	-
Medical doctor	36	-	*
Scientist	*	-	-
Statistician	*	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

*Source: The Advisory Panel on Equal Opportunities in the Civil Senior Civil Service (1995)*

*Note: - \* Figures less than five have been asterisked to ensure confidentiality*

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<sup>83</sup> The figures for 2004 could not be provided by the Cabinet Office for any previous or later years – due to 'sensitivity'.

## 8.6 Promotion

Table 8.7 provides a comparison of the 1997 promotion prospects of the White and BME groups. The figures show that in percentage terms, the rate of promotions for ethnic minorities improved significantly at the lower responsibility levels. Figures for the SEO and above levels were requested from the Civil Service Statistics Division but were “not available”. It was indicated, however, that the percentage promotion figures for BME individuals to Grades 5, 6 and 7 were significantly lower than those for the grades below. In looking at the issue of promotion for BME individuals above the SEO level, of interest is the fact that this was the only year that this particular table was published by the Civil Service Statistics Division and despite a formal request for a similar table for 2004, as with the request for information on promotion rates above the SEO level, the researcher was again advised that these were not available. The limited 2004 data that the researcher has been able to access, does, however, suggest a similar picture to the 1997 rates, in that promotion prospects for BMEs in percentage terms are significantly better at the lower responsibility levels.

*Table 8.7 - Promotion and Promotion Rates for Selected Responsibility Levels, by Ethnic Origin and Gender 1996-97*

	Men	Women	Total	% of all	Men	Women	Total	% of all
	BME				White			
HEO to SEO	25	17	42	2.9	1004	366	1370	97.0
EO to HEO	46	26	72	2.4	1852	997	2849	97.5
AO to EO	125	188	313	7.6	1545	2246	3791	92.3
AA to AO	211	395	606	6.9	2749	5397	8146	93.0

*Source: Equal Opportunities in the Civil Service Data Summary 1997*



## 8.7 Comparisons

Table 8.8 provides the official headcount figures for gender, race and disability for the years 1989, 1997, and 2004. This shows an increase in numbers for each of these groups, ranging from 5.8% for women, 4.0% for BMEs, and 2.9% for disabled people. Table 8.9 and Figure 8.2, using the 'against all' calculation methodology provides a comparison from 1989 to 2004 of the percentage of women, disabled and BME individuals at the various Civil Service responsibility levels. At the senior Civil Service level, this again shows an increase for each of these groups, in simple percentage terms the most significant increase is for women from 15% in 1997 to 25.8% in 2004, for BMEs 1.4% in 1989 to 2.7% in 2004, and for disabled people 0.2% in 1989<sup>84</sup> to 2.3% in 2004.

*Table 8.8- UK Civil Service Diversity of staff in post All levels - 1989-2004*

	Headcount	Gender		Ethnic Minority		Disability	
	All staff	Total Women	% Women	Total BME	% BME <sup>85</sup>	Total Disabled	% Disabled <sup>86</sup>
1989	483892	225132	46.5	23907	4.2	7500	1.3
1997	459283	234689	51.1	22217	5.7	17641	3.8
2004	554110	289970	52.3	33430	8.2	23550	4.2

*Source: Civil Service Statistics 1989, and Data Summary 1997, 2004*

*Table 8.9- Staff in UK Civil Service by grade and equality strands - 1989-2004*

	1989 - %			1997 - %			2004 - %		
	Women	Disabled	BME	Women	Disabled	BME	Women	Disabled	BME
SCS	7.5	N/A	1.4	15.0	1.3	1.4	25.8	2.3	2.7
Grade 6	10.0	N/A	2.2	17.4	1.6	2.5	39.4	3.0	3.8
Grade 7	11.0	N/A	1.2	20.1	2.3	1.7			
SEO	10.0	N/A	1.2	20.5	2.1	2.4			
HEO	17.0	N/A	1.7	29.7	3.1	2.2			
EO	39.0	N/A	2.9	47.4	3.7	3.9			
AO	66.0	N/A	5.6	61.2	3.9	6.2	59.6	4.4	7.1
AA	74.0	N/A	6.5	66.3	5.4	6.3			
Total	49.0	N/A	4.2	51.0	3.8	4.8	52.3	4.2	5.2

*Source: Civil Service Statistics 1989, and Data Summary 1997, 2004*

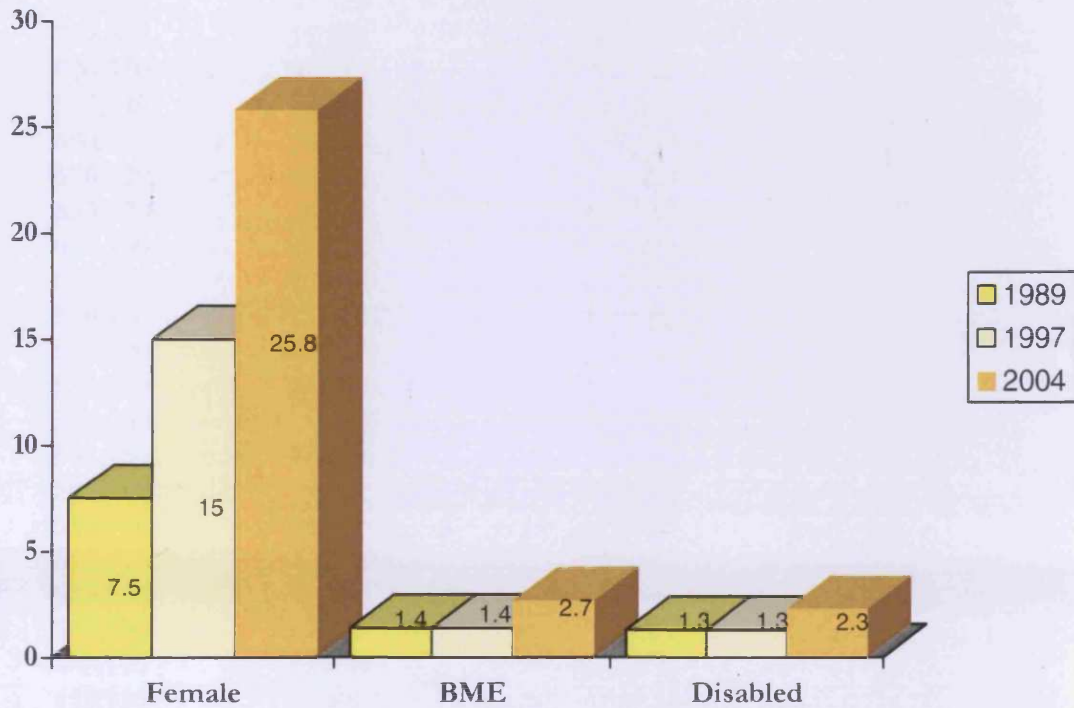
*Note: N/A = Not Available*

<sup>84</sup> This is a relative figure which relates only to the 'registered disabled' at that time and is considered unreliable.

<sup>85</sup> As percentage of staff who reported their ethnic background - does not include non-responses.

<sup>86</sup> Staff with a known disability as a percentage of all staff.

Figure 8.2 - Senior Civil Service by Race, Gender, Disability, 1989-2004



Source – Research findings

As identified at Chapter five, whilst there has been an improvement, there continues to be an under representation of these group at the senior civil service level in relation to their numbers within the Civil Service.

The picture that emerges from these statistics is that there has been improvement and progress in both recruitment and progression for BME individuals since the launch of PAR in 1990, but that this improvement has been both limited and slow for all underrepresented groups, particular for racial minorities and disabled people. This limited progress needs, however, to be seen in the light of the Civil Service manpower fluctuations during the period of this study (1989 to 2004), detailed from 1974 at Table 8.10 below.

Table 8.10 – UK Civil Service headcounts, 1974 to 2004

Year	Full-time	Part-time	Total
1974	678,130	27,810	705,930
1975	686,390	29,960	716,350
1976	732,050	31,120	763,170
1977	729,850	31,390	761,240
1978	720,770	29,770	750,540
1979	717,340	29,870	747,210
1980	690,610	28,600	719,210
1981	676,120	26,970	703,090
1982	653,990	24,740	678,740
1983	637,930	21,960	659,890
1984	613,460	21,020	634,480
1985	588,180	21,700	609,880
1986	581,990	24,750	606,740
1987	583,570	28,490	612,060
1988	564,020	31,210	595,230
1989	551,780	34,870	586,650
1990	542,540	39,710	582,240
1991	532,170	43,380	575,550
1992	542,220	46,190	588,410
1993	529,050	50,330	579,380
1994	507,300	52,100	559,400
1995	483,190	53,890	537,070
1996	459,930	54,890	514,820
1997	439,570	56,260	495,830
1998	426,210	58,000	484,210
1999	421,060	59,630	480,690
2000	432,530	65,110	497,640
2001	436,410	70,040	506,450
2002	452,980	87,850	540,830
2003	452,980	87,850	540,830
2004	461,050	93,060	554,110

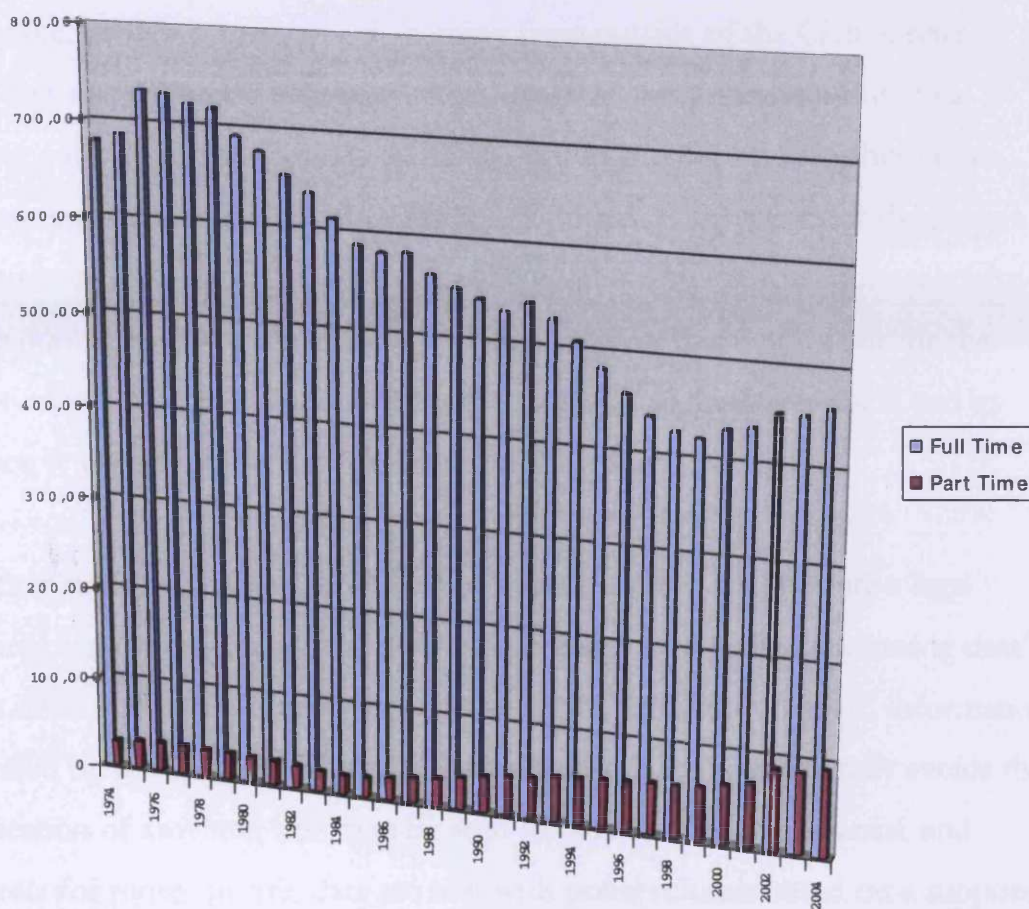
Source: *Civil Service Statistics 2004*

As can be seen from Table 8.10, by 1989, the trend in the reduction of the number of Civil Service was continuing from the peak number of Civil Servants in 1976. This shrinkage had the impact of providing less opportunity for improvement in the numbers and status levels of underrepresented groups, due to the lack of recruitment. More recently (from 2002) there has been a growth in Civil Service numbers, which should in theory provide greater opportunity for improvement. Even taking note of these manpower fluctuations it is clear that the limited progress identified from the statistical information available is



not fully reflected in the positive picture painted by the Civil Service reports with regard to the progress made by underrepresented groups. As the reality appears to be somewhat different, this positive picture perhaps gives further credence to the point made by Mark Twain at Chapter five on the way in which statistics can be interpreted, as he suggests in certain circumstances statistics are actually less reliable than *'lies and damn lies'*.

**Figure 8.3-** UK Civil Service headcounts, 1974 to 2004 Full-time and Part-Time Comparison



*Source: Civil Service Statistics 2004*

Although outside of the scope of this study, also of note (Figure 8.3) is the decline in full time employees and the increase in part time employees. From a limited analysis undertaken, it was interesting to note that women and BME individuals provided a larger percentage of the part time employees in comparison to the full time employee percentages.

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## 8.8 Conclusion

In relation to the specific focus of this study, the progression of racial minorities, what is clear from the statistical information in this chapter, is that there has been progress at the lower levels but less so, and with less uniformity among the different racial groups at the senior levels. This lack of uniformity and the limits to internal progression is confirmed by the statistics available, which also show that the majority of BME appointments to the SCS are Asian males (i.e. professionals), mainly coming from outside of the Civil Service. Whether this apparent '*preference*' within the racial groups itself points to a greater cultural acceptance of a particular group is considered further in the analysis and conclusion chapters in the light of the perspectives of the study's interview and questionnaire respondents. What is also clear from these statistics is the double discrimination faced by BME women, this issue is outside the scope of this research, but consideration of how this manifests itself, and its impact, is worthy of further investigation and study.

Another finding of note and indeed concern is the fact that despite a legal requirement to maintain and publish comprehensive equality monitoring data<sup>87</sup>, there remains real difficulty in obtaining anything but the standard information provided by the Cabinet Office. This standard information generally avoids the publication of anything that may be seen as sensitive or controversial, and requests for more specific data are met with polite refusals based on a supposed need for anonymity and /or the cost of production. The difficulty in obtaining this more specific information was a limitation to the analysis of this secondary data, this limitation was an issue for this study and further comment is made about this in the conclusions at Chapter twelve.

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<sup>87</sup> *The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000* placed further specific obligations on public authorities such as the Civil Service

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## Chapter Nine

# Research Results and Findings: Influence

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## 9.1 Introduction

*“To what extent does the organisational culture of the Civil Service help or hinder progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service?”*

Using the above research question as a basis, this chapter provides a presentation of the responses to the study’s semi-structured interview schedules and questionnaires. These responses are presented by first setting out the qualitative and quantitative findings and results with regard to Civil Service culture. This is followed by the results and findings ordered around the ‘influential’ issues of policy and commitment, each of which are considered as potentially having an impact on career progression opportunities for racial minorities within the Civil Service. Where applicable, the interview and questionnaire data for each of the respondent groups (Civil Service Organisations, Racial Minority Individuals and Equality Organisations) are provided by way of contrast and comparison. This comparison takes note of the profiles of the survey population groups (age, ethnic origin, gender, length of service) set out at Chapter 7. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main points arising from this first part of the data collection exercise.

## 9.2 Culture

In looking at the issue of culture through the perceptions of the research respondents, the data collection exercise sought to explore the strength, nature, attributes and influence of the perceived Civil Service culture, with particular regard to career progression for racial minorities.

### 9.2.1 Civil Service Culture

As shown at Table 9.1, six of the eight Civil Service organisation<sup>88</sup> respondents (all male), were of a view that the Civil Service did have a specific identifiable and influential culture. Whilst there were some differences in views of its make up and the significance of its influence, the consensus that emerged was that the Civil Service was probably seen as a white middle class organisation, with men at its head. The six respondents had a little more difficulty in setting out the attributes of this specific culture, but when pressed, a number of common terms were employed, such as *'honest, trustworthy, hardworking, flexible, dedicated, there to serve', and dependable* [CS Respondents]. In addition, a number mentioned attributes such as *'Christian, Eurocentric, and Anglo-Saxon'* as descriptors.

In noting these attributes and the influence that they may have, all six respondents agreed that there was an expectation as to the way in which things were done and therefore an influential *'cultural fit'* which needed to be shared and practiced by all, although these respondents suggested that in recent years, with a greater diversity of staff, there was more resistance, particularly from non-whites, to this cultural fit.

Table 9.1 – Civil Service Culture : CS Organisation perspectives

	Specific culture		Influential culture		Strong culture		Historic culture		Set values	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	6	2	6	2	3	5	6	2	8	0

Source: Research Findings

Concerning the strength of this culture, three of the six respondents were of a view that the expectations defined by the Civil Service ethos created a strong

<sup>88</sup> Relate to the eight (seven male and one female – all white) Civil Service organisation respondents selected and identified at Chapter 7.

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cultural bond. In clarifying this view, one of these three respondents made the point that *'this strong bond was necessary to ensure that the Civil Service remained free from corruption and impartial'* [CS Respondent - White, Male, 56-65, 21-30 years in service]. The other three respondents were not sure if the culture was that strong, but agreed that it did have a great deal of influence in the manner in which individuals operated. The view from these six respondents was that the Civil Service culture was historic in nature. All made reference in different ways about the probable male Oxbridge culture of the senior civil servants. Interestingly, two of these six respondents were also aware of the Indian Civil Service origins. When asked about the values of this culture and its possible impact on those who did not share the same cultural values, these six respondents were clear that whilst there would be no deliberate exclusion, the fact, as one respondent [CS Respondent - White, Male, 56-65, 21-30 years in service] put it, was that *'these individuals would come with different standards'* which would make it very difficult for them to fit into the Civil Service ethos and way of working. A general point agreed by all six respondents was that the Civil Service should not change to accommodate different cultural values. If it did, these respondents suggested that, the UK Civil Service would be in danger of becoming as corrupt as many other central government agencies around the world.

The two respondents who did not consider that the Civil Service had a specific identifiable culture were of the view that the Civil Service was a welcoming organisation, open to all, open to all cultures and treated everyone *'the same'*.<sup>89</sup> Both, however, agreed that there were certain key values under which the Civil Service operates, (interestingly these broadly corresponded with those identified by the six respondents who answered yes to this question). Again, terms such as

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<sup>89</sup> This view reflects the debate about equal treatment of treating people 'the same' as opposed to treating them 'equally'.

'Honest, Trustworthy, Hardworking, Flexible, Dedicated' were used concerning the attributes of this culture. Both respondents also made reference to the Civil Service being 'Christian and Anglo-Saxon' in its make up. Both were of the view that there was an expectation of the 'values' that a civil servant should have, which broadly corresponded to the attributes that they had set out. As a consequence, both agreed that the way things were expected to be done was generally shared and practiced by all. With regard to the impact on those who did not share the same cultural values, as with the six respondents who answered yes to the Civil Service having a specific culture, both were clear, and made the same point that if you came with a different set of values and beliefs, then 'things might be very difficult', suggesting that an effective Civil Service needed to operate to a set of standards and to the code of practice as set out in the Civil Service Code<sup>90</sup> (Appendix A).

In posing the same questions on the Civil Service to the 60 racial minority civil servants, as shown at Table 9.2 below, all 60 were of the opinion that the Civil Service did have a specific identifiable culture. All, without exception, were of the view that this culture was 'White British' in nature, and suggested that this was evidenced by the fact that the Civil Service was seen by most racial minorities, both inside and outside of the Civil Service, as a white, male dominated organisation with a European culture espousing 'white' values.

**Table 9.2 - Civil Service Culture: Racial Minority Individuals' Perspectives**

	Specific culture		Influential culture		Strong culture		Historic culture		Set values	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Racial Minority Individuals (60)	60	0	59	1	51	9	54	6	60	0

Source: Research Findings

<sup>90</sup> The Civil Service Code, a concise statement of the role and responsibilities of civil servants. (It forms part of the Civil Service Management Code, a much longer document setting out the central framework for management of the Civil Service).



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In probing, the individuals had difficulty in stating exactly what these 'white' values were, but all had a view, expressed in different ways that it did not appreciate or take account of the attributes of racial minorities, and apart from one individual, all these respondents were very clear that this culture was 'significantly influential'. By way of an example, a number of individuals (15) stated that despite being born in Britain and attending British schools, there was still a view of them being different and not fitting in. A number (30 of the 42) of male individuals gave accounts of stereotypical views held of them by their white managers, (lazy, aggressive, unpunctual). These views, it was suggested, influenced the way in which they were treated and the expectations that white managers had of them. All 60 respondents were of the view that this was an influential factor, although the depth of feeling varied between the individuals. The majority (85%) felt that there appeared to be a 'them and us' situation, and if you did not fit the 'us', you were very unlikely to progress. A majority (71%) made reference to the competences for appraisals used within the Civil Service, which they considered favoured White British colleagues. Despite probing, the only evidence provided for this statement related to comments about communication skills and attitudes that they indicated were often referred to in a negative manner for racial minorities when appraised. All the individuals considered that this culture had a great deal of bearing and influence as to the manner in which the Civil Service operated. Importantly nearly two thirds (61%) made reference to sub-cultures within their organisations, but which still had an overall white value system, *'in talking to my black colleagues there is little or no difference whatever Department you work in'* [RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 56-65, 21-30 years in service] as the heads of these sub-cultures were predominately white and male.

All 60 respondents made the point that they were not sure how this culture had developed but a vast majority (90%) were of the view that it had been there for



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a very long time and did not appear to be changing. A common view from all the individuals was the need for the Civil Service to acknowledge that things had changed and that they now lived in a multi-faith, multi-cultural society and this needed to be reflected within the Civil Service culture and mode of operation. When asked about the impact on those who did not share the same cultural values, all the individuals were clear that this had a major impact on them and other racial minorities who were often overlooked for promotion and regarded as difficult or not fitting in.

All five equality organisation respondents were of the view that the Civil Service did have a specific identifiable culture. Whilst there were some differences of view of the influence and make up of the culture, as with the Civil Service Organisation respondents, the consensus was that it was a '*white middle class organisation with men at its head*'. In describing the attributes and culture, terms such as *bureaucratic*, *trustworthy*, and *dedicated* were used, along with '*English and Christian*'. The view 'looking in' from all five equality respondents was that to get on in the Civil Service you would generally need to be white, male and middle-class. All five, in different ways, suggested that the disabled person, woman or members of a racial minority group would all struggle to progress. With regard to the strength of the Civil Service culture, all five respondents regarded this culture as strong and influential, affecting its employment practices, service delivery and policy making. Four of the respondents were of the view that the Civil Service had a well established embedded culture which had both strengths and weaknesses. This had benefits, but as one of these respondents [*EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 36 to 45*] put it, '*to accommodate a more diverse workforce, there was now a need for change*'. With regard to the impact on those who did not share the same cultural values, all five respondents were of the view that there was a significant and sustained impact

on racial minorities who they suggested were seen as being different and not fitting in to the '*Anglo-English ethos*' of the Civil Service.

### 9.2.2 Civil Service Culture - Questionnaire Survey Results

The vast majority of the questionnaire respondents,<sup>91</sup> as shown at Table 9.3, were of the view that the Civil Service did have a specific (20 of the 24), strong (17 of the 24), and historic culture (20 of the 24).

*Table 9.3- Civil Service Culture - Questionnaire Survey Responses*

	Specific culture		Influential culture		Strong culture		Historic culture		Set values	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
CS Organisations (8)	5	3	3	5	2	6	5	3	5	3
Racial Minority individuals (8)	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	7	1	6	2	7	1	7	1	7	1

*Source: Research Findings*

As to whether this culture had an influence and impact on the recruitment and progression of racial minorities specifically, again a clear majority of the respondents were of the view that this was the case (Influence - 17 of the 24 (71%), Impact - 20 of 24 (83%)), but among these views there was a significant difference concerning influence between the views of the Civil Service Organisations (three Yes – five No) and those of the Racial Minority individuals (eight Yes - zero No) and Equality Organisations (six Yes - two No). Interestingly, within the Civil Service organisation responses there was also a clear difference of opinion, with all three of the Civil Service organisation female respondents stating that the Civil Service culture was influential, and all 5 of the Civil Service organisation male respondents stating that the Civil Service culture was not influential. This difference in viewpoint between the

<sup>91</sup> Relates to the 24 Questionnaire surveys undertaken, (eight for each respondent group)

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male and female Civil Service organisation respondents was apparent throughout the questionnaire survey responses.

### 9.3 Individual Organisations' Culture

Only three of the Civil Service organisation respondents stated that their organisation had a specific identifiable culture. They were of the view that their organisation was probably seen as a white middle class organisation with men at its head. With regard to the attributes of their individual organisations, the three respondents suggested that these attributes were derived from and based on Civil Service attributes such as '*honesty, trust, flexibility, dedication and a willingness to take orders*'. The three respondents were, however, clear that these were positive attributes, which contributed to the standards that all staff members were expected to maintain. On reflecting on their responses, the three respondents made similar points, summed up by the views of one who suggested that '*Whether this was culture or not, I am not certain, but its right*' [**CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service**]. All three respondents were clear and made that the general point that standards governed the way things were expected to be done. With regard to the strength of this culture, all three of the respondents felt that the expected maintenance of standards made for a strong 'cultural fit', which influenced much of what and how the organisation operated.

The five Civil Service Organisation respondents who did not consider that their organisation had a specific identifiable culture each made the point that their organisations had their own culture which differed slightly from that of the Civil Service more widely. The five respondents identified similar attributes such as '*honesty, trust, flexibility, dedication and a willingness to take orders*', but suggested that their organisations were also '*welcoming, open to all cultures and treated everyone fairly*.' The five respondents were also all of the view that the

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attributes and so called ‘cultural values’ were applied to all and were in no way discriminatory, one of them summing this up by adding that:

*‘there was an expectation that the values of their organisation should be followed by all, and as a consequence the way things operated within the organisation was generally shared and practiced by all.’*

***[CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55 1-6 years in service]***

These expectations were seen as strengths within the organisation by these five individuals, who also conceded that this strength was also very influential.

As with the Civil Service question on culture, perhaps not surprisingly, all 60 racial minority individuals were of the opinion that their individual organisations did have a specific identifiable culture. All without exception were of the view that this culture was *‘White British’* in nature, and suggested that this was evidenced by the fact that their organisation was seen by most minorities in the locality as a white male dominated organisation. With regard to the strength and influence of this culture, all were of the view that these were major influential factors within their respective organisations, and as with the Civil Service answer, many of the respondents suggested that within their individual organisations, they had directly experienced a *‘them and us’* situation, a number making the same comment that *‘if you did not fit the us, you were very unlikely to progress’*. Most of the respondents (87%) again made reference to sub-cultures within sections in their organisations but still related this to an overall *‘white value system’*. This could be seen, most of these respondents suggested, by the fact that the head of these section sub-cultures were mainly white, and stating that even the racial minority managers had to *‘act white’* in order to maintain their status and be accepted.

### 9.3.1 Individual Organisations' Culture - Questionnaire Survey Results

The Civil Service Organisations (one 'yes', seven 'no') and Racial Minority Individual (seven 'yes', one 'no') questionnaire respondents had diametrically opposite views as to whether their individual Civil Service organisations had their own specific sub-culture, as shown at Table 9.4.

*Table 9.4 - Individual Organisations' Culture - Questionnaire Survey Responses*

	Specific culture		Influential culture		Strong culture		Historic culture		Set values	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
CS Organisations (8)	1	7	2	6	7	1	7	1	6	2
Racial Minority individuals (8)	7	1	7	1	8	0	7	1	8	0

*Source: Research Findings*

This difference of view was also reflected with regard to the influence that the culture may have (CS two 'yes', six 'no' – RM seven 'yes', one 'no'). There was, however, a general consensus and agreement between the two groups of the strength, history and set values of the Civil Service culture, which most considered was reflected in their individual organisations. Unlike the Civil Service culture question there was no significant difference between the male and female responses from the Civil Service organisations.

### 9.4 Culture Summary

With regard to the culture of the Civil Service, the interview and questionnaire responses showed a general consensus that organisations such as the Civil Service / Civil Service Departments do have a specific culture with associated and related sub cultures. There was, however, less of a consensus about the influence that this culture would have on career progression, the specific focus of this study. In general terms, the Civil Service Organisation respondents were of the view that the culture has little influence, whilst the Racial Minority

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Individuals and Equality Organisation respondents were of the view that this influence was significant.

In relation to the impact of culture, in particular concerning career progression, the divergence of views between the Civil Service organisation respondents and the Racial Minority Individual respondents was again significant. In general the Civil Service Organisation respondents were of the view that there was not much of an impact, as one of these respondents [**CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 11-20 years in service**] put it, *'yes there may be a specific way of doing things that could be regarded as culture, but we all have to follow the same standards, so how can there be an impact'*. The Racial Minority individual respondents held a very different general viewpoint, based, they suggested, on the reality of their experiences, where they were often overlooked for promotion and regarded as 'difficult' or 'not fitting in'. An example of this reality was given by one Racial Minority individual respondent [**RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 21-30 years in service**] who noted that, *'after 15 years despite knowing the job inside out I have been overlooked for promotion over and over again'*. This was a recurring view from those who had been in the Civil Service for more than five years.

In general, there was a view from the majority of all respondent groups that for those who did not share the same cultural values or came with a different set of values and beliefs, things might be a little more difficult within the organisation, but this, it was suggested by the majority of the Civil Service Organisation respondents, was due to maintaining 'standards' and not to any form of disadvantage or discrimination. This viewpoint was not shared by the Racial Minority individual respondents, who in the main considered that this was nothing to do with standards but simply a way of maintaining the cultural norms under which the Civil Service and/or their organisation operated.

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## 9.5 Equal Opportunity Policies

The data collection exercise sought to establish the status and knowledge of the equal opportunity policies of the Civil Service Organisations researched, and in particular in the context of this study, who within the organisation had responsibility for their formulation and amendment.

Of the eight Civil Service Organisation respondents, six were clear that the organisation did have an equal opportunities policy and four had it to hand, while, the other two respondents were not sure, but presumed that *'there must be one'*. Only two of the eight respondents could confirm that the policy made specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities. A general view from all eight respondents was that with regard to equality, reference should be made to all equality strands and that issues of progress should not be limited to racial minorities. A quotation from one individual that emphasised this view:

*'We believe in mainstreaming of equality here, all of the strands are of equal importance but it appears that race is the only one that the government wants to do anything about' [CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service]*

As to who had or should have responsibility and accountability for the equal opportunities policy, all eight respondents were of the view that this was or should be the personnel section. In all eight of these organisations, the Head of Personnel was identified as white (six male and two female).

Of the 60 racial minority individuals, 54 (90%) were aware that the organisation had an equal opportunity policy, of the remaining six individuals, four did not know, and two were adamant that there was no policy, *'certainly none that they had*

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*seen, or had been communicated/ disseminated to them*'. From the 54 individuals who were aware of the organisation's equal opportunities policy, 45 (75% of all of these respondents) had in fact read the policy, or had occasion to use it. The two individuals who responded 'no' to there being a policy, provided a view as to the reason for this, both stating that this was as a result of '*the racist and discriminatory nature of the organisation*'. Of the 45 individuals who stated that they had read the policy, or had occasion to use it, all but one stated that the policy did not make any specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities. All 60 individuals were, however, of the view that any policy should make specific reference to racial minorities, as one put it '*how are things ever going to change if it does not?*' [**RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46to 55, 21-30 years in service**]. This, most (90%) of the respondents said in a variety of ways was needed if there was ever going to be an improvement for racial minorities.

As to who had or should have responsibility and accountability for the equal opportunities policy, only 10 of the 60 respondents considered that this should be within the personnel function. Most (38 – 63%) considered that this responsibility should be with some form of Equal Opportunities committee, all making reference to the fact that the committee should have a strong racial minority representation. The remaining 12 of these 50 respondents referred to some other structure/mechanism, but were again of the view that this should contain a strong racial minority representation, as one respondent [**RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 28 to 35, 1-5 years in service**] put it - '*that could influence, what the policy said*'.

Almost all of the respondents (57 – 95%) were aware of who had responsibility for the Equal Opportunity Policy (the Personnel or HR Department), all



identifying the heads of these Departments as White and the vast majority as males (52 – 86%).

### 9.5.1 Equal Opportunity Policies - Questionnaire Survey Results

Table 9.5 shows that 15 of the 16 questionnaire respondents reported that their organisation had an equal opportunity policy, and that 11 (eight racial minority individuals, three Civil Service organisations) of the 16 were of the view that the policy should make specific reference to the needs of racial minorities.

**Table 9.5 – Organisational equal opportunity policy awareness**

	Has your organisation a written equal opportunities policy?		Do you think that this policy should make specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities?		Does your Personnel Department have responsibility for the EO Policy?		Please provide the race and gender of the Head of the Department who has responsibility for your EO policy
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Civil Service Organisations (8)	8	0	3	5	7	1	8 'White Males'
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	7	1	8	0	7	1	6 'White Males' 1 'White Female' 1 'Don't Know'

*Source: Questionnaire Survey Results*

With reference to who had responsibility for the Equal Opportunities policy, 14 of the 16 respondents confirmed that this was the personnel function. One Civil Service Organisation respondent indicated that this was within the corporate structure and one Racial Minority individual respondent was not sure. The respondents confirmed that 14 of the Heads of the Department responsible for the equal opportunities policy were white males, one was a white female and one Racial Minority individual was not sure who was responsible.

Within the Civil Service organisation responses there was a clear difference of opinion between the male and female respondents with all three of the Civil

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Service organisation female respondents stating that the policy should make specific reference to racial minorities, and all 5 of the Civil Service organisation male respondents stating that this should not be the case.

### **9.5.2 Equal Opportunities Policies Summary**

With regard to equal opportunities policies, most respondents interviewed were aware that an equal opportunities policy existed, and in general most of the respondents considered that these policies were generally very good. The vast majority of the Racial Minority individuals were, however, of the view that the good policies were let down by the inconsistency of their implementation. The responsibility for this inconsistency, it was suggested by them was clearly with those in authority, mainly the white male managers. This was not a view shared by the Civil Service Organisation respondents, who whilst recognising that the policies were not always implemented consistently, were very firmly of the view that this lack of consistency of approach applied to all groups and as such did not necessarily disadvantage racial minority individuals. As to whether the equal opportunities policies should make specific reference to the needs of racial minorities, whilst in general terms most respondents could see a need for this, there was a sharp difference of opinion between the Racial Minority individual respondents and the Civil Service organisation respondents as to what benefit this would provide. The Racial Minority individual respondents were unanimous in their view that this was a must, and a good starting point for any real change to take place. The Civil Service organisation respondents, in the main, were not convinced of any practical benefits arising from this, pointing to a similar need, if this was to happen, for clear articulation for all equality strands.

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## 9.6 Commitment

With regard to commitment, the data collection exercise sought to establish the level and nature of the commitment to equality of opportunity demonstrated by the Civil Service organisations researched. More specifically, the purpose was to understand how this commitment was practically demonstrated with regard to the career progression objectives for racial minorities.

### 9.6.1 Commitment - Demonstration

All eight Civil Service organisation respondents were of a view that their organisation was fully committed to equality of opportunity. It was stressed by all eight that this commitment related to all aspects of equality and not just race issues. One respondent [*CS Respondent - White, Male, 56 to 65, 31+ years in service*], made the point that *'it was a shame that equality of opportunity now only seemed to relate to race, at the expense of, for example, white middle-class males'*. As to how this commitment was demonstrated, six made reference to the organisation's equal opportunity policy as being the practical demonstration of commitment. The other two respondents made reference to a number of practical outcomes that the organisation had achieved over and above the rhetoric of the equal opportunities policy. An example stated by one respondent was *'the establishment of a number of staff networks'*, [*CS Respondent - White, Female, 46 to 55, 11-16 years in service*] which, they stated, were active in moving the equality agenda forward. As to who takes the lead in demonstrating this commitment, all eight respondents made reference to the commitment of the head of the organisation (the Permanent Secretary), and/or the senior management team. In probing on this issue, little practical evidence of practical outcomes or how the lead person demonstrated this commitment was provided. This was particularly true with regard to progression issues, where despite being given a number of

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opportunities to do so, not one example of this commitment was provided by this group of respondents.

Of the 60 racial minority individuals, the vast majority (52 - 87%) were of a view that their organisation was not really committed to equality of opportunity, most making similar points with regard to rhetoric rather than practice. As one respondent suggested, *'its good words simply to tick the box'* [***RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 28 to 35, 1-5 years in service***].

These 52 individuals also made the general point that equality was more geared to gender and disability issues, race issues only being dealt with if the organisation was forced to do this. The eight individuals who identified their organisations as being committed to equality of opportunity all made the point that this commitment covered all aspects of equality and not just race.

However, all but two of these eight suggested that a greater emphasis was being given to gender and disability issues. With regard to how this commitment was demonstrated, 52 of the 60 individuals could not identify any practical demonstration of this commitment, most suggesting in similar terminology that *'it's all words and no action'*. The eight other individuals cited their organisation's equal opportunity policy as the practical demonstration of commitment. Four of these eight respondents also made reference to the development of staff networks. With regard to who takes the lead in demonstrating this commitment, all 60 said that it should be the head of the organisation. A number (22 - 36%) were also of the view that middle managers also needed to publicly demonstrate their commitment. All these 22 respondents were also of the view that the head/senior managers had provided no real evidence of commitment to race equality specifically; this they suggested was particularly true with regard to progression issues.

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All five Equality Organisation respondents thought that there was a good general commitment to equality of opportunity within the Civil Service and that this was also demonstrated in the relationships that they had with individual Civil Service organisations in their locality. All were, however, of the view that this commitment related to all aspects of equality, and four of the five placed race some way behind the issues of disability and gender. As to how this commitment was demonstrated, all five respondents could point to gender and disability specific initiatives, but not any race specific initiatives.

The general view from this group of respondents was that with regard to race, there appeared to be little practical demonstration of this commitment, and very little with regard to recruitment and progression. Regarding who takes the lead in demonstrating this commitment, all five equality respondents were clear that this should be at the top level, with the head of the organisation having ultimate responsibility, although also making the point that there was a general responsibility on all staff, particularly managers.

### **9.6.2 Commitment - Questionnaire Survey Results**

Only half of the 24 questionnaire respondents were of the view that the Civil Service demonstrated a commitment to equal opportunities (Table 9.6). As with the semi-structured interview responses, there was a significant difference of view between the Civil Service Organisations and Racial Minority individual respondents with regard to the question of commitment and its practical application.

**Table 9.6– Organisational Commitment to Equal Opportunities**

	Would you say your organisation demonstrates a commitment to Equal Opportunities?		Is there evidence to support a commitment to Equal Opportunities within your organisation?		Would you say that the Civil Service demonstrates a commitment to Equal Opportunities?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>Civil Service Organisations (8)</b>	8	0	7	1	8	0
<b>Racial Minority Individuals (8)</b>	1	7	0	8	1	7
<b>Equality Organisations (8)</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	3	5

*Source: Questionnaire Survey Results*

Interestingly, all of the eight Civil Service Organisations reported commitment, and seven of the eight reported evidence to support this commitment within their organisation and within the Civil Service, whilst only one of the Racial Minority individuals reported commitment, none of the eight reported any evidence to support this commitment within their organisation and only one reporting commitment within the Civil Service. The Equality Organisations reported a more even distribution to the question of Civil Service commitment.

### **9.6.3 Commitment - Programme for Action on Race (PAR)**

In seeking to establish the practical extent of progress with regard to career progression opportunities for racial minorities, and hence the Civil Service commitment to this undertaking, a number of questions were asked of the Civil Service Organisations and Racial Minority individuals with regard to PAR but more specifically with regard to the career progression actions set out in the PAR action plan.

All eight Civil Service Organisation respondents were aware of the PAR initiative, although four had to be shown the document before remembering its contents. All had been made aware of the initiative via correspondence from

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the Cabinet Office, but apart from completion of the required returns, they advised that no further direct contact had been made with the Cabinet Office. All eight respondents reported that their organisations had not made the full requirements of the PAR initiative available to staff. No specific reason was given for this, although 'mainstreaming' was mentioned by many (six) of the respondents. With regard to specific steps taken, all eight respondents reported the development of some form of race action plans as the result of PAR. On closer probing, it was found that the action plans were in fact all part of general equality/diversity plans, with limited specific practical 'race' outcomes. In all but two of the organisations, it was confirmed that the action plans had been drawn up without input from the racial minority staff, and in one of those instances it was admitted that *'initially, the action plan had been drawn up by group of white middle managers, the ethnic minority input only being considered as an afterthought.'*

**[CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]**

The majority of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents reported that the two main difficulties faced in taking the PAR recommendations forward were first, a lack of priority given to race issues by their organisation, and second, a lack of visible numbers of racial minority staff. All respondents conceded that mainly because of these issues, very little practical progress had actually been made toward, for example, increasing the number of racial minorities in senior management positions. There was a general consensus by all eight respondents that progress in raising awareness of race issues generally had been made but little else. This was again put down to the lack of visible numbers of racial minorities, and there being other more important priorities for their organisation to take forward. A statement from one of the respondents **[CS Respondent - White, Female, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in**

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*service]* that perhaps sums up the overall perception on progress was that, *'If judged by what happens and not words then in truth very little progress has been made'*.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, only three had heard of PAR. All three were middle managers who had come across the initiative rather than it being communicated to them. None of the three were, however, aware of the exact requirements of PAR. With regard to specific steps taken, none of the three were aware of any specific practical steps taken as a result of PAR, nor aware of any racial minorities in their respective organisations who had been consulted about the drawing up of PAR Action Plans. All three individuals suggested that the main difficulties in implementing something like PAR would have been a lack of priority given to race issues, and a lack of awareness within the organisation about race issues.

Having been provided with an explanation of PAR, none of the remaining 57 (95%) individuals could recall whether there had been any recruitment/progression initiatives with regard to racial minorities. All were of the view that the manner in which policy directives with regard to race equality issues are generally communicated to the staff members was poor, a majority (38 – 63%), stating in a variety of ways that this was *'non existent'*.

#### **9.6.4 Questionnaire Survey Results – Commitment - PAR**

As with the interview responses, in the questionnaire responses there was a significant difference in the level of awareness of PAR between the Civil Service Organisations and the Racial Minority individuals. Of the eight Civil Service organisations, three were aware of PAR but none were aware of any specific actions taken to adopt the PAR recruitment and progression recommendations. None of the eight Racial Minority individuals were aware of PAR or of any specific actions taken to adopt the PAR recruitment and progression recommendations.



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### 9.6.5 Commitment Summary

With regard to commitment there was a clear divergence of views between the Civil Service organisation respondents and the Racial Minority individual respondents as to the level and nature of this commitment particularly with regard to race and career progression issues. The Civil Service organisation respondents were clearly of the view that commitment was there, certainly within the documentation and rhetoric. The Racial Minority individual respondents were equally clear that there was no real commitment, *'only words'*. All respondent groups did, however, agree that the commitment to equality of opportunity could be more practically demonstrated. This lack of practical action was clearly demonstrated by the poor response and the lack of action and outcomes in taking forward the PAR career progression objectives.

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## 9.7 Influence Findings Summary

The data collection presented in this chapter ascertained the perceptions and views of respondents with regard to the influential issues of culture, commitment and policies and specifically their impact on career progression opportunities for racial minorities.

The findings highlighted a significant difference in the perceptions held by the three respondent groups surveyed (the Civil Service Organisation respondents, the Racial Minority individual staff member respondents, and the Equality Organisation respondents). Although the same themes/questions were put to the respondents, what was particularly striking was the gap between the views of the respondent groups, particularly the Racial Minority individuals and the Civil Service Organisation respondents. This gap in perception was not significantly affected by age, gender or length of service, of the respondents. Although there were significant differences in the views of the Civil Service Organisations and the Racial Minority individual respondents, the overall conclusion from these findings and results are that the Civil Service does have a strong and influential culture and indeed strong and influential sub-culture within the various Departments. This culture, the findings and results suggest, significantly influences its mode of operation which includes the way in which policies are developed, and the commitment given to equality of opportunity, and can have a direct negative impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service. This impact is further discussed and analysed in detail at Chapter eleven.

The findings and results with regard to the practical experiences of the respondents based on practice, opportunities and bias are now considered.

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## **Chapter Ten**

# **Research Results and Findings: Practical**

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## 10.1 Introduction

*“To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in career development and progression in the Civil Service?”*

Using this research question as a basis, this chapter provides a presentation of the second part of the responses to the study’s semi-structured interview schedules, and questionnaires. These responses are presented by setting out the qualitative and quantitative findings and results ordered around the experiences of the respondents with regard to the ‘practical’ issues of practice, opportunity, bias, and barriers, each of which are considered as having a direct impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities within the Civil Service. Where applicable, the interview and questionnaire data for each of the respondent groups (Civil Service Organisations, Racial Minority Individuals and Equality Organisations) are provided by way of contrast and comparison. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main points arising from this second part of the data collection exercise.

## 10.2 Practice

By looking at the manner in which the specific internal processes and procedures of ethnic monitoring and review in respect of recruitment and progression of racial minorities were undertaken, the data collection exercise sought to identify the extent to which the rhetoric of the organisations’ equal opportunities policies were put into practice.

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### 10.2.1 Ethnic Monitoring Process

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, four indicated that mechanisms were in place to monitor recruitment, selection and promotion by ethnic origin. The other four all indicated that the issue had been discussed and would be something that the organisation would be putting in place in the near future. Of the four respondents who indicated that mechanisms were in place, each reported that the monitoring followed the latest census categories and that this monitoring was undertaken at all stages of the recruitment, selection and promotion process. These four respondents considered that this monitoring had not in fact improved the representation of racial minorities in the organisation, and they were all of a view that the real issue with regard to promotion and progression of racial minorities was more to do with the skills and abilities of applicants rather than any prejudice or discrimination. A view from one of these respondents [*CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service*] that summed this up was that, *'if you are good enough there is nothing to stop you getting on; it's got nothing to do with colour'*. Each of these respondents, however, indicated an understanding of the need for monitoring at all stages of the recruitment and selection process to enable the proper mapping of progress for racial minorities. One of these respondents, [*CS Respondent - White, Male, 56 to 65, 30+ years in service*] suggested that, *'you need to be able to demonstrate that everything is fair and above board'*. Of the four respondents who indicated that this would be something that the organisation would be putting in place, all saw the need for monitoring but doubted that it would make any real difference to outcomes.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, 52 (86%) were aware that the organisation did undertake some form of monitoring with regard to recruitment and selection processes, but were not sure exactly what. The vast majority (44 –

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73% of the total) of these 52 respondents were also not sure exactly how this monitoring took place or who had responsibility for it. All 60 respondents were of the view that proper monitoring was essential if improvements in the career progression outcomes for racial minority individuals were ever to be achieved. This proper monitoring, they all in different ways suggested, had not been the case to date as the monitoring figures had not been properly evaluated and had largely been ignored. A practical example provided by one of these respondents **[RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 6-10 years in service]** was the fact that *'I asked for details of progression, but was told that these were not collated by ethnic origin.'* The 60 respondents gave a number of views of what could be done to improve the present situation. A common theme identified by the vast majority (55 – 91%) was the need to act on (evaluate and then take practical actions) the differentials that the monitoring figures might show, *'what's the point of doing anything if you are not going to action it?'* **[RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service].**

### **10.2.2 Ethnic Monitoring - Questionnaire Survey Results**

Table 10.1 shows that 12 (75%) of the 16 Civil Service Organisation and Racial Minority individuals questionnaire respondents reported that their organisation undertook monitoring of recruitment and progression by ethnic origin. The eight Equality Organisations were unanimous in their view that organisations should undertake detailed and comprehensive monitoring.

**Table 10.1 – Ethnic Monitoring**

	Does/Should your / the organisation undertake monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion by ethnic origin?		Do you believe that monitoring improves the recruitment and progression of racial minorities?		Do you believe that there is more that could be done to improve the recruitment and progression processes?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>Civil Service Organisations (8)</b>	8	0	6	2	1	7
<b>Racial Minority Individuals (8)</b>	4	4	8	0	8	0
<b>Equality Organisations (8)</b>	8	0	7	1	7	1

*Source: - Questionnaire Survey Results*

The vast majority (21 -83% of the 24 respondents) were of the view that monitoring would improve the recruitment and progression opportunities for racial minorities. There was a sharp difference of opinion with regard to whether more could be done to improve the current processes. Only one of the eight Civil Service organisations thought that more could be done, whereas 15 (62% of the total respondents) of the remaining 16 respondents were of the view that more could be done.

As to what could be done about the process, there were a number of views from all three respondent groups. From the Civil Service Organisation responses, one respondent [*CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service*] said - *'The whole framework was subjective in nature and needed a complete revamp'*. The majority of the racial minority respondents made reference to the need for a level playing field, and considered that the process was generally biased toward unnecessary competences and did not allow for the transferable skills and abilities often held by racial minority candidates. In addition, the racial minority respondents suggested a need for panels to be more representative and to include racial minority individuals, in particular

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those from an African-Caribbean decent. The majority of the Equality Organisation respondents were of the view that it was not the systems themselves but those operating it was where the problem lay. As one of the Equality Organisation respondents put it [*EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 36 to 45*]: ‘Until and unless there was more accountability and justification of outcomes in the system then little would change’. She articulated the general consensus of this respondent group as to what now needed to be done.

### 10.2.3 Review Procedures

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, all considered that there were specific review procedures in place that would ensure that racial minority individuals would be treated the same as their white counterparts when it came to recruitment and progression.

*‘we treat everyone here the same, there are no problems or complaints and to me that shows that the review procedures are in place and are working well’ [CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 11-20 years in service]*

Whilst none of the eight could specify what exactly the procedures were, where they could be found, and how they operated, they were sure, however, that the procedures were there and that this did ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, all but one made the point that the review procedures in their organisations did not ensure equality of opportunity. Most (49) cited what they saw as the continuing disadvantage experienced by Racial Minority individuals as evidence of the failure of review procedures



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generally. More specifically, the vast majority (56 – 93%) of the Racial Minority individual respondents could point to first hand experiences of the differential progression outcomes for white and racial minority staff. A view from one of these respondents drawing on first hand experience was as follows:

*I was the most senior and most experienced within my section yet I was overlooked yet again in favour of a much more junior white colleague [RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 56 to 65, 21-30 years in service]*

This statement emphasises the view held very strongly by all 60 respondents that despite whatever review procedures were in place, recruitment and progression procedures were biased toward white individuals.

#### **10.2.4 Questionnaire Survey Results – Review Procedures**

The questionnaire responses as to whether their organisation had in place specific recruitment and selection procedures / processes to ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff produced an almost totally contrary viewpoint between the Civil Service Organisation and Racial Minority individual respondents. Seven of the eight Civil Service Organisations reported that their organisation did have appropriate procedures and processes in place and all eight of the Racial Minority individuals reported that their organisation did not have these in place. Of the 24 respondents, 21 (87%) were of the view that specific procedures would ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff. These results again emphasise the difference in perception between the Civil Service organisations and Racial Minority individuals in an area where it was assumed that there would be clarity of the practice in operation.

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### 10.2.5 Practice Summary

In looking at the issue of the practical application of policy with particular regard to the ethnic monitoring and review procedures in respect of recruitment and progression of racial minorities, the Civil Service organisation respondents were generally of the view that these procedures were in place and were not an issue, going on to suggest that whilst monitoring and review mechanisms were necessary, in general terms they could not see how this would be of any real benefit to racial minority individuals. The Racial Minority individual respondents were clear, however, about the need and the benefits that would be attained from effective monitoring and review, making the point that until these were in place and operating properly, then there was no real hope for a significant impact on career progression opportunities and outcomes for racial minorities.

### 10.3 Opportunities

The data collection exercise sought to identify what specific actions had been taken to improve career progression opportunities for racial minorities. Specifically, respondents were asked questions on positive action initiatives and training.

#### 10.3.1 Positive Action Initiatives

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, only one was aware of any specific positive action initiatives for the recruitment and /or progression of racial minorities. The positive action initiative referred to was a recruitment open day aimed specifically at racial minority individuals. This, the respondent indicated:

*...had proved a great success, which as a direct result of the initiative, increased the number of applications for jobs within the organisation*

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*from racial minorities by 200% in the year following the exercise. [CS*

*Respondent - White, Female, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]*

Of the seven respondents not aware of any specific positive action initiatives for the recruitment and /or progression of racial minorities, none could provide any specific reason for this, and only one of the seven thought that positive action schemes would improve the situation for the organisation and/or the racial minority individual. The remaining six were of the view that any such initiatives would be seen as discriminatory, and as a consequence would be counter productive. A quotation from one individual [**CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service**] which reflected this viewpoint was that *'this would be giving racial minorities an unfair advantage'*. This view, which in the eyes of these six respondents amounted to reverse discrimination, was very strongly held and a cause of major concern for the six respondents.

However, of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, five made the same general point that whilst not necessarily a good thing, *'there may be a need for positive action initiatives in some limited circumstances'*. Four of the five, however, qualified this, stating forcefully that this should not only be for racial minorities but if it was to happen at all it should cover all equality strands. The only real benefit identified by these five respondents was the possibility of providing a wider range of opportunities for under represented groups. The main drawback identified was that of unfairness to particular groups, such as white males. A very strong view held by one of these respondents was that *'white males in particular received a raw deal with this equality lark'*. [**CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service**]. Two of the five were of the view that there was a thin line between positive action and positive discrimination, and that many in any event perceive positive action as a form of discrimination. The

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three respondents who considered the encouragement of positive action as not a good thing under any circumstances were all of the view that this was positive discrimination in all but name. They could see no real benefits but significant drawbacks in *'creating and providing favouritism'* and as a consequence, unsettling the workforce and not following the guiding principle of the Civil Service of fair and open competition, based on merit. A general view from one respondent that summed up the general consensus was that:

*'why change things, we now have the policies in place and over time things will improve, the real need is for racial minorities to take note of the values and requirements of the organisation and make sure that they adopt them'. [CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service]*

By way of further emphasis, all eight Civil Service Organisation respondents made the point in different ways that the government needed to be very careful in pushing forward positive action initiatives, as it had the potential to make the present system a lot worse.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals interviewed, 34 (57%) were unaware of any specific positive action initiatives within their organisations for the recruitment and /or progression of racial minorities. The remaining 26 (43%) individuals considered positive action to be vital if racial minorities were to progress within the Civil Service. The 26 provided a number of examples of initiatives in both the recruitment and progression process that had taken place within their respective organisation. In providing this information, the individuals made it clear that all of the examples provided were aimed specifically at racial minority individuals and included initiatives such as recruitment open days, adverts targeted at the ethnic minority press, inward secondments of racial minorities, mentoring, work shadowing, work placements, Black Staff Networks and black management development courses. The 34 individuals who were unaware of any specific positive action initiatives

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for the recruitment and /or progression of racial minorities were unanimous in their view that they would improve the situation/profile of both the organisation and the racial minority individuals. A comment from one individual [*RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service*] which summed this up was that, '*seeing nothing but good coming out of positive action initiatives*'. None of the 34 could think of any good or logical reason why positive action initiatives were not being taken forward by their organisation. A view as a possible reason, made in different ways by the vast majority (26) of the 34 individuals, was that management would be afraid of the backlash from the white majority if they were to provide positive action initiatives to racial minorities. A comment from one of these respondents was that '*it's not in their culture to want any change, they would much prefer to maintain the status quo*' [*RM Respondent - Asian, Female, 36 to 45, 1-5 years in service*], this was a shared view within this respondent group and, as it provides a perception of the link between culture and behaviour, is of particular relevance to this study.

With regard to the benefits of positive action initiatives, all 60 Racial Minority individual respondents considered these to be a good thing. All the 60 respondents could see benefits of improved fairness and equity, 49 (82%) making mention directly and indirectly of redressing past unfairness. No drawbacks at all could be seen by 51 (85%) of the individuals. A number of these commented, however, that others may see this as unfair and as a consequence, resent it. All were adamant that positive action initiatives were beneficial and suggested that those who had a view that positive action amounted to positive discrimination, '*needed awareness training to understand the reason for taking such steps*'. Perhaps not surprisingly, a common view from this group of respondents was that positive action initiatives were particularly needed for racial minorities, who appear to have suffered the most in recruitment and progression over the years. Of the nine individuals who could

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see drawbacks, this again was mainly based on the perceptions/reactions of others, rather than any real practical drawbacks. A quote from one individual with regard to potential benefits which was particularly relevant was that:

*'the only way you are ever going to change the way they think and the things that they expect of you is to promote your own views, and beliefs through things such as positive action initiatives'. [RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 18 to 25, 1-5 years in service]*

This need to be able to have different values and have these accepted was a view put forward by this respondent but was a common theme put forward by a large number of this respondent group.

All five equality organisation respondents were of the view that positive action initiatives were a good thing. Four, however, qualified this by stating that within recruitment and progression, it was not only racial minorities who suffered disadvantage. One of these respondents made the point that: *'women, particularly at senior levels, face the same type of difficulties and therefore need similar initiatives'. [EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 46 to 55, 6-10 years in service]*

The benefits all five reported in different ways were that of equity and providing a more level playing field for all. This, in turn, they suggested should mean better recruitment and progression rates for under-represented groups. As far as drawbacks were concerned, if there were any, the view from all five was that this was based on ignorance and a lack of understanding of positive action. A quote from one respondent which summed up the general attitude of this group was that:

*'positive action initiatives were much needed particularly in the recruitment and progression arena where the subjective views and values by those making the decisions always prevailed'. [EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 1-5 years in service]*

This respondent also related the subjective views to the norms and expectations of those mainly white managers making the decisions on progression.

### 10.3.2 Positive Action - Questionnaire Survey Results

Both the Racial Minority individual questionnaire respondents and the Civil Service Organisations respondents (Table 10.2) were overwhelmingly of the same view that there were not any positive action initiatives of note that could be identified within their organisations. However, a number of ‘minor’ initiatives were mentioned, such as ‘*advertising specifically in the ethnic press*’ and ‘*a work placement scheme*’.

*Table 10.2 – Positive Action - Questionnaire Survey Results*

	Any positive action initiatives that could be identified?		Positive Action initiatives a good thing?		Positive Action initiatives would improve the recruitment/ progression process?.	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	1	7	2	6	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	0	8	8	0	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	7	1	7	1

Source: - *Research Findings*

As to whether positive action initiatives were a good thing that would improve the recruitment/progression process, and improve the profile of the Civil Service / organisation, there were again diametrically opposite views. The Racial Minority individual respondents and the Equality Organisations reported a very positive view, and the Civil Service Organisations, an overwhelming negative view. From these responses it was clear, that there appeared to be a misunderstanding on their part concerning the difference between positive action and positive discrimination.

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### 10.3.3 Training

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents interviewed, all said that their organisations had provided some form of race equality training. Six also said that they had undertaken race equality recruitment and selection awareness training. On further questioning it became apparent that both the general race training and the race equality recruitment and selection awareness training were both limited in nature and normally included all strands of equality. *'I did something for about 10 minutes in my induction around equality but I really cannot remember exactly what'* [CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 1-5 years in service]

By way of evidence of this observation on the limits of training provided, on further probing, seven of the respondents when asked specifically about race specific courses indicated in different ways that in line with the policy to mainstream equality, the race aspect had been included within a general equality course. The remaining respondent indicated that a full one day race specific training course had been provided. With regard to the equality recruitment and selection awareness training (not race specific), four of the respondents said that the duration of this training was between 10 minutes and 20 minutes, the other two that the duration was between 30-40 minutes. Of the two respondents who indicated that they had not undertaken any race equality recruitment and selection awareness training, both said that there were plans to introduce this, but they could not see what real benefit that this would provide. A quote from one of these respondents [CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 11-20 years in service] was that, *'Our recruitment practices are fair and open and strictly based on merit, therefore what is the need?'*

This statement encapsulated the general view from these respondents, who, in general, could see no real benefit in race equality training being provided to improve recruitment and progression.



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Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals interviewed, 20 (33%) were aware that their organisations had provided some form of race training. Ten of these 20 respondents were also aware that their organisation had undertaken race equality recruitment and selection awareness training. These 20 respondents indicated that the general race training was part of general equality training and not race specific. A point emphasised by all of these respondents was the limited time actually spent on the issue of race during the training. A view from two of these 20 respondents that summed up this sentiment was that - *'It's as if the trainers are afraid to discuss the issue'*. Of the 10 individuals from the 20 who indicated that they were aware of their organisation having undertaken race equality recruitment and selection awareness training, all were of the view that this was limited in nature, most estimating that the training was 10-15 minutes in duration and not race specific, *'We were given a 15 minute session as part of induction but that covered everything - I don't think that the person doing it had a clue'* **[RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 46 to 55, 1-5 years in service]**. All 60 individuals were unanimous in their view of the benefit of race specific training and all felt very strongly that this would improve their situation immensely. None of the 60 individuals could think of any good or logical reason why race specific training should not be provided. Two quotes which sum up the views of these respondents are that:

*'the organisation did not know anything about race and more importantly did not want to know'* **[RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 18 to 25, 6-10 years in service]**

*'It should be a prerequisite to have undertaken a full day's race training including recruitment and selection issues before anyone was allowed to sit on a recruitment panel or undertake appraisals'*. **[RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 46 to 55, 1-5 years in service]**

The need for race awareness training to assist the lack of understanding and awareness by the mainly white managers was strongly felt by the vast majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents.

### 10.3.4 Opportunities (Training) - Questionnaire Survey Results -

Table 10.3 shows that in response to the question of whether race training had been provided, both the Racial Minority individual questionnaire respondents, and the Civil Service Organisations were overwhelmingly of the same viewpoint that this had not been provided.

*Table 10.3- Training Opportunities - Questionnaire Survey Results*

	Race equality training provided?		Race equality training, would improve the recruitment/ progression process?		Race equality training, would improve the profile of the Civil Service?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	1	7	1	7	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	1	7	8	0	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)			7	1	7	1

*Source: - Research Findings*

As to whether race training would improve the recruitment and progression process and improve the profile of the Civil Service / organisation, there were, however, diametrically opposite views. The Racial Minority individual respondents, and the Equality Organisations reporting a very positive view, the Civil Service Organisations an overwhelming negative view. Based on subsequent telephone conversations with some of the Civil Service organisation respondents, the main reason put forward for the negative views on race training was because of the standard of training that had been provided in the past. A very clear view from those who I spoke to subsequently was that they had not been given value for money, and indeed the mainly black trainers had created difficulties in the confrontational way in which the training had been delivered.

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### 10.3.5 Opportunities Summary

In looking at the issue of opportunities, of particular interest was the general view amongst Civil Service Organisation respondents that race issues had been dealt with, and that equal prominence now needed to be given to other equality strands if 'mainstreaming' was to be achieved. In addition the Civil Service Organisation respondents were concerned that positive action initiatives with regard to career progression needed to be open to all equality strands and not just race. This was not a view shared by the Racial Minority individual respondents, or Equality Organisation respondents who generally identified a need for particular action for racial minorities. Similarly for training, the Civil Service organisation respondents saw little benefit coming out of the equality training that had taken place and were also adamant that too much emphasis was being given to race issues, again in direct opposition to the views of the Racial Minority individual respondents, who saw real benefits from awareness training as a way of improving the opportunities for racial minorities.

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## 10.4 Prejudice/ Bias

With regard to the issue of prejudice and bias, the data collection exercise sought to identify what if any race specific complaints had been made by the Racial Minority individuals interviewed, what if any race specific complaints had been received by the Civil Service organisation respondents and what if any race specific complaints the Equality organisations had been notified of or were aware of. Perceptions were also sought of the validity and credibility of the statistical information available with regard to prejudice and bias.

### 10.4.1 Complaints

All eight Civil Service organisation respondents had over the past two years either received (five) or were aware of (three) one or more complaint about supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority member of staff. The area where most complaints arose was that of appraisal, closely followed by promotion. As to what could be done to address the issues faced, a quotation from one respondent which sums up the eight respondents' view on the complaints and how to address them was that:

*'a number of racial minorities have a habit of complaining and using the race card, this helps no one particularly themselves'.*

**[CS Respondent - White, Male, 56 to 65, 21-30 years in service]**

This statement reflected the underlying view of this group of respondents who generally felt that the complaints made were unjustified.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, 59 (98.3%) had complained (formally and/or informally) during their employment about one or more of the aspects of promotion, appraisal or supervision (47 promotion; 54 appraisal; and 37 supervision). All felt that their complaint was justified and had been caused by

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the unfairness that they perceived in the attitude of their managers or the 'system'. This attitude, these respondents suggested, was most related to the preferences of their managers, for those who acted and behaved in the same manner as themselves, any difference perceived or otherwise was from the respondents' experiences likely to lead to a negative viewpoint toward those who were different.

*'as a Chinese man, I know that I am treated differently, but it is even worse if you are a black man, I can tell you this from experience as sometimes I am told things in confidence, as they do not see me as black.'*  
**[RM Respondent - Chinese, Male, 46 to 55, 11-15 years in service]**

As to a way forward, respondents made reference to the need for training, the need for transparency and a proper independent appeals system. Without exception, the respondents made the point of the need for more racial minority managers, to act as role models and also importantly the fact that this would demonstrate change. As one Racial Minority individual respondent put it:

*'until and unless white managers faced up to the fact that things had changed, nothing was going to change.'* **[RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]**

The one individual who had not had cause to complain was aware of at least four Racial Minority individuals who had complained about their appraisal, and two about not getting a promotion. This individual did not see this as a problem, *'life is not fair but we do tend to moan more than most about it'*, **[RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 46 to 55, 1-6 years in service]** going on to indicate that there were other white individuals who he could point to who had made similar complaints.

Of the five equality organisation respondents, only two had over the past two years either received (one) or was aware (one) of one or more complaint from a racial minority civil servant about supervision, appraisal or promotion. Both

complaints related to being overlooked for promotion. With regard to what could be done to address this, the clear viewpoint from both of these respondents was the need for greater transparency. As one respondent [*EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service*] put it ‘a radical overhaul of what was being sought in promotion exercises’, going on to suggest that ‘it was clear that the present appraisal arrangements obviously mitigated against racial minorities’. The three respondents who were not aware of or had not received complaints, stated that this would not have been within their remit and as such they could not comment on this aspect.

#### 10.4.2 Prejudice/Bias - Questionnaire Survey Results

Table 10.4 shows that in response to the question of receipt or awareness of complaints based on race, members of all questionnaire respondent groups reported having received or being aware of race specific complaints.

*Table 10.4 - Complaints Perspectives Questionnaire Survey Results*

<b>Civil Service Organisations (8)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have you in the past year received or been aware of a formal complaint about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority Civil Service staff member?	5	3
Are you aware of any racial minority individuals who have complained but not formally?	7	1
<b>Racial Minority Individuals (8)</b>		
Have you had cause to complain about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion?	7	1
Are you aware of any racial minority individuals who have complained?	8	0
<b>Equality Organisations (8)</b>		
Have you in the past year received or been aware of a complaint about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority Civil Service staff member?	5	3

*Source: - research Findings*

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As with the interview responses, the awareness by all respondent groups of what appears to be a relatively large number of complaints by racial minorities was a real surprise, more so that despite this awareness, very little appeared to be taking place to deal with this as an issue.

### 10.4.3 Statistics

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, six were clear and stated in a variety of ways that whilst the statistical information available may point to relative disadvantage for racial minorities, things were getting better, and with the improved policies and initiatives aimed at racial minorities this situation would improve in due course. These six respondents were of a similar view of a need for patience, summed up by the point made by one of them, that:

*'as with all staff in the Civil Service, individuals would need to bide their time and ensure that they follow the rules and requirements in order to get on'. [CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]*

The other two respondents did not accept that the statistics necessarily showed disadvantage, and suggested that in real terms, racial minorities were adequately represented and were no less disadvantaged compared, for example, to women and disabled people; both these respondents stated that: *'So nothing more needs to be done'*.

A view from 56 (93%) of the 60 Racial Minority individuals was that the statistics accurately reflected their experiences and in different ways suggested that this was due to nothing other than bias and discrimination. One respondent summed up this view stating that:

*'you have to be a certain way if you are to get on, black people are not regarded as being able to work at a senior level'. [RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 26 to 35, 6-10 years in service]*

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As to what needs to be done to improve the situation, most of the 56 individuals made reference to positive action schemes, secondments and the need for role models at senior management positions in order to improve the situation. A minority of the 56 individuals (23 – 38% of the total number of respondents) were also of the view that things were getting worse rather than better. A view that emerged from all of the 41 African-Caribbean respondents was that it now appeared that any senior management role for ‘black’ individuals would undoubtedly go to an Asian person. This was a view that was very strongly held and very forcefully made by this group of African-Caribbean respondents, well articulated by one of these respondents who suggested that:

*‘it seems that if you are Asian then you are regarded as more acceptable than if you are black’.* [RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]

This greater acceptance of Asian individuals was also perhaps surprisingly the view of most of the 11 Asian respondents.

The view from the five equality organisation respondents was that the statistics were probably accurate, but that this situation was not specific to the Civil Service and a number cited the local authorities and the private sector where similar statistics could be derived. The general reason for this was stated by one of these respondents [EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service] who put this down to the ‘societal views of black people, in particular their ability to manage and take on responsibility’. As to what could be done to improve the situation, the very clear view from these respondents was a need to embrace and recognise different talents, and the fact that there was not just one way of doing things. This understanding, one of the Equality Organisation respondents [EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 36 to 45]



suggested, 'would take time but as a more multi-cultural society evolved would happen'.

This optimism was not shared by the remainder of these respondents.

#### 10.4.4 Statistical Information - Questionnaire Survey Results

In taking note of the statistical information available, Table 10.5 shows that from the questionnaire survey, there were mixed, but primarily negative views as to whether the Civil Service was in fact a career of choice for racial minorities. The Racial Minority respondents reporting one Yes - seven No, the Civil Service Organisations four Yes - four No, and the Equality Organisations two Yes - six No.

*Table 10.5 – Statistical Information Perspectives - Questionnaire Survey Results*

	Would you see the Civil Service as a career of choice for racial minorities?		Do you consider that the perceived cultural values of the Civil Service create a barrier to the Service being a career of choice for racial minorities?		Is there more that the organisation can do to encourage and provide greater opportunities for racial minority staff?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	4	4	2	6	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	1	7	8	0	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	2	6	7	1	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

*Source: - Research Findings*

As to whether this was due to cultural barriers, there were very different perspectives put forward from the Civil Service Organisations (two Yes - six No) to those from the Racial Minority respondents (eight Yes - zero No), and the Equality Organisations (seven Yes - one No). This divergence of views was also the case in response to whether more could be done to encourage racial minorities to progress. The written comments of two Racial Minority individual respondents' reflected this stating that:

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*'there was a need for role models and the need for the organisation to become more multi-cultural in its outlook'. [African-Caribbean, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]*

*'there was a need for more positive action initiatives and a need for action to stop the Civil Service being seen as a white dominated organisation'. [Asian, Female, 46 to 55, 6-10 years in service]*

These comments contrasted with the Civil Service Organisations respondents' general view on what more could be done, summed up by one **[CS Respondent - White, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]** who suggested that:

*'whilst there was always room for improvement the statistics hid the good work and real progress being made in the Civil Service on equality issues'.*

These comments were fairly typical and emphasised the very real difference of opinion and viewpoint between the Racial Minority individual respondents, and that of the Civil Service Organisations. Of note, however, was that within the Civil Service organisation responses, regardless of grade or length of service, there was a clear difference of opinion between the male and female Civil Service organisation respondents, the female respondents providing a much more positive viewpoint throughout the questionnaire survey responses. In noting this gender difference of opinion, it is worth re-iterating that the questionnaires sought the perceptions of respondents based on their individual experiences, as such, apart from the gender difference highlighted above, perhaps not surprisingly no other clear pattern of commonality of views emerged to the questions posed.

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#### **10.4.5 Prejudice/ Bias Summary**

With regard to the issue of prejudice and bias, the divergence of views could not have been clearer. In general the Racial Minority individual respondents were very sure that prejudice and bias existed and that this was a major ongoing factor, many citing personal experiences of complaints, bullying and harassment. The greater instances of complaints by racial minorities appeared to accord with the statistical information available which generally pointed to a possible bias against racial minorities. The Civil Service Organisation respondents in general, however, did not consider there to be any direct prejudice or bias and in the main considered that there were good reasons for the apparent statistical imbalance, and that too much was being made of the statistical information available, which many of the Civil Service Organisation respondents suggested did not tell the whole story.

#### **10.5 Barriers**

Following on from the questions on the respondents' perception of opportunities within the Civil Service, the data collection exercise sought to explore the possible barriers faced by racial minorities with regard to career progression generally, but specifically with regard to supervision and appraisal.

##### **10.5.1 Progression Barriers**

Looking at progression issues, of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, four reported that culture was probably a barrier to the progression of racial minorities. The other four respondents, whilst acknowledging the possibility, thought it unlikely that the perceived 'culture' would create these barriers. The four respondents who said that this was

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probably true could identify very few specific 'cultural barriers' but listed a number of potential issues that may prevent racial minorities from progressing. Issues included time in the organisation, racial minorities not being seen as fitting into the organisation, stereotypes of certain racial minority groups, and from one respondent, a view that:

*'generally racial minorities appeared less able to meet the Civil Service competences'. [CS Respondent - White, Male, 56 to 65, 31+ years in service]*

As far as removing these barriers was concerned, all these respondents came up with the need for further awareness training, but also three of the four were of the view that the problem actually lay with the racial minorities themselves, who, they suggested, *'should learn to fit in better'*. Of the four respondents who thought it unlikely that the perceived 'culture' would create progression barriers for racial minorities, the general view put forward was that everyone was treated fairly and that they could not see how the perceived culture would affect their progression. With regard to the apparent significant discrepancy in progress for racial minorities, a view put forward by two of the respondents was expressed by one of them as follows:

*'statistics did not always take all the factors into account, and that the same could be said for other groups such as disabled individuals'.*

All four of these respondents considered that there was very little that could be done to change this situation. Two of these respondents did, however, suggest a need for greater awareness training for managers.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, the overwhelming majority (52 – 86%) considered that the perceived 'culture' did create progression barriers for racial minorities. These 52 individuals, all in different ways, considered and made the point that the main barrier faced by racial minorities, was, as one individual put

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it, *'prejudice - 'pure and simple'. [African-Caribbean, Male, 26 to 35, 6-10 years in service]* This prejudice, most emphasised, was based to a large extent on the views (values and beliefs) held by the mainly white management. Whilst this prejudice was not considered by these 52 individuals to be overt and indeed some identified it as bias rather than prejudice, all 52 considered that this remained a significant problem. This prejudice/bias based on the perception of managers, it was suggested by a large number (40) of these 52 individuals, leads to a number of both direct and indirect barriers. These include a lack of senior role models, racial minorities not being in the feeder grades to enable them to have the opportunity to progress to the senior management ranks, negative stereotyping of racial minorities, subjective appraisals, lack of access to training and lack of positive action initiatives. As to how the barriers could be removed, all of these 52 respondents made reference to awareness training and positive action initiatives, but more fundamentally, some (29) made reference to a need to review the framework under which progression took place within the Civil Service, if things were ever to change. As one of these individuals put it:

*'you have to be twice as good as your white colleague to get on, and then only if you are lucky'. [African-Caribbean, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service]*

Importantly, and perhaps surprisingly many (32) of these respondents considered that things in many respects were actually getting worse rather than better.

Of the eight individuals who thought that the perceived 'culture' did not create progression barriers for racial minorities, the general reason put forward for this view concerned the apathy on the part of some racial minority individuals, *'there are a lot of us who are lazy, and pretend to use anything as an excuse' [Asian, Male, 46 to 55, 1-6 years in service]*. With regard to the apparent significant discrepancy in progress for racial minorities, these eight individuals had no

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explanation for this, but considered that this may not have been peculiar to racial minorities alone. As far as anything more that could be done, again the eight individuals could provide very little in the way of specific proposals, but there was a general view that there was more that racial minorities could do to help themselves.

All five equality organisation respondents were of the view that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service did or had the potential to create progression barriers for racial minorities. Four of the equality respondents identified these barriers, in general terms, as the 'nature' of the Civil Service. When asked to clarify this, all four were of the view that this related to the culture of the Civil Service and as a consequence, the way it operated. The remaining equality respondent saw these barriers as structural, and suggested that '*they were in fact necessary to ensure the independence and impartiality of the Civil Service*'. [*African-Caribbean, Male 46 to 55*] As far as removing these barriers were concerned, two of the equality respondents suggested a root and branch review as the only way to progress. The remaining three equality respondents made reference to the need for ongoing training and awareness, particularly for senior members of the Civil Service.

### **10.5.2 Progression Barriers - Questionnaire Survey Results**

In response to whether the Civil Service culture creates barriers for racial minorities in progressing, there were again diametrically opposite views provided (Table 10.6). The Racial Minority individual questionnaire respondents (eight yes - zero no) reported a unanimous yes, supported by the Equality Organisations (seven yes - one no). This compares with an overwhelming opposite view from the Civil Service Organisations (one yes - seven no).

*Table 10.6– Progression Perspectives Questionnaire Survey Results*

	Whether the CS culture creates career progression barriers for racial minorities?	
	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	7	1

Source: - Research Findings

As to what could be done to address these barriers, the vast majority of the Racial Minority and Equality Organisation respondents were of the view that there was a need for much greater use of positive action initiatives. In addition most made mention of and were concerned that the stereotypical views of racial minorities remained a real barrier that the Civil Service organisations needed to tackle as a matter of urgency. The one Civil Service Organisation respondent who was of the view that Civil Service culture was a barrier suggested that more role models and less stereotyping was needed. The seven Civil Service Organisation respondents who considered that there were no ‘real’ progression barriers, in general terms had similar views of a system that was fair and open to all.

### 10.5.3 Supervision

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, two were of the view that the perceived ‘culture’ of the Civil Service created supervision problems for racial minority staff. These two respondents felt, however, that this was marginal, and not a big issue. The sort of problems the two respondents detailed related, in the main, to attitudinal issues of the racial minorities supervised and as both these respondents put it – *‘the unrealistic expectations on*

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*both sides*'. By way of clarification, both respondents made reference to the difficulty they were aware of in white managers managing black staff in the current political and legal climate - *'you dare not do or say anything otherwise you would find a claim of racism against you'*. With regard to addressing supervision problems, both respondents were of the view that the problem was with the racial minority staff and it was they who had to *'get their act together'* to make what was a good process work for everyone. Of the six respondents who were of the view that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service did not create supervision problems for racial minority staff, all suggested in one form or another that the disgruntlement was 'natural' for those who were either not up to the job, or had a tendency to complain. The same quotation from two of these six respondents that sums up this view was that *'they just do not understand the requirements expected here'*. [**CS Respondent - White, Males, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service**] With regard to taking things forward, four of these six respondents were of the view that there was very little that could be done to improve the supervision situation. The other two respondents suggested a need for some form of guidance and training for the racial minority staff to help them better understand and benefit from supervision.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, the overwhelming majority (49 – 81%) considered that the perceived 'culture' created supervision problems for racial minorities. The 49 individuals articulated in different ways the view that the main problem faced was a lack of understanding on the part of the mainly white managers of the cultural needs of racial minorities. This lack of understanding, they suggested, led to differences in the way in which racial minority staff were supervised and managed, often greater expectations being required of them than their white counterparts. Interestingly a number (26 – 43%) also made reference to the lack of confidence that their managers appeared to have when dealing with them. As far as addressing the problems,



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all were of the view, some more strongly than others, that training and awareness were key, as was the need for white managers to be fairer and more objective in dealing with racial minorities. A comment which summed up the basic feeling of these Racial Minority individual respondents, suggested by one of these respondents [*RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Female, 26 to 35, 1-5 years in service*], was that *'they should stop trying to turn us into them'*.

Of the 11 individuals who considered that the perceived 'culture' did not create supervision problems for racial minorities, seven in general terms were of the view that the systems employed were fair, and could not see what there was to complain about. As a consequence, a consensus view from these seven individuals was that they could not see what else needed to be done. The remaining four individuals, whilst of the view that the perceived 'culture' did not create supervision problems for racial minorities, did, however, consider that from personal experiences, some line managers treated racial minority staff in a different manner. One respondent [*RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service*] suggested that: *'there is almost an expectation of conflict'*. As to what could be done to improve the situation, two distinctive views were put forward by this group of 11 individuals. One was the need for greater training and awareness for the managers and secondly a more simplified and more objective supervision framework that did not allow (the often subjective) views of managers to be recorded.

All five equality organisation respondents were of the view that the perceived 'culture' created or had the potential to create supervision problems for racial minorities. These problems were identified by the five respondents in general terms as a lack of understanding of the purpose of supervision by both sides and the different approach (values) that both sides brought to supervision. Again the main remedy suggested was further training and awareness for

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managers, although two of the five also suggested a root and branch review of the supervision processes as the only way to progress.

#### 10.5.4 Supervision Barriers - Questionnaire Survey Results

Does the Civil Service culture create supervision problems? There were, once again, diametrically opposite views about this (see Table 10.7). The Racial Minority individual questionnaire respondents (eight yes - zero no), and the Equality Organisations (seven yes – one no) reported a definite yes, and the Civil Service Organisations (one yes - seven no) produced a resounding No.

**Table 10.7 – Supervision Perspectives Questionnaire Survey Results**

	Whether the CS culture creates supervision problems for racial minorities?	
	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	7	1

*Source: - Research Findings*

As to what could be done about improving the supervision process, a common view from the Racial Minority individuals was the need to accept that people were different and that different approaches may be needed, without imposing the supervisors' own views on the process. A similar view was provided by the Equality Organisation respondents. The one respondent from a Civil Service Organisation, who was of the view that the Civil Service culture did create supervision problems, suggested that there was a need for training for the mainly white managers. The remainder could not see that there were any problems and in general provided comments to this effect.

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### 10.5.5 Appraisal

Of the eight Civil Service organisation respondents, seven reported that there were issues for racial minorities, although not necessarily difficulties with the appraisal process. All seven put this down to a lack of understanding on the part of the racial minorities, but they also recognised the possibility of the perceived 'white culture' creating these so called difficulties. The sort of difficulties put forward by the seven respondents as related as by one respondent '*an unwillingness to accept criticism*' [**CS Respondent - White, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service**]. To deal with these issues/difficulties, all seven respondents suggested further management training, for example, in dealing with black staff and also the need for further awareness training for both white managers and racial minority staff, '*the racial minority staff in particular*'. Five of the seven suggested in different ways that: '*they should learn to follow the rules better.*' The one respondent who suggested that there were no difficulties put forward the view that a clear policy that was in place that was followed to the letter without detriment to anyone. These respondents felt that the apparent disgruntlement did not necessarily relate to difficulties caused by either the process itself or the way it was managed and implemented.

Of the 60 Racial Minority individuals, all but one was of the view that there were difficulties within the appraisal system, 45 (75%) of them attributing this to the perceived culture of their organisation/the Civil Service. The sort of difficulties described related to poor marks based on negative stereotyping of racial minorities, subjective comments not evidenced by fact and a general lack of awareness demonstrated by those undertaking the appraisals. A view from one respondent was that '*the white bosses have unrealistic expectations of us and when these appear not to be met, we are marked down – what I am saying is that we do not appear to 'fit' the cultural requirements necessary*' [**RM Respondent - African-Caribbean,**

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*Male, 36 to 45, 6-10 years in service*]. As to what to do about these difficulties, the overwhelming view was the need for retraining of those undertaking appraisals and a much clearer and transparent process, not subject to the prejudices and bias of those undertaking them. The one Racial Minority individual respondent [*RM Respondent - Asian, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service*] who considered that there were no difficulties, suggested that the disgruntlement '*was all in the mind*', going on to say that he had never had any difficulties because he worked hard to ensure that the criteria set was in fact met. As a consequence, it was his view that there was nothing more that needed to be done to improve the situation.

All five Equality Organisation respondents made clear that their knowledge of the specific Civil Service appraisal system was limited. They did, however, consider that the '*Eurocentric culture*' of the Civil Service could create difficulties for racial minorities. These difficulties related, the five suggested, particularly to the competences used by the Civil Service. As one respondent put it:

*'you normally have a white person doing the appraisal, based on a biased framework, what chance does the racial minority member of staff have?'* [*EO Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55*]

With regard to what could be done about these difficulties, the general consensus was that there was a need for a new system that was much more objective and that dealt with performance and outcomes, rather than character traits.

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### 10.5.6 Appraisal Barriers - Questionnaire Survey Results

The Racial Minority individual respondents (eight yes - zero no), and the Equality Organisations (seven yes – one no) reported a definite yes to the question of whether the Civil Service culture created appraisal issues and/or problems, (Table 10.8). The Civil Service Organisations, however, (one yes - seven no) reported an overwhelming No. These results perhaps not surprisingly are the same as for the questionnaire responses with regard to supervision barriers outlined at 10.4.6 above. This can be explained to some extent by the clear link between the two processes, which are often indistinguishable, supervision being and being seen as part of the overall appraisal process.

Of note, however, from these responses was that unlike the semi-structured interview results to this question, but as with the supervision responses, there were again diametrically opposite views between the Civil Service Organisation and Racial Minority individual questionnaire respondents.

*Table 10.8 - Appraisal Perspectives Questionnaire Survey Results*

	Does the CS culture create supervision problems for racial minorities?	
	Yes	No
Civil Service Organisations (8)	1	7
Racial Minority Individuals (8)	8	0
Equality Organisations (8)	7	1

*Source: - Research Findings*

As to what could be done about improving the appraisal process, as with the supervision barrier responses, a recurring view from the Racial Minority individual respondents was the need to accept that people were different and brought different skills, had different values and generally a need to move away from what appeared to be long established ways of working. The one respondent from a Civil Service Organisation who was of the view that appraisal problems were created, suggested that there was a need for training for the mainly white managers.

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### **10.5.7 Barriers Summary**

The Racial Minority individual respondents in particular were very clear that a number of barriers existed which, at the very least, hindered their progression opportunities. The Civil Service Organisation respondents, on the other hand, in general, whilst conceding that there were some barriers that may have the potential to hinder, did not see these as significant or indeed noteworthy.

Supervision and appraisal mechanisms were highlighted by the Racial Minority individual respondents as specific barriers, both in the way they are designed and operated. This was a view generally supported by the Equality Organisations but again a view not shared by the Civil Service Organisations.

### **10.6 Practice Findings Summary**

The findings in this chapter focus on the perceptions and views of respondents with regard to their experiences by looking at the issues of practice, opportunity, bias and barriers with specific regard to the impact perceived or experienced on career progression opportunities for racial minorities.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the findings highlighted a significant difference in the perceptions and experiences of the three respondent groups (the Civil Service Organisation respondents, the Racial Minority individual staff member respondents, and the Equality Organisation respondents). As with the influential factors at chapter nine, although the same themes/questions were put to the respondents, what was particularly striking was the gap in the views among the respondent groups, particularly the views of the Racial Minority individuals and the Civil Service Organisation respondents.

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The overall summary drawn from these findings point, in the view of particularly the racial minority respondents, to practices that have the potential to significantly impact negatively on the career progression of its racial minority staff, based on issues such as inadequate training, a lack of proactive positive action initiatives, bias and the subjective nature of supervision and appraisal.

Two issues of note that were apparent in the responses were, first, the very strongly held views within the racial minority group of the difference of treatment of the Asian and African-Caribbean individuals, and second, the more positive views put forward by the female Civil Service Organisation questionnaire respondents to the issues of action, bias and potential barriers.

These issues and the apparent negative impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service is now further discussed and analysed at chapter eleven.

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## Chapter Eleven

### Research Analysis



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## 11.1 Introduction

Chapters eight, nine and ten described the findings from relevant Civil Service statistics, and the perceptions of the study's respondent groups. Structured around the research questions presented at chapter six, this chapter brings together and analyses these findings, and through this, seeks to provide an evidential basis of the extent to which the organisational culture of the Civil Service impacts on the career progression of racial minorities in the UK Civil Service.

The structure for this evidential evaluation is first a contextualisation of the findings. This is followed by a consideration of the respondents' perception around the issues of culture, race/racism. There is then a detailed consideration of the specific research questions themselves, concluding with an overall summary of the analysis. This evidential evaluation is informed, where appropriate, by reference to the discourse in the earlier literature review chapters, and more particularly the responses to the 'influential' issues of policy, and commitment at chapter nine, and the responses to the 'practical' issues of practice, opportunity, and bias at chapter ten.

## 11.2 Context

By way of contextualisation, three important observations need to be noted from the outset:

1. The findings and results highlighted a significant difference in the perceptions held by the three respondent groups surveyed (the Civil Service organisation respondents, the Racial Minority individual respondents, and the Equality Organisation respondents). Although the same themes/questions were put to the respondents, what was particularly striking was the gap between the views of the respondent groups, particularly the views of the Racial Minority individuals and the Civil Service organisation respondents;

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2. The acknowledgement by almost all of the respondents (95%) that whilst the Civil Service statistical data indicated an improvement in the career progression opportunities and outcomes for racial minorities in comparison to their white counterparts, these data also continue to indicate, in percentage terms (particularly at the senior levels), relative disadvantage in comparison to their white counterparts for this group. From the interviews this continuing disadvantage was generally reinforced by the perceptions of the respondents, although there was a significant difference of view between the Civil Service organisations and Racial Minority individuals as to the extent and importance of this disadvantage. The views of the third respondent group (the Equality Organisations) were generally in line with those of the Racial Minority individuals;
  3. There was general agreement among all respondent groups (in line with the Civil Service statistical data) that the vast majority of racial minority individuals were still in the lower grades within the Civil Service, and that the numbers of racial minority staff at more senior levels remains well below the overall racial minority staff level. Taking note of this perception, a strongly held view from the Racial Minority respondents interviewed for this study was that the small improvement in those progressing (particularly those who had reached the Senior Civil Service level) were predominantly 'professional' Asian men, reinforcing the views of Costello (2006) of the professional glass elevator that exists in employment progression<sup>92</sup>. Many of these respondents highlighted this as an issue that needed further consideration as there appeared to be a clear distinction between the career progression of Asian and African-Caribbean individuals.

These observations are of particular importance to this study and should be seen as a 'common thread' that is of relevance throughout the analysis.

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<sup>92</sup> The *glass elevator* or *escalator*, terms which imply that there is an invisible vehicle that transports individuals (mostly men) up the through the ranks of corporate power. A point developed by Carrie Young Costello's *Professional Identity Crisis: Race, Class, Gender, and Success at Professional Schools* (Vanderbilt University Press) which identifies the success of Asian and Asian American students in professional settings.

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## 11.3 Culture, Race, and Racism

To assist in the analysis of the specific research questions, the respondents' views and perceptions of the meaning and attributes of the terms culture, race/racism are first established.

### 11.3.1 Culture

In chapter two of this study, commentators such as Burrell and Morgan (1979) and Smirich (1993) identified that although amongst social scientists there is an underlying view about the attributes of culture, there was less of a consensus as to its meaning. Perhaps not surprisingly, this lack of consensus was also a recurring issue for interview respondents. In the main, they saw little difference between the attributes and the meaning of culture; *'they are one and the same thing are they not'*, was a common reaction, and as such the responses provided dealt mainly with the attributes. This is therefore reflected in the discourse that now follows. My own interpretation of the difference between the meaning and attributes of culture concurs with that of Hofstede (1984), who in the literature review, in general terms, suggested that the attributes simply help to better define and add clarity to the individual views held of its meaning.

With regard, therefore, to the attributes of culture, the views of the respondents generally reflected what Burrell and Morgan (1979) referred to as the 'basic assumptions, values and beliefs of individuals'. The respondents in their description of these attributes provided individual viewpoints of their value and belief systems based essentially on their life experiences, which, perhaps not surprisingly, differed significantly (regardless of gender or age) between the Racial Minority individual respondents and the entirely white Civil Service organisation respondents. These very different life experiences are perhaps an

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obvious and natural explanation for the significant contrary perceptions of these two respondent groups. An observation of note, however, was that the life experiences on their own, whilst significant, were not the whole story. Increasing the difference in the value and belief systems of individuals is what Kumar (1995:103) refers to as the 'perception of the reality', which links directly to the reality of life experiences. For the vast majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents, this was negative in nature – *'life's a bitch particularly if you are black'* [RM Respondent]. Variations around this statement were common amongst the Racial Minority individual respondents. With regard to the focus of this study, the perception and reality for most of the Racial Minority individual respondents was that of privileges for their white counterparts based on what very many of this respondent group saw as *'the dominant white culture of the Civil Service'* [RM Respondent], which equates to the dominant embedded white Eurocentric culture of the Civil Service identified by Schneider Ross (1999) at chapter two.

Among the white respondents there was a much easier acceptance of the attributes of this embedded Civil Service culture, which in the main was seen, again regardless of age or gender, as much more closely aligned to their own value and belief systems. These attributes, it was suggested by most within all three respondent groups, generally reflected the value and belief systems of those in authority, who whilst operating behind established policies, were able to interpret these policies and fit them to their own values and beliefs. A Civil Service Organisation respondent indicated:

*'Yes there is a set of values that we as Civil Servants all have to work to, and yes they may be Western in nature – but there is nothing wrong with that is there? - After all we do live in the West.'* [CS Respondent]

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A Racial Minority individual respondent made the point that, *‘I don’t know whether its culture but there is certainly a way that things are done round here, and it’s the way of the white bosses’* [RM Respondent]. Underlying this difference of perception of the rights or wrongs of the dominant value systems reflecting those of the mainly *‘white bosses’*, was perhaps surprisingly, an acceptance by both respondent groups that this is ‘how things are’ and that there is little need (the mainly white respondent) or prospect (the mainly black respondents) of change.

An example of this acceptance bordering on apathy on the part of the Racial Minority individual respondents was their view and experience, as one of these respondents put it, *‘of the changing nature of culture’* [RM Respondent] within their own work environments. This ‘changing nature’ referred to by Schein (1985) in the literature review, was also recognised by the Racial Minority individual respondents, but seen as insignificant. A respondent from this group said, *‘it is just new ways of describing the same old thing’* and another *‘when forced they will do something but the sometimes radical changes proposed are soon adapted and watered down to something that they feel comfortable with’* [RM Respondent]. This acceptance and apparent apathy, it was suggested by these respondents, was due to a lack of involvement. A view from a large majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents was that, *‘they did not feel involved in or part of the culture of their organisation’* and despite the Civil Service rhetoric on consultation and involvement, a prevailing view from this group was that *‘it was still these same group of white managers who made decisions based on their own cultural norms’*. Needless to say, this perception held by the Racial Minority individual respondents was not shared by the Civil Service Organisation respondents who in general saw an improvement and greater acceptance of different cultural viewpoints within the workplace. The view that *‘after all we do live in a multi-cultural society’* [CS

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*Respondent*], was by way of evidence put forward by one of these respondents in support of this wider acceptance.

Importantly, a very high percentage of respondents made reference to sub-cultures within their Departments and/or areas of work, which the Racial Minority individuals in particular saw as being little different to the embedded Civil Service culture and indeed a similar number suggested was only '*difference at the margins*'. Essentially the sub-cultures '*built on rather than replaced*' the core values of the Civil Service, which they saw as very much in line with the general Eurocentric values and beliefs. This view of a lack of significance with regard to sub-cultures is shared by Hofstede (1984), who, as indicated in the literature review, in a longitudinal research exercise, identified that many sub-cultures with different value systems may exist in an organisation, but that underlying these sub-cultures is a dominant western culture. This identification by Hofstede (1984) was reinforced by a significant majority of Racial Minority individual respondents who provided practical examples from within their home Departments, where they perceived by way of the behaviour and attitude of their line managers '*little or no difference*' between the dominant Civil Service culture and that practiced within their Department or area of work.

Leading on from the general acceptance of a specific culture, there was also a general consensus of this culture being strong and influential, and this strength and influence, whilst not necessarily a bad thing, was generally acknowledged as being underpinned by underlying dominant western culture, which created an environment described by Schein (1985) as those things that are taken for granted, and by Deal and Kennedy (1982) as, '*the way we do things around here*'. Based on their own experiences, this '*way*', a majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents suggested, needed to be followed, as not following it had the effect of ensuring exclusion as opposed to inclusion. This lack of

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inclusion (albeit from either a negative standpoint by the Racial Minority individual respondents or a positive standpoint from the Civil Service organisation respondents) was identified by all respondent groups as relating to the correct 'fit' requirement within the Civil Service performance management process. It was clear from the interviews that those who did not meet this 'fit' or appeared to be outside the norm were generally seen as outsiders, which created difficulties. Of particular relevance to this study, this norm, Hoecklin (1995) argued, shapes the systems, structures, practices and procedures of organisations. Theakston (1995), and Pyper (1999), with specific reference to the Civil Service, share this view making the point that well established organisations, such as the Civil Service have usually developed a strong culture of shared values, which is a powerful influence on a wide range of functions, practices, procedures, policies and specifically the behaviour within an organisation such as that of today's Civil Service. These norms as described by O'Reilly *et. al.* (1991), in themselves can vary in influence. For full acceptance there was a need for both *Intensity* (the amount of approval/disapproval attached to an expectation) and *Crystallisation*: (the prevalence with which the norm is shared).

Probing on the issues of intensity and crystallisation with regard to the strength and influence of the Civil Service culture produced very different perspectives. The Civil Service Organisation respondents' were generally of the view that with regard to the approval and prevalence of a particular culture, this was at best 'patchy'. A high percentage of the Racial Minority and Equality Organisations respondents, however, suggested very strongly that based on their organisational experiences, the approval and prevalence of the Civil Service culture was significant, resulting in ongoing influence. One of these respondents suggested it was '*clear for anyone to see that the white group are more than happy with the way things are culturally, as it is they who benefit*' [RM Respondent].

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This benefit applied only to those who shared and approved these cultural values; for those who did not or came with a different set of values and beliefs, it was suggested that *'things were definitely more difficult within the organisation'*. There was, however, a divergence of views as to the reason for this 'difficulty'. On the one hand, the vast majority of Civil Service Organisation respondents suggested that any difficulties arose as a result of the organisation seeking to maintain standards and not from any form of cultural discrimination. On the other hand, in general, the Racial Minority individual respondents were clear that in reality this difficulty was nothing to do with standards but with *'fitting in'*. This need to 'fit in' was a view shared by the Equality Organisation respondents. A practical consequence of this fitting in, supported by the statistical findings, was the limited improvement in progression prospects for racial minority individuals, who it is clear from the statistical findings, are often overlooked for promotion. As one respondent eloquently suggested they *'are regarded as having an attitude which did not support the organisational culture or ethos [RM Respondent]'*. This is a point that reinforces the contention of the power of culture made by Pfeffer (1981) at chapter two, who argued that culture was merely a representation of institutionalised (organisational) power.

In summary, what was clear from the responses to the question about the meaning and attributes of a Civil Service culture; was that there was a strong general consensus from all respondent groups that there is a specific identifiable culture with associated and related sub cultures within the various Departments and units that make up the Civil Service. The attributes of this core culture were identified as westernised in nature, as were the sub cultures, which in general, differed very little from the core culture. Importantly, in the context of this study, the westernised cultural norms had a tendency to disadvantage those who did not share or were not seen as sharing them, such as the racial minority staff members.



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What also appears clear from the analysis of the attributes and meaning of Civil Service culture is that it is strong and has well established values and beliefs. It is a culture that the Civil Service *is* and something the Civil Service *has*, adapting the Burrell and Morgan (1979) view of the nature of culture. The strength and influence of these values and beliefs have an obvious correlation to the behaviour of those in positions of authority (the mainly white bosses) who had to uphold these norms so as to maintain their position of privilege and favour. This was in stark contrast to those, like the racial minority staff members, who often resented the imposition of these cultural values as the norm. The remedy of this imposition, a large proportion of the Racial Minority individual respondents suggested, was either to conform or rebel. Interestingly these respondents also made the point that the black staff members who chose to conform became even greater advocates of the norm and those who rebelled or were seen as resisting tended to reinforce the stereotypical views held by some of the Civil Service Organisation respondents of racial minorities being uncooperative, and *'having a chip on their shoulder'*. This reference to racial minorities and stereotypes is an important one, as all the respondent groups to a large extent associated culture with colour which perhaps not surprisingly led to the stereotypical views and expressions (lazy, difficult, chip on shoulder) indicated above. Interestingly culture was also associated with religion, specifically Islam, which again provided a number of negative stereotypical views, particularly around the unfair treatment of Moslem women.

These observations about the attributes, nature and strength of the Civil Service culture are important considerations when looking at its impact, as are the views of the respondents as to their understanding of race and racism that now follows.

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### 11.3.2 Race and Racism

The meaning of the terms race and racism provided a much greater degree of consensus than did culture from the respondent groups, but not with regard to its importance or its nature. Whilst the Racial Minority individual respondents were keen to talk about the issues of race and racism, there appeared to be a distinct nervousness and lack of ease on the part of the Civil Service organisation respondents to even explore the issue. This was summed up by one of these respondents who stated '*not this again, look there is only one race, the human race, I treat everybody the same no matter what their colour*' [CS Respondent]. This statement was typical and indicated what appeared to be a degree of denial as to race being an issue, and certainly not one that needed discussion (although reluctantly they did) or a definition.

A common view from all respondent groups as to what was meant by the term race revolved around the issue of colour and/or to a lesser extent religious beliefs. For example, there was no acknowledgement from any of the respondent groups of the Welsh being a race, but a clear view that if you were black or Muslim then you were obviously from a different racial group, as put by one Civil Service Organisation respondent '*yes, I do think that if you are a person of colour it makes a difference, whether you were born in Wales or not*' [CS Respondent]. This issue of colour brought with it, again from all respondent groups, a particular view from the respondents' perspective of the nature and characteristics of that particular race ( '*racial group*' ). Although not explicitly stated, as identified by writers such as Lovejoy (1960) it was evident from the responses that there existed in the minds of the vast majority of the respondents a concept of a hierarchy within the different racial groups, a hierarchy based, as noted by Goldberg (1993), on the perceived inferiority/superiority of certain races.

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In probing it was clear that the main construct of this hierarchy was that of physical appearance, this physical appearance as Barker (2000) pointed out in the literature review, is linked to the ranking of groups based on characteristics such as perceived 'intelligence' and 'capabilities'. Based on their workplace experiences, this ranking was something that the Racial Minority individual respondents were keen to point out and discuss and was an issue that very much struck a chord and generated much excitement within this respondent group. They were adamant that a racial ranking existed and this very much related to the supposed superiority of whites, a view emphasised by one of these respondents who made the point that, *'you have the white people first, the Asians next and as usual we the West Indians are down the bottom'* [RM Respondent].

In addition a majority of these respondents alluded to the fact that this hierarchy was nothing new, a point also made in the literature review by Drake (1991). Interestingly, among the 60 Racial Minority individual respondents, the ranking issue was seen by all of the 45 African-Caribbean respondents within this group as a major and key issue, particularly with regard to the status of the Asian staff members within this hierarchy. This group of respondents related this to the different treatment that they had experienced in relation to their Asian counterparts, particularly with regard to promotion. A majority articulated a view of often being seen as inferior, and not as capable as their Asian colleagues.

This experience accords with the views of Barker (2000) on the relative hierarchy of different BME groups, asserting that British Asians are considered as second-class citizens, but British African-Caribbeans are on the third rung of the workplace ladder. This distinction within the BME groups is a point well made by Barker. It is a point, however, that is often not made due to sensitivities about political correctness. It is, however, a point that is supported by the statistical findings, which show that at senior levels if you are of Asian

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origin and more recently, it appears, of a Muslim religion<sup>93</sup> you are much more likely to progress. One of these respondents in a chance meeting in 2003, puts this issue into focus implying that, *'since the 9/11 bombing in America, the Public Sector has gone out of its way to accommodate these people [Muslims], what about us? [RM Respondent]*. The strength and vehemence of this view about religious preference is something that is a recurring concern for many non Muslim racial minorities. This hierarchy or preference as it was referred to by some respondents, is as Marable (1991) indicates, (and as can be seen in the perceived religious preferential treatment identified above) is an artificial social construction, which a small number of Racial Minority individual respondents identified in different ways as being deliberately imposed *'simply to ensure that we [Black Caribbeans] remain at the bottom of the pile'*. Marable (1991) was clear that preferences of this nature maintains the exploitation, power and privilege of those in authority, evidenced by the racism that he suggests still exists today.

With regard to the issue of racism more generally and in the context of this study, there was a clear divergence of views between the Civil Service Organisation respondents and the Racial Minority individual respondents. The Civil Service Organisation respondents were almost unanimously of the view that it did exist, but not within the service. In support of this view, the majority suggested that the safeguards in place meant that racism would have little or no impact within the Civil Service. A view from one of these respondents was indicative: *'it can happen, but the open and transparent procedures that we have in place, makes sure that it does not' [CS Respondent]*. The Racial Minority individual respondents, however, were of entirely the opposite viewpoint, suggesting that from their experiences, racism was rife within the Civil Service. They gave a

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<sup>93</sup> If data on religion was held this statement could be properly evidenced, however this comment is based in part on recent BME Senior Civil Service appointments, including the last two appointments of the Head of Equality in the Cabinet Office (the most Senior Civil Service Equality and Diversity appointment – effectively the equality lead in the Civil Service) were both to Muslim men.

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number of personal accounts where they had individually experienced racism. One of these respondents demonstrated this very strongly held view: '*if racism exists in society then surely it exists here*' [RM Respondent]; a second said '*these procedures are not worth the paper they are written on, managers still do what they want including discriminating against black people*' [RM Respondent]. A majority of these respondents referred to the irrational behaviour of their managers, a point also made by Goldberg (1993) who links it to the superior/inferior racial hierarchical ranking based simply on physical characteristics (highlighted above). This continuing superiority/inferiority debate, based on physical difference, provides another example of social construction, and is surprising given the undeniable evidence that it is a debate that has no scientific support<sup>94</sup>. It, however, remained an underlying factor in the discussions on race and racism with all respondent groups, both black and white.

The reality of this racism was seen by the vast majority of Racial Minority individual respondents as simply unfairness and disadvantage, based on what many of these respondents saw as the cultural values associated with this hierarchy. The relationship between racism and culture referred to by the Racial Minority individual respondents is supported by writers such as Rex (1973), and Phizacklea & Miles (1980) who in the literature review argued that racism stems from cultural ideology leading to differential treatment, and in the context of this study, disadvantage for racial minorities in the Civil Service. This disadvantage and unfairness was referred to within the literature review by writers such as Bodmer and Mckie (1994), Gilroy (1987), and Hall (1996) who also made reference to the supremacy and treatment by the 'dominant' white group over the 'inferior' black group. Banton (1983) described this as a 'them' and 'us' situation, a situation in different ways referred to by all respondent

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<sup>94</sup> The *Times Newspaper* article of Wednesday 27 October 2004 looking at the DNA make up of individuals found no difference in the make up of different racial groups.

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groups as an effect of racism. A Racial Minority individual respondent maintained: *'people talk about being fair, but fair in whose eyes, and is it fairness based on the white manager's idea of what is fair or not fair'*[**RM Respondent**]. This quotation both emphasises this perceived unfairness but also its link to culture.

In summary, the practical experiences particularly of the Racial Minority individual respondents, supported the theoretical conceptualisation of race and racism identified in the literature review chapters. Both the practical and theoretical perspectives provided a clear view of physical difference promoting exclusion rather than inclusion by the virtue of this difference, in this case based on colour and/or race. Importantly, this difference based on the dissimilar workplace progression experiences of Asian and African-Caribbean individuals, was not seen as just about colour. Both emphasised and demonstrated that racism exists within and outwith different groups but has the potential for greater impact depending on where a particular racial group sits within the perceived hierarchy to which many respondents made reference.

Having identified, explored and analysed the respondents' perceptions of culture, race and racism, the research questions themselves are now considered, based on the above analysis, the literature review and the findings from chapters eight, nine and ten.

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#### 11.4 Research Question 1- Civil Service culture help or hindrance?

To what extent does the organisational culture of the Civil Service help or hinder progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service? – Specifically:

- *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service influence its race equality policies and create career progression problems for its racial minority staff?*
  - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*
- *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service limit its commitment to race equality and create career progression problems for its racial minority staff?*
  - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*
- *Does the ‘culture’ of the Civil Service impact on its practices and procedures that create appraisal problems for its racial minority staff?*
  - *If so what are these problems and what can be done to address them?*

Having come to the view that there is a specific Civil Service culture, in looking at both the main and the specific questions above it is perhaps important to start with the issues of the influence of culture on policies. In this regard, as identified in chapter five, the Civil Service operates under a code of practice which sets out its constitutional framework within which all civil servants are expected to work and uphold. Importantly in the context of this study, the literature review also identified that this code is both developed and modelled with a set of values that belong to a small elite group who had responsibility for drafting this code in the nineteenth century and for any amendments (the most recent being in 1999) to the code since that time. This code provides a backbone for the Civil Service mode of operation and, as suggested by a significant number of respondents from each of the respondent groups, it shapes the operation and the work values of the Civil Service.

There was a consensus amongst respondents that the code does influence Civil Service policies generally and more specifically the policies of the individual Departments. There was, however, a significant difference of view between the

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respondent groups about the nature and effect of this influence. This difference centred not so much around the policy itself but its implementation and the influence of the values and beliefs of individuals in the interpretation of policies, particularly those individuals in positions of power and authority. A view from one Racial Minority individual respondent which summed up this respondent groups' position was that, *'we have a well-written equal opportunity policy, which should ensure equity but it certainly does not do this'* [RM Respondent]. This was added to by a strongly shared consensus from this respondent group that this lack of equity was as a result of white males in the main being in the positions of power and authority. What this meant in practice, eloquently identified by one of these respondents is that *'they [the white males] are able to greatly influence, for example, policies such as the appraisal systems and as a consequence their outcomes'* [RM Respondent]. The uniform perception therefore of the Racial Minority individual respondents was that the ideals set out in the policies were never really matched by the way the policy was actually implemented - *"good words in the policy but certainly not implemented fairly"* [RM Respondent]. This lack of fairness was, they suggested, borne out by what they felt clearly to be a lack of any significant career progression opportunities for most racial minorities within the Civil Service. This view was supported by the statistical findings at chapter eight and the perceptions of the Equality Organisation respondents.

This was not, however, a view shared by the Civil Service Organisation respondents. One Civil Service Organisation respondent, contending that whilst there was a Civil Service way of doing things, which may be reflected in the Civil Service policies, maintained that these policies were implemented without favouritism or bias – *'how could you, if you did you would surely be found out'* [CS Respondent] and *'These days the equal opportunities policies ensure fairness therefore there are no longer any prejudices'* [CS Respondent]. A practical example of the way in



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which policies were implemented, which had the effect of excluding the views of particular groups, was set out by another Civil Service Organisation respondent who recalled the fact that his Department's equal opportunity policy had been drawn up without input from the BME staff: *'initially, the policy had been drawn up by group of white male senior managers, the BME input only being considered as an afterthought'* [CS Respondent]. This type of practice was referred to by all respondent groups as fairly typical but as indicated, particularly by the Civil Service Organisation respondents, this was indicative of poor Civil Service communication practices generally and not seen by this respondent group as disadvantaging or impacting upon the career progression opportunities of racial minorities.

As to whether the culture of the Civil Service limited commitment, what was particularly interesting was not so much the now expected divergence of views between the Civil Service Organisation respondents and the Racial Minority individual respondents as to whether there was commitment or not, but the arguments put forward in support of these viewpoints and perhaps surprisingly the agreement by all respondent groups on the need for more practical action to demonstrate that commitment. To support their view on commitment the Civil Service Organisation respondents, for example, could point to initiatives where they suggested their Department/ Section *'had gone well beyond what was required by law'*. Amongst examples provided of this commitment were:

- *the 'appointment' of at least two equal opportunity advisers at each of its offices;*
- *the inclusion in the annual reports of a commitment to equal opportunities as a competence;*
- *a national seminar for all racial minority staff chaired by the head of the Department.*

Of note from the Civil Service Organisation respondent group was the fact that the female respondents were more pragmatic about this commitment, one suggesting that:

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*‘Although there is commitment, it is going to take at least another 15 to 20 years before one will see racial minorities progressing uniformly at all levels and being proportionately represented in senior management positions, look at how much difficulty we women are having’. [CS Respondent]*

This view not only highlighted the issue of the possibility of discrimination and disadvantage in all equality strands, but also the slow nature of change within the Civil Service. This was highlighted by writers such as Dowding (1995), Madgwick (1994) and Kingdom (1991) who made suggestions about the near static nature of institutions such as the Civil Service (this, they go on to contend, provides a measure of control and power that should not be underestimated) and importantly, how the exercise of this power was based on the cultural attitudes and beliefs of a small elite minority.

The Racial Minority individual respondents, in direct contrast to the Civil Service organisation respondents, were very firm in their views that no real commitment had been demonstrated, and stated that this was demonstrated in the lack of action to take forward career progression opportunities for racial minorities. This lack of commitment many of the Racial Minority individual respondents suggested was to do with a need for greater acknowledgement by those in authority that any problem existed, based, many perceived, on a need *“to maintain the cultural ‘norm’ through rhetoric rather than action” [RM Respondent]*. Examples were provided of what a majority of these respondents referred to as a ‘tick box’ exercise that their Departments were engaged in. This they suggested, allowed the pretence of commitment but was not backed by practical action.

Interestingly, there was a consensus from all respondent groups as to a lack of action in demonstrating commitment. Rather surprisingly there was also general agreement from all respondent groups that this lack of action had a direct

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impact on racial minorities progressing particularly to senior management positions. The main reason put forward by respondents for this inaction was a lack of priority given to equality issues generally and with regard to race specifically, a shortage of visible numbers of racial minority staff. On a more positive note, there was also a general consensus by all respondent groups that progress in raising awareness about race equality issues had been made, but as one Civil Service organisation respondent suggested, *'better awareness but precious little else'* [CS Respondent]. This was again put down to the lack of visible numbers of ethnic minorities and other work priorities, which were considered more important than equality. Two statements from one of the Civil Service Organisation respondents that perhaps sums up the overall perception on progress and commitment were that: *'If judged by what happens and not words then in truth very little progress has been made'* [CS Respondent] and *'Although there is commitment this can at times be half hearted particularly if those at the top do not consider that there is a problem'* [CS Respondent]. These two statements provide a good illustration of the underlying view from all respondent groups that commitment at best is patchy.

As to what could be done to improve this commitment, most respondents were of the view that very little could be done given the current Civil Service structures and frameworks, but also importantly the majority of respondents from all respondent groups were of the view that there was no real willingness to change things, *'as most senior managers were happy the way things are.'* A small number of Racial Minority individual and Equality Organisation respondents made a number of practical suggestions. One of note from an Equality Organisation respondent was that:

*'race equality objectives being built into the personal development plans of senior managers, and a form of 360 degree appraisal of these objectives utilising black staff and external stakeholder groups'*  
[EO Respondent]

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Implementing something like this, it was suggested by the Equality Organisation respondents, was the sort of practical commitment that most respondents felt was lacking, but was needed to assist career progression opportunities for racial minority staff.

Career progression opportunities and outcomes, and the performance appraisal system were regarded by all respondents as key. This accords with the views of Hoecklin (1995) and Brooks (2003) who in the literature review demonstrated how the personnel function, (in particular those at its head) in the advisory role that they have in organisations can shape and influence the policies and their implementation. In the context of this study, given that the vast majority of the heads of the personnel function within the Civil Service organisations interviewed were white males, it follows, as indicated by Torrington *et. al* (2002) in the literature review, that it is their values and beliefs with particular regard to the implementation of policy and practice that has a huge influence. This influence is further reinforced by the personnel function, acting as Greene and Kirton (2000) asserted as the 'stewards' of the organisation's policies, and as part of that stewardship, of particular relevance to this study, assisting senior managers develop and nurture a culture suitable to achieving their goals.

This agreement as to the importance of the performance appraisal system was, however, the only real consensus between the Civil Service Organisation and Racial Minority individual respondents with regard to career progression and more specifically the appraisal system. These two respondent groups in most instances had diametrically opposed viewpoints and perceptions of the fairness and objectivity of the appraisal system. Of interest were the different views on the outcomes or rewards of appraisal. These reward systems, as suggested by Rana (2003) and Torrington, Hall, and Taylor (2002), are generally designed and planned so they are consistent with the norms and beliefs and values that are

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central to the culture of the organisation. Taking note of this it is perhaps not surprising that in general the Racial Minority individual respondents had a totally different perspective to that of the Civil Service organisation respondents as to the fairness and objectivity of the performance appraisal system. The Racial Minority individual respondents were clear that the appraisal system was *'fundamentally flawed'* and needed a complete overhaul if it was ever to be fair or objective. The lack of fairness and the subjectivity that this group associated with the appraisal system was, in the view of most of these respondents, a direct result of the expectations to fit in based on the cultural values and beliefs of their Department and/or the Civil Service itself. Barlow (1994) emphasises that there is more reward for those who 'fit', explaining that performance is monitored and measured according to the norms of the organisation as administered (generally) by a powerful personnel department. A vast majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents made reference to precisely these points and described difficulties related to poor appraisals they had received, which they considered were unjustified. They gave practical examples where issues such as negative stereotyping, subjective comments, and a general lack of awareness of difference had been evident. This respondent group was unanimous in its view that these types of issue were commonplace and as a consequence meant that there *"was not a level playing field when it came to appraisals"*. Examples of negative appraisal comments and markings with regard to communication skills were reported. This was seen by these respondents, however, as just another way of identifying difference and therefore their being seen as 'outside', given the Anglo-Saxon norm that Hoecklin (1995) and Nkomo (1992) refer to in the literature review.

The Equality Organisation respondents were in general agreement with the Racial Minority individual respondents on career progression and appraisal. Although they did not go to the extent of saying that the system was

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fundamentally flawed, they were, however, of the view that the performance appraisal system did discriminate against racial minorities due to the culture of the Department and/or the Civil Service. This culture they related to the nature of the competences that the appraisals were marked against and the subjective nature of the marking criteria. This subjectivity the Equality Organisation respondents related to status. This was well articulated by a respondent who made the point that *'you normally have a white person doing the appraisal, based on a biased framework, what chance does the racial minority member of staff have? [EO Respondent]'* These views from those not directly involved added a great deal of weight to the experiences set out by the Racial Minority respondents and link back to the implementation and interpretation of policy and the impact that this can have.

As to what to do to improve the appraisal system, the overwhelming view from the Racial Minority respondents was consistent with the views of the Equality Organisation respondents. There was the need for training or retraining those undertaking appraisals, but also there was an acknowledgment by many of these respondents, that racial minority staff needed to improve their understanding of the appraisal process. All respondents from these two respondent groups were of the view that there was a need for a much clearer and more transparent appraisal process, not subject to the prejudices and bias of those undertaking them. As part of this transparent process it was suggested that more effective monitoring and review of the appraisal process was needed. Effective monitoring and review, it was suggested, would ensure that the appraisal procedures and practices were more consistent in their application. The racial minority respondents had no doubts this would improve their opportunities for career progression significantly. A view particularly from the Racial Minority individual respondents (which in many ways reflected a positive way forward) was the need for those undertaking appraisals to accept that people were

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different and brought different skills, had different values and as a consequence a need to move away from what appeared to be long established ways of working. In short there was a need for a new system that was much less subjective, and dealt with performance outcomes rather than character traits.

Randell (1984) made the point that performance appraisals can mean different things in an organisation and may serve a multiplicity of purposes, so it is not at all a surprise that for the most part, the Civil Service Organisation respondents did not agree with the views of the Racial Minority individual respondents and considered that the appraisal systems used in their individual Departments were already fair and non-discriminatory. A clear view from this group was that it was probable that the racial minority staff did not like the appraisal system *“as it allowed poor performance to be properly measured” [CS Respondent]* and that *“they did not understand them properly [CS Respondent]”*. These comments are indicative of the strong viewpoints held by the Civil Service organisation respondents with regard to the bias alleged by the racial minority respondents. There was, however, an acknowledgement from some of the Civil Service Organisation respondents of *“some minor difficulties”* within the appraisal system, but this they considered more to do with time constraints rather than culture, bias or the objectivity of the process. Whilst acknowledging a specific culture within their Departments, there was not an acceptance by these respondents of the perceived ‘white male’ cultural values and beliefs creating or contributing to these so called difficulties. These difficulties, as one respondent put it, relate to, *“an unwillingness by some racial minorities to accept criticism” [CS Respondent]*, another going further and suggesting *“that there are still some who carry a chip on the shoulder”*. As to how to deal with these perceived difficulties, a view put forward by the majority of the Civil Service Organisation respondents was that there was a need for training, for example, to assist managers and supervisors when

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dealing with black staff and also the need for further awareness training for all staff, racial minority staff in particular.

What the above differences on appraisal clearly show is how experiences affect perception. The reality as experienced by the Racial Minority individuals means that there is a very negative view about appraisal and its outcome. The reality as experienced by the white Civil Service organisation respondents conversely means that there is a very positive view about appraisals and their outcome.

Underlying these realities and perhaps what makes the real difference, was the expectations or the 'fit' which all respondent groups agreed were based on the embedded Civil Service ethos and values. This view is supported by Newton and Findlay (1996) who, in the literature review, made the point that there is a need to identify potential and to determine the extent to which the individual is serving the goals of the organisation and how far the individual demonstrates the behaviour (derived from the beliefs and values) that the organisation considers appropriate. This is a key consideration that arises from this analysis.

The above has provided an acknowledgement of a specific Civil Service culture, and the general agreement amongst the respondent groups that this culture is almost certainly guided and influenced by the values and beliefs of those in positions of authority. In the context of this study, this influence is particularly relevant to the personnel functions, which as Fombrun *et al.* (1984) suggests in the literature review, is of key importance in the management and progression of career outcomes. Given the number of white males who were in charge of the personnel function, the influence of their values and beliefs was seen as significant. The majority of respondents saw this as generally having a negative impact and creating problems for career opportunities for racial minority staff. The sort of problems that this influence caused were obviously a lack of progression, but more importantly a problem of perception about the abilities



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and capabilities of racial minority individuals, particularly at the more senior levels. Most respondents were of the view that very little could be done to limit this influence, given the current Civil Service structures and frameworks, which most respondents suggested, did not allow for open discussion or input from those that the policy most affected or those best placed to comment.

In the identification of the extent to which the organisational culture of the Civil Service helps or hinders the progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service. The analysis above looked at the influential aspects of policy, commitment and performance management (appraisal), in the consideration of the extent that the organisational culture of the Civil Service helped or hindered the progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service. Even allowing for the significantly divergent viewpoints of the Racial Minority individual and Civil Service organisation respondents, both statistically and with regard to the majority of the respondents' perceptions, the analysis has demonstrated that the Civil Service culture provides (or is perceived as providing) much greater hindrance than help to the career development opportunities for its racial minority staff. The extent of this hindrance is variable but importantly as far as impact is concerned, is evident in each of the aspects of policies, commitment and performance management analysed.

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## 11.5 Research Question 2 - Do the personal experiences of individuals support the statistical information available?

To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in career development and progression in the Civil Service? – Specifically:

- *Have racial minorities experienced career progression disadvantages as a consequence of the Civil Service 'culture'?*
  - *If so what are the experiences and what can be done to address them?*
- *Have racial minorities experienced a lack of career progression opportunities as a consequence of the Civil Service 'culture'?*
  - *If so what are the experiences and what can be done to address them?*
- *Has the 'culture' of the Civil Service created performance appraisal barriers for racial minorities?*
  - *If so what are these barriers and what can be done to address them?*

Taking note of the analysis of the influential aspects of policies, commitment and appraisal above, this section now considers the research question dealing with the realities of the personal experiences of respondents and as a consequence their perceptions of inequality in progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service. There are obvious overlaps between the influential aspects and of the personal experiences dealt with in this section. Here the focus is on in particular the lived experiences of the respondents with regard to perceived disadvantage, bias and barriers.

In dealing with the issue of disadvantage it is important to clarify what respondents actually meant by the term, and specifically with regard to this study, the term racial disadvantage. Not surprisingly, there were a number of very different viewpoints both among and between the three respondent

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groups. For the purpose of this study the general definition<sup>95</sup> provided to each of the respondent groups was that of *'less favourable treatment direct or indirect in terms of arrangements, provision, access, or offers in the workplace employment context'*. This definition of racial disadvantage accords with those set out in the literature review by Modood (1998) and Metcalf (2000), both of whom also made reference to the different workplace experiences and importantly outcomes for racial minorities caused by this disadvantage. As the issue of disadvantage and less favourable treatment relate in the context of this study primarily to racial minorities, the issue is looked at in the main from the experiences of the Racial Minority individual respondents (using complaints made by this respondent group as a basis) but importantly also from those within the Civil Service organisation respondent group. This view from the Civil Service organisation respondents is important as it provides a contrasting viewpoint from a group that the majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents see as the perpetrators of the disadvantage that they face.

The Racial Minority individual respondents provided a range and variety of both direct and indirect accounts of disadvantage and dissatisfaction, in particular with regard to the recruitment, selection and progression systems within their work environments. This dissatisfaction, they reported, inevitably led to them making complaints, generally informally but ultimately for some formally. The under reporting of complaints due to the informal nature of most complaints was a recurring issue, as explained by these respondents, who made the point that:

*'not the first, second or even third time something happened, I tell my line manager but nothing happens, its not even noted, but there is only so much you can put up with'.*

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<sup>95</sup> A full definition of the term is provided in the glossary

This is a fact borne out by the statistical findings at chapter eight, which records higher instances of complaints from racial minorities within the Civil Service, and also the research findings at chapter ten, which showed that over 90% of the Racial Minority individual respondents interviewed had made one or more complaint (normally informally) in the past three years. The reasons stated for the complaints stemmed, a majority of the Racial Minority individual respondents suggested, from issues such as stereotyping, lack of cultural sensitivity, unfair remarks, not being given the benefit of doubt, being overlooked in favour of juniors, predetermined interviews and unfair appraisals. The respondents were able to provide first hand accounts of these complaints. Of even more concern for the vast majority of these respondents was the lack of action taken once the complaint had been made, and as a consequence, unsatisfactory outcomes (Table 11.1). This lack of action many saw as racism, a view supported by Jordan and Weedon (1995), who made the point in the literature review that whilst racism is about difference, it is also certainly about disadvantage, a disadvantage that many in this respondent group suggested that they experienced on a daily basis.

*Table 11.1 - Complaints Made by Racial Minority individual respondents*

Complaint Type	Number Of Complaints	OUTCOME	
		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
<i>General</i>			
Stereotyping	14	2	12
Culture	9	0	9
Unfair remarks	24	3	21
<i>Promotion</i>			
Overlooked	23	1	22
Biased Interviews	13	1	12
Unfair appraisals	54	6	48

*Source - Research Findings*

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This lack of action was a cause of great frustration to many of the Racial Minority individual respondents, not surprisingly, felt that their complaint was justified and reasonable, but found that this was not a view generally shared by those to whom the complaints were reported. A large majority suggested that underlying the unfairness of approach that they perceived, was the attitude of the managers, including their own line managers within their individual Departments. Most of these respondents related this attitude to the preference of the managers for those *'who acted and behaved in the same manner as themselves'*. Any difference perceived was likely to lead to a negative viewpoint and response from the manager.

As to what to do about this situation, without exception the Racial Minority individual respondents suggested the need for training, the need for transparency and a proper independent appeals system. Fundamentally, they also suggested a need to have more racial minority managers in senior management positions. As one respondent put it, *'until and unless white managers faced up to the fact that things had changed nothing was going to change'* [**RM Respondent**]. These suggestions very much accord with the views in the literature review of Jenkins and Solomos (1989), and Smith (1981), who also suggest the need to review workplace policies and practices, and of specific relevance to the previous section, the need for a review of the personnel function and its operation.

Whilst there was an expectation that many of the Racial Minority individual respondents would have experienced some form of disadvantage, what came as a major surprise was the fact that all of the Civil Service organisation respondents had, over the past two years, either received or were aware of one or more complaints about recruitment or progression from a racial minority

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member of staff. Most complaints were about appraisal. In reporting the receiving of these complaints, what was apparent was that these respondents did not in any way associate the complaints as relating to them individually. Indeed one respondent sums up the general view: *'a number of racial minorities have a habit of complaining and using the race card, this helps no one particularly themselves'* **[RM Respondent]**. This apparent lack of awareness that from a racial minority member of staff perspective that these respondents may in fact be at fault indicated a lack of understanding. Without this understanding, it is difficult to see how any progress could be made.

As with the Civil Service organisation respondents, all of the Equality Organisation respondents had also over the past two years either received or were aware of one or more complaint about recruitment or progression from a racial minority civil servant. These complaints related in the main to being overlooked for promotion. With regards to what could be done to address these complaints, the clear viewpoint from these respondents was the need for greater transparency and a radical overhaul of the present system, as the existing system they suggested, mitigated against racial minorities.

What the above demonstrates are perceptions of frequent and ongoing experiences of career progression disadvantage for racial minorities working in the Civil Service. This disadvantage, the analysis suggests, is based on difference, including cultural difference. From this what is clear, through, for example, the expectations (fitting the cultural norms) within the appraisal process, make it difficult for racial minorities to compete on a level playing field. Both Corby (1999) and Watson (1992), with specific regard to the public sector, albeit with regard to gender, support this view of culture creating disadvantage. Coussey and Jackson (1991) also make the point that this

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disadvantage can and does lead to racial minorities failing to achieve their full potential.

With regard to culture impacting on career progression opportunities, the majority of respondents from all respondent groups considered that racial minorities did experience a lack of opportunities in general terms but also with regard to career progression. Research by Liff and Wacjman (1996) reinforced this view and reflected on the impact of culture limiting opportunities for racial minorities. Rose and Miller (1992) put forward a similar view, but linked the lack of opportunity and the career development of racial minority individuals to the control and power of those in authority.

Surprisingly, this lack of opportunity and a need for improved access to opportunities for racial minorities was a view shared by all respondent groups. This need for greater opportunities was seen by the majority of all respondent groups as one of the areas where improvement could and needed to be made. This was, however, qualified, particularly by the Equality Organisation respondents, with statements such as - *“You can provide all the training possible but you cannot train out prejudices”* [**EO Respondent**] and also that *“Training and education by themselves will never be enough to make meaningful change take place”* [**EO Respondent**]. The vast majority of the Civil Service organisation respondents were of a similar view, explaining that training would be a good thing and was needed, but they saw little benefit being derived from training. This point with regard to racial minorities was forcefully made by a Civil Service organisation respondent who suggested that *‘too much emphasis was being given to race issues anyway, so more training would only make matters worse’* [**CS Respondent**]. The need for an improvement in the opportunities provided to racial minority staff in the Civil Service was strongly put forward by the Racial Minority individual respondents. One suggested that there was a need to - *‘Take out the possibility of*

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*managers making arbitrary decisions in what opportunities are available and to whom they are available* **[RM Respondent]**. A majority of the Civil Service Organisation respondents, however, wanted the point made that although opportunities had been limited, things were in fact improving, and that the work in this area needed to be seen in a positive light. By way of example of this improvement, mention was made by one of these respondents of *'specific management development courses for racial minorities'* **[CS Respondent]** and from another of *'the appointment of a senior racial minority race manager'* **[CS Respondent]**. It was, however, agreed by all of these respondents that there was still a long way to go. On a positive note, all considered that things would change for the better in the future.

As to what could be done, there was, unusually, a consensus amongst all respondent groups on the need for action. A range of actions were put forward, qualified, by the Civil Service organisation respondents, one of whom summed up the general view of this respondent group, suggesting that:

*'there was a need for action to improve opportunities, but not only for racial minorities but all who suffer disadvantage and a lack of opportunity'*

**[CS Respondent]**

A recurring action proposed was that of 'positive action initiatives'<sup>96</sup>. Both the Civil Service organisation and Racial Minority individual respondent groups reflected on the fact that there were very few race specific positive action initiatives in their Departments to assist racial minorities in their career development. The vast majority of Racial Minority individual respondents saw the development of positive action initiatives as a key element of improving opportunities, a view only partly shared by the Civil Service organisation respondents who qualified their support by warning of possible negative response to such initiatives. Most of these respondents made reference to:

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<sup>96</sup> A definition of positive action is provided in the glossary



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*'The fear of backlash from the white staff for showing favouritism to ethnic minorities, it would therefore be inappropriate to the needs of the organisation' [RM Respondent]*

In building on this caution, a minority of respondents from this group reported that attempts had been made in the past to offer such schemes to the racial minority staff but there had been little or no take up.

As to other actions that could be taken to improve opportunities, a significant number of respondents made mention of the need to have positive role models as a way forward. However, how this was achieved led to a big difference between the views of the Civil Service organisation respondents and the Racial Minority individual respondents. The Racial Minority individual respondents generally wanted immediate action to deal with what they perceived as the long standing *'inactivity and apathy'*. The Civil Service organisations, on the other hand, in the main considered that over time, the role models would be there but that the racial minority staff would need to be patient. The Racial Minority individual respondents, without exception, also called for direct practical actions such as the use of secondments, particularly for internal progression on an interdepartmental basis. The use of properly briefed head-hunters was also advocated by this respondent group, as was having 'champions' with the authority and influence to change things. To this end it was suggested that the Equal Opportunity Officers in the organisations be given 'more clout' as they were seen as being - *"In a position and at a grade where normally they cannot influence the major decisions on equal opportunities"*. The use of mentoring schemes was particularly favoured by the Racial Minority individual respondents, as emphasised by one of these respondents who considered that, *'If not seen just as a paper exercise, mentoring provided a real practical opportunity for development'*. Mentoring was also favoured by a majority of the Civil Service Organisation respondents. Some of these respondents made reference to plans to introduce such schemes

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in the near future, although it was emphasised that these schemes would be open to all staff.

This underlying difference of views between the Civil Service organisation and Racial Minority individual respondent groups was not that of the need for action to improve opportunities but the need for speed of action. The Racial Minority individual respondents were clear immediate action was needed while the Civil Service organisation respondents were much more inclined to propose action over time. The reason for the fundamental underlying difference was generally seen by respondents as related to maintaining the cultural status quo, a view made in different ways by all respondent groups. The Civil Service organisation respondents generally related their views to the '*maintenance of standards*'. The Racial Minority individual respondents generally related their views to the '*maintenance of cultural norms*' on the part of the Civil Service / Department.

With regard to progression barriers faced by racial minorities that may be related to cultural values, perhaps surprisingly, there was a consensus from all respondent groups that there were additional barriers in the career progression and development process faced by racial minority individuals. Interestingly a barrier cited by all respondent groups was that of culture. This Civil Service culture can be seen to be related to the culture that Alibhai-Brown (2000) described as significant and made up of shared 'British' values.

It was generally acknowledged by all respondent groups but particularly the Racial Minority individual respondents that these cultural values were reflected in the existing competency expectations and frameworks of the Civil Service and acted as a significant barrier to racial minorities. One such competency expectation that racial minorities are frequently marked down on is

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*'communication'*. This often relates to both written and oral skills where the language/accents and the mannerisms of racial minority individuals are often referred to in the performance appraisal process. The performance appraisal system more generally was identified by all respondents as a major influence on progression. The Racial Minority individual respondents, in recognising the performance appraisal system as an important influence, also saw its operation as a barrier, relating a number of personal experiences in support of this viewpoint. Whilst there was a consensus about the barriers of culture, communication and to some extent the performance appraisal process, the Racial Minority individual respondents were adamant that the biggest problem that racial minorities still faced in progressing within the Civil Service was that of prejudice *'pure and simple'*. Many of the Racial Minority individual respondents cited personal experiences to support this viewpoint. Some of this respondent group identified this as bias rather than prejudice, and suggested it created a negative view of the Civil Service in the eyes of racial minorities, both inside and outside of the service. This negativity, it was argued by a majority of these respondents, could itself be another barrier to progression, as within the service many long established racial minority Civil Servants were now seeking to leave the Civil Service instead of making it their career. As one respondent put it - *"What's the point of staying, you have to be twice as good as your white colleague to get on, and then only if you are lucky"* [**RM Respondent**]. The Civil Service Organisation respondents in general did not consider that there was any significant prejudice or bias but accepted that there may be some isolated instances - *"there are bad apples in every race"* [**CS Respondent**]. In any event, they considered that things were improving given the sanctions now in place, which mitigated against prejudice or bias occurring. Many of the Racial Minority individual respondents, however, considered that things in many respects were actually

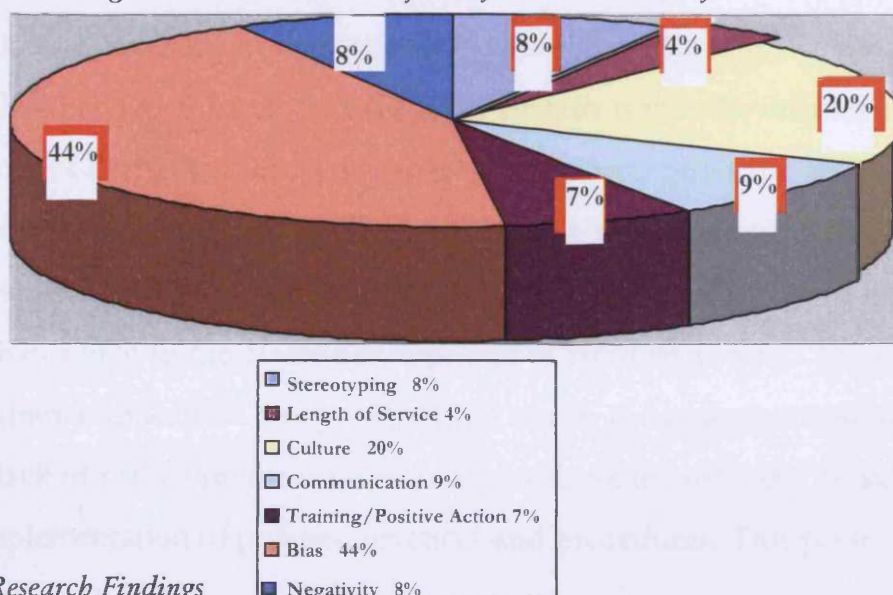
getting worse rather than better, suggesting that the bias was more subtle and built into the procedures and practices of the Departments.

Other significant barriers (Figure 11.1) identified by the Racial Minority individual respondents were those of the continuing negative stereotyping of racial minorities, the lack of access to training and the resistance to positive action initiatives. Each of these barriers, it was suggested by respondents, had a direct correlation with the cultural values and expectations of those with a responsibility for career progression and development. For example, the negative stereotyping hindering and affecting the markings given to racial minority individuals, and the lack of specific training and positive action initiatives for racial minorities ensuring that the provision of a 'level playing field' for opportunities for racial minorities are at best limited or not provided at all. A particular progression barrier identified by the Civil Service organisation respondents was that of length of service:

*'up until recently they were not in the feeder grades to enable them to have the opportunity to progress to the senior management levels [CS Respondent]'.*

This situation they argued was changing but would take time to play out.

**Figure 11.1 - Progression barriers identified by Racial Minority Individuals**



Source: Research Findings

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As to what to do about these barriers, a general view made by all respondent groups was that of the attainment of better qualifications. However, as highlighted by Brennan and McGeevor (1990), this does not necessarily follow. They suggest that despite better qualifications, racial minorities were still less likely to obtain training opportunities and promotion than their white counterparts. This view had a great deal of resonance with the Racial Minority individual respondents, many making the point that despite having superior qualifications to their white counterparts, they were still much more likely to be overlooked for promotion. A reason for this as Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) highlighted in the literature review, is that progression is not necessarily based on the principle of the best person, or the person best qualified for the job but more likely the best person that 'fits'. This fit, as identified by Brewer (1995) in the literature review, can be seen to be cultural racism at work. The 'fit' needed would invariably be based on the cultural requirements of the organisation.

## **11.6 Analysis Summary**

This chapter looked at the extent to which the realities and personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in career development and progression in the Civil Service. What is clear from the analysis is that the realities and experiences of racial minorities support both the perception and reality of disadvantage. As recognised by all respondents, a key contributory factor to this disadvantage is that of culture, which from first hand experience is a hindrance rather than a help to the career development of racial minorities. The extent of this hindrance appears to be significant and stems, the analysis would suggest, from a lack of real commitment to equality by those in authority, as well as the poor implementation of policies, practices and procedures. This poor

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implementation is highlighted in the performance appraisal process, which, as a key progression mechanism, was found by most respondents to be fundamentally flawed and in need of change. The main issues noted that support this observation are summarised as follows:

- organisations such as the Civil Service / Civil Service Departments do have a specific culture, with associated and related sub cultures;
- the function of the personnel department is a significant factor in the career progression opportunities for racial minorities;
- the personnel practices and processes, such as appraisal and supervision, can have a significant impact on career progression opportunities and outcomes for racial minorities;
- while personnel departments are often female areas of work those who are ultimately responsible for and have responsibility for the personnel function are overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-aged men;
- looking at the group information provided by the statistical information available, and the Racial Minority individual respondent perceptions, it is apparent that the racial minorities individuals' experiences match that of the racial minority group as a whole;
- there is a general laissez-faire approach to the implementation of equal opportunity policy;
- the statistical data show clearly career progression for racial minorities is limited;
- the analysis of the research findings with regards to the perceptions of the respondents reinforce the statistical evidence.

This observation of the impact of cultural values needs, however, to be qualified by the significant divergence of views, and perhaps moreover emphasis, between the Civil Service organisation and Racial Minority individual respondents. This divergence is not necessarily of view but of emphasis, and is well demonstrated by the example of the prominence of race. The Civil Service organisations were generally of the view that the issues around race and culture had been dealt with, and that equal prominence now needed to be given to other equality strands if 'mainstreaming' was to be achieved. They made the point by way of clarification that positive action initiatives with regard to career progression needed to be open to all equality strands and not just race. This was

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not a view shared by the Racial Minority individual or Equality Organisation respondents who, whilst recognising that some work had been undertaken on race and cultural issues, and expressed concern that the fear of the possible 'backlash' by white staff if so called '*favouritism*' was shown to racial minority staff, were generally of the view that much more needed to be done, and that positive action initiatives should be particularly targeted at racial minorities. This type of difference of view and emphasis was typical throughout the analysis. Importantly, there were also a number of areas of agreement that provides support for the analytical conclusions reached.

There were three key aspects amongst these areas of agreement. First there was an almost unanimous view of Civil Service competencies and the need for staff members to 'fit' these competencies if they were to progress. This fit, it was agreed by the vast majority of respondents, related directly to the values of those in authority, who, as identified above are overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-aged men. The second aspect related to barriers and how to overcome them. The overall consensus that reflected the views of most respondents was that there was not one answer to this. Although there was now greater awareness of the barriers and that the situation overall was improving, this was very slow. A particular barrier related to the criteria for progressing: the 'fit', mentioned above. Most respondents from all respondent groups recognised that appointments to senior positions should be on merit. The question posed, however, was, who sets the merit standards? As with the first aspect, this was identified overwhelmingly as white, middle-class, middle-aged men. The third and final aspect related to the need for action. Albeit there was a different emphasis as to the speed of this action amongst the groups, but nevertheless, there was a shared recognition of the need for action. This need for action and possible avenues will be specifically addressed in the conclusions chapter that follows, but again, a view from all respondent groups was that

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those who had the power and control to determine the speed of action were, again, the overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-aged men in authority.

Taking note of the above, the picture that emerges within the Civil Service is not one of outright discrimination and prejudice as suggested by the Racial Minority individual respondents, but a very unmistakable and I would suggest well evidenced argument that the cultural values of an elite group made up of overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-aged men, impacts directly on the policies, practices and ultimately the behaviour of today's Civil Service. This cultural impact on policies, practices and behaviour in the context of this study is particularly relevant to the Civil Service performance appraisal system. The above analysis clearly demonstrates this has a negative impact statistically and in reality to the opportunities for progression for racial minorities within the Civil Service.



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## 11.7 Analysis Conclusions

Both from the statistics and the empirical data the view obtained was that some progress on ethnic minority issues has been made since the launch of PAR in 1990. However, a clear message was that this progress has been limited, and certainly in the view of the racial minorities interviewed, the progress was inadequate. This was a view also shared by the Civil Service organisation practitioners in some areas. On a positive note, although externally driven, it can certainly be said that Civil Service Departments and Agencies now have formal race equality policies and action plans in place. Indeed it is clear that most Departments and Agencies can point to specific areas of progress. However, the practical extent of that progress, particularly for racial minorities, is a matter of conjecture. What also appears to be true is that the commitment to taking forward race equality has been influenced and diluted by other priorities and also importantly in the context of this study, held back by the culture of the Civil Service. The very clear message from the racial minority staff interviewed was that further action is needed by Departments and Agencies to ensure that equal opportunities are provided to all in recruitment and promotion as well as in access to training and development opportunities.

Finally, from its own publications, it is perhaps worth noting that the Civil Service believes that it has excellent equal opportunity policy, a policy that has been reinforced and built on by initiatives such as PAR. In relation to this study, PAR is designed to address the specific needs of racial minorities in the Civil Service. However, policies, no matter how good, need committed practical implementation to succeed. The statistical evidence and perceptions of those interviewed suggests that in many instances the progress made amounts to doing the minimum needed to be able to tick the appropriate box, that the progress is slow and change patchy. This lack of change or slowness of change

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that many commentators suggest is a feature of the UK Civil Service is, I would suggest, governed by the cultural norms and standards of the Civil Service and acts as a significant barrier to the recruitment, progression and development of groups such as racial minorities. This view is to a large extent borne out by the research findings which point to the fact that the culture (values , beliefs, norms) of the Civil Service can and does have a significant impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities.

This Chapter has provided an analysis of the perceptions and statistical data with regard to career progression opportunities for racial minorities. From this a clear view emerged of a culture that impacts negatively on racial minorities. The question then posed by many of the respondents was, not surprisingly, what can be done about this and is there the will to do anything about it? The next chapter presents the conclusions of this study and looks specifically at what can be done by highlighting the key contribution of this thesis. Moreover, it includes a discussion on the research limitations, and importantly the practical actions / implications to address the research questions. The chapter concludes with the identification of potential avenues for further research.

It is a pleasure to have you here in person for this special event. It is an exciting opportunity for us to share with you the research findings that we have gathered over the past few years. The Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation. The research findings that we have gathered over the past few years have shown that the Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation. The research findings that we have gathered over the past few years have shown that the Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation.

# Chapter Twelve

## Conclusions

The research findings that we have gathered over the past few years have shown that the Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation. The research findings that we have gathered over the past few years have shown that the Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation. The research findings that we have gathered over the past few years have shown that the Civil Service culture of the 1970s and 1980s was a time of great change and innovation.

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## 12.1 Introduction

Based on the research findings and analysis in previous chapters, this chapter gives an evidential response and conclusions to the research questions at chapter six, specifically the impact of the Civil Service culture on the opportunities for racial minority progression within the Civil Service. To provide this response, there is first a contextualisation of the research findings, followed by a presentation of the research conclusions leading to a discussion on the principal issues and contributions from the study. In addition, the limitations of the thesis are stated in terms of the general, research design and methodology. The chapter concludes with a series of insights and recommendations for consideration as avenues for further research.

## 12.2 Context

From the literature it is clear that the origins and history that has shaped the modern Civil Service points to a long standing embedded culture, initiated and developed by a small elite group, the vast majority of whom retain their power and influence through the operation of a well established code of practice they write and perpetuate. The original classical 'Oxbridge' requirements have continued to the present time as has the same basic cultural values and norms that are maintained by the 'heirs' of the original elite group, whose influence and power continues, despite many attempts at reform.

In the case of the UK Civil Service, the cultural norms are clearly Anglo-Saxon in nature and derived and influenced from a white dominated military perspective that has changed little over the years. These cultural values and norms, as identified at Chapter two are 'taken for granted' Schein (1985), within the Civil Service and provide the basis for the way things are done and/or

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expected to be done. The impact of this with regard to personnel functions, for example, is one that the research shows leads to less favourable treatment of particular groups, and can in the context of this study be seen as a subtle form of cultural racism which disadvantages racial minorities. This general societal disadvantage with regard to racial minorities has been well documented and researched by commentators such as Modood *et al.* (1997), and more recently re-emphasised by the Prime Minister (Blair 2003), in his speech at the launch of the *'Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market'* report in March 2003<sup>97</sup>.

By way of balance it is perhaps worth restating that the excellent general Civil Service equal opportunity policy has been reinforced by initiatives such as PAR, aimed at addressing the progression issues for racial minority staff in the Civil Service, seeking to address (in the case of PAR) the specific career progression needs of racial minority staff in the UK Civil Service. However, what was clear from the research was that policies, no matter how well written and well intended, need committed practical implementation to succeed.

What should also be noted is that against a background of falling Civil Service numbers and the delegation to Departments and Agencies of most human resource management responsibilities, including equal opportunities. It is commendable that the Civil Service has made some progress in improving its equal opportunity provision. Nonetheless this progress has been limited, in respect of race, to areas such as better awareness of race issues, and monitoring rates. For example, in 1989, when Service-wide data first became available, the ethnicity survey response rate was 75%. This response rate has increased to 87% in 1996, with a number of Departments now reporting a response rate of 90% or more.

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<sup>97</sup> [www.strategy.gov.uk/downloads/su/ethnic\\_minorities/report/downloads/ethnic\\_minorities.pdf](http://www.strategy.gov.uk/downloads/su/ethnic_minorities/report/downloads/ethnic_minorities.pdf)

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Numerically, however, progress has been insignificant with regard to actual numbers of racial minorities progressing to senior management positions in the Civil Service. It is true that some of the differences in representation at various grades may be accounted for by the different age and service profiles of staff from different racial groups. For example, 45% of African-Caribbean staff in the Civil Service are less than 30 years old, compared with only 26% of white and 32% of Asian staff. In addition 28% of black staff have more than 10 years service compared with 51% of white and 36% of Asian staff. Nevertheless, this does not fully account for the discrepancies and it would appear that despite a number of specific initiatives, (such as PAR) African-Caribbean individuals, in particular, are still not progressing particularly into senior management grades, in the same proportions as their White or Asian counterparts.

Taking note of this context, the next section provides the study's conclusions and evidential response to the research questions.

### **12.3 Conclusions of the Study - Evidential Response**

The main focus of this study has been the issue of equality of opportunity for racial minorities in the Civil Service. In looking at this issue, the study looked at two specific questions:

*To what extent does the organisational culture of the Civil Service help or hinder progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service?*

and

*To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in career development and progression in the Civil Service?*

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From the above context, it can be noted that the general conclusions of this study are of both an embedded Civil Service culture, and that racial minorities in the Civil Service face disadvantage with regard to career progression opportunities. In addressing the two specific questions, what has come as a surprise, and what clearly emerges from the study, is both statistically and in the perceptions of the majority of those surveyed, the lack of tangible progress made since 1989 in improving the career opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service. This lack of progress to a large degree evidences and underpins the general response to the main research questions, which, in outline is that:

***The organisational culture of the Civil Service does hinder the career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service and that this hindrance is reflected in the lived reality and personal experience of racial minority civil servants, thereby supporting the statistical perception of inequality in career development and progression for racial minorities.***

From this general response to the research questions, there are, however, a number of underlying issues that are now further explained and clarified thereby making a contribution to the body of knowledge in this area. The specific inter-related issues identified and considered below are those of:

- attitude
- specialism and status
- hierarchy
- positive action
- resistance to change

In the main these issues are relevant to both of the research questions, but given their interlinked nature, where they relate only to one of them this has also been identified.

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### 12.3.1 Attitude

One of the significant and evident issues that came out from this study was with regard to the attitude and approach of the Civil Service to the issue of race and as a consequence the level of regard and priority given to it. As indicated by commentators such as Jewson and Mason (1993:221), organisations such as the Civil Service have what they call a 'liberal' attitude/approach to the way in which they conduct their business. From the research there was overwhelming evidence to support this view and to suggest that this liberal attitude was directly linked to the cultural values of those in authority.

The study showed that these cultural values were embedded in the practices and procedures adopted by the Civil Service organisations reviewed. Specifically, this liberal attitude was evident in the personnel practices and procedures, based on the Civil Service philosophy of 'fair and open competition, based on merit'. This is laudable, but what was clear was that in practice the fair, open and merit considerations take little or no regard to the embedded cultural issues and biases of those in control of the practices and procedures. For example, whose fairness and merit value systems are we working to? The conclusion reached from this study is that it is without doubt the white westernised value systems.

Importantly for this study, what this leads to is the maintenance of status differentials (the racial minorities remaining concentrated in the lower grades), and the lack of progression opportunities for racial minorities, particularly in reaching senior management positions. Indeed, some racial minority respondents argued that this attitude demonstrated a lack of real understanding and commitment by those charged with the implementation of the *Civil Service Equal Opportunity Policy*, and initiatives such as the *PAR* and the 1994 *Advisory Panel on Equal Opportunities in the Senior Civil Service*<sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> Advisory Panel on Equal Opportunities in the Senior Civil Service Cabinet Office, September 1995



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By way of support for this statement, these three documents make the clear case for equity for all in the Civil Service, as well as spelling out attendant benefits for organisations as well as individuals that the proper implementation of equality policies/initiatives would provide. It appears, however, that a gap exists between the advocated intentions and the actual practices as interpreted by the Departments and Agencies, resulting in little and/or a slow pace of change. The lack of understanding is perhaps typified by a statement from a Civil Service Organisation respondent, who, when asked about barriers facing racial minorities seeking progression to senior management positions, stated that *“there are no barriers here, we treat everyone exactly the same, and we have an excellent equal opportunities policy to prove it”* [CS Respondent]. This statement is particularly poignant given that the highest ranking racial minority member of staff, in this particular organisation was at the junior manager Executive Officer or equivalent grade.

What the statement from the Civil Service Organisation respondent perhaps shows is a certain naivety and/or ignorance in appreciating that documented policies and procedures do not guarantee their practical effectiveness. This lack of practical effectiveness may be due to as contended by Torrington *et al.* (1982), *‘circumvention by neglect’*; in simple terms what I would describe as formal procedures being permitted to atrophy. Alternatively, it may be due, according to Jewson and Mason (1986, 313-328), to circumvention by manipulation, i.e. policy may be followed to the letter but contravened in the spirit. A view as set out in Chapter one, shared by Cockburn (1991:216). During the course of the research it was clear that despite the very good policies and even a stated

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The 1995 *‘Advisory Panel on Equal Opportunities in the senior civil service’* report commissioned by the Head of the Home civil service, aimed to identify the steps needed to be taken to improve the representation in senior management positions of people from ethnic minority backgrounds and disabled people. This report states that the employment of ethnic minorities and disabled people in the civil service compares favourably with other employers both public and private sector. However both groups are under-represented at senior levels. The Panel concluded that: Under-representation of ethnic minorities and disabled people in the senior civil service is likely to be due to a combination of factors including relative under-achievement at more junior levels, lack of opportunity for career development and promotion and the *culture and ethos of the civil service itself.*

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commitment to those policies, for a variety of reasons, and indeed some respondents suggested ‘excuses’, those individuals with the power to implement were also in a position to circumvent by ignoring, neglecting or as developed below, affording such a low priority to the issue that little was in fact ever achieved.

This lack of priority given to race issues was clearly linked to the attitudinal culture of the Civil Service and was perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the study’s findings. It was clear that this attitudinal culture, which is an inherent part of the organisational culture of the Civil Service, has a specific and significant impact on career progression opportunities for racial minority staff. The liberal *laissez-faire* model to equal opportunities, as described by Jewson and Mason (1986, 313-328), predominates in the Civil Service. Rather than a help, there is a belief, certainly from the racial minority staff interviewed that this liberal attitude is in fact a hindrance to progression and equality of opportunity for racial minorities. Whilst most Civil Service Departments have good written equal opportunity policies, the manner in which they are interpreted and/or implemented, mainly through a lack of priority given to it, leads inevitably to little real progress being made in redressing the career progression difficulties faced by racial minorities. As an issue, it is therefore argued that whilst this liberal approach continues to be practised, there is little likelihood of any significant improvement to the situation for racial minorities. The view put forward by a senior Racial Minority respondent supports this contention, and is indicative of the attitude that prevails within the Civil Service.

*“they [the management] say that equal opportunities policies are now in place means that everyone now has the same opportunity”, misses the need to redress the balance of years of inequity, to enable certain groups to play on a ‘level playing field’, [RM Respondent]*

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### 12.3.2 Specialists and Status

The lack of racial minority senior managers was a point that was evident from the statistical information presented in chapter eight, but also a point of concern particularly to the study's racial minority respondents. A closer inspection of the statistical information, however, paints an even gloomier picture, in that the majority of racial minorities in senior positions are in fact specialists such as doctors, solicitors, engineers and scientists. This issue of specialists, on the face of it, may not seem of much significance. However, I believe is an excellent illustration of how cultural value systems are often accepted without question and how they operate to the detriment of particular groups. By way of explanation, the fact that the overwhelming majority of racial minority senior managers are in fact specialists, I believe, demonstrates the stereotypical views that are held of racial minorities in the Civil Service. Whereby, individuals needing to 'fit' or 'be fit' for progression can be seen to support the notion that particular racial groups are associated with particular roles. This fit, I consider is compounded by the '*privileges of education*' enjoyed by many of these specialists, which can compensate for your race (just as, for example, class can compensate for gender), and can act as an agent of socialisation, making educated racial minorities, '*more like us*'.

With regard to this study mention has been made of specific specialist roles, for example, Asian doctors or accountants. The specialist roles particularly for Asian males, in part answers another issue of significantly greater Asian male numbers within the racial minorities in senior management positions, and is considered in greater detail at 12.3.3 below. This issue of specialists, however, is not peculiar to race and is perhaps even more emphasised with regard to gender, a point made by Crompton (2002), who refers to the specialist 'glass

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escalator' route that women have to follow noting the issues of 'credential levers' and 'specialist tickets'.

The cultural values and norms leading to stereotypical assumptions is clearly then a factor in the progression and placement of racial minorities, and as with gender this is an issue to which little consideration is given but which potentially has a huge impact on the status of groups such as racial minorities within the Civil Service hierarchy.

With regard to the senior management positions within the public sector and linked to the issue of specialists in senior management positions in the Civil Service is the issue of barriers to progression for racial minorities. These barriers were referred to in a 2003 speech to business leaders at Canary Wharf, by Trevor Phillips, chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, entitled - *are 'snowy peaks' the new glass ceilings?*<sup>99</sup>. In the speech he made the point that:

I coined the phrase 'snowy peaks' to help explain to government ministers what was happening in the civil service in terms of staff representation. I told them to think of Whitehall as a mountain range. At the base of each mountain you find large numbers of women and racial minority workers whereas at the summit you find a small amount of white, middle class men

The idea of snowy peaks that Trevor Phillips refers to is consistent with the glass ceiling barriers experienced by women and referred to by Corby (1994) in chapter five of this study. They ensure that women and racial minorities generally remain in much greater numbers at the bottom of the organisation's status structures, and, importantly in the context of this study, a lack of progress to senior levels. What is apparent is that glass ceilings and/or snowy peaks are underpinned by cultural value systems that this study concludes has a significant impact for racial minorities. Trevor Phillips went on to suggest that

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<sup>99</sup> [http://www.psi.org.uk/events/event.asp?event\\_id=54](http://www.psi.org.uk/events/event.asp?event_id=54) (Last Accessed 12 January 2007)

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the only Department that seemed to be the exception to the rule was the Crown Prosecution Service. But this he explained was due to the fact that the vast majority of racial minority lawyers could not gain entry to private practice and were therefore drawn into public work.

This suggestion supports the points on both specialists and status.

A further interesting point made by Trevor Phillips which supports a view made by a number of racial minority respondents related to the need for racial minorities and indeed women to turn themselves into or be seen as 'white men' to get on, Mr Phillips suggesting that:

Even when people are doing all the right things to encourage greater diversity, they sometimes end up with a biased outcome. For example, every year the BBC runs a graduate trainee scheme, with tens of thousands of people applying for only five places. A colleague of mine who took part in the recruitment process complained that historically they had only ever chosen white men. He was determined to change this situation, and he did. His selection resulted in two women and three Asians being successful. However, he felt that something was not right. He went back to read their CVs and realised that they had all studied at Oxbridge!

As far as the Civil Service focus of this study is concerned this perhaps demonstrates both the qualifications lever and the strength of the 'Oxbridge' cultural values being a more important or a compensating factor for progression than race or gender.

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### 12.3.3 Hierarchy

An issue which perhaps surprisingly created the most debate and strength of feeling was that of the hierarchy within the BME groups in the Civil Service organisational structure. As noted above, this hierarchy could be seen to be linked to the issue of specialists and the appointment particularly of Asian males into certain specialist areas, but the study also clearly showed a deeper and more persistent hierarchical order in the manner outlined in chapter three by Barker (2000), that is the biological superiority of particular races with Whites at the top of the hierarchy, Asians in the middle and Blacks at the bottom.

All respondent groups were aware of this hierarchy and could point to the different perceptions held of Black and Asian groups. An example of this perception, as one Civil Service Organisation respondent ‘jokingly’ suggested, *‘we all know that Blacks are generally lazy and aggressive but the Asian individuals are more even tempered, work harder and are more like us [CS Respondent]’*. Whether a joke or not, what the Civil Service Organisation respondents could not or would not accept or acknowledge was the impact that these perceptions actually had on the reality for racial minority staff. Holding a perception such as this, I would suggest is likely to have an impact on the way in which these different groups are treated.

Within the racial minority respondent group (which included 11 Asian respondents), only one Asian individual was not aware of the hierarchical preference that existed. A typical comment from one Asian respondent was that *‘if you are Asian you are much more likely to get on’ [RM Respondent]*. Within the African- Caribbean respondents there was a great deal of resentment and indeed anger about what they perceived as a wholly unfair and unjust perception. A view from one African-Caribbean individual with regard to the

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preference of Asian individuals which summed up this resentment was that, *'they always side with the whites, they class themselves as whites, they hate us even more than the whites'* [RM Respondent]. Another more strident view from another African-Caribbean individual was that, *'If you ever go for promotion and there is an Asian panel member and you are black, forget it'* [RM Respondent]. This anger and resentment was acknowledged by the majority of Asian respondents and whilst not totally accepted was also understood by most of them.

A recent high profile Civil Service initiative which adds to the African-Caribbean hierarchical concerns above, relates to the 2005 Civil Service 10 point plan on equality in the Civil Service (Appendix F), which uses as its example of diversity in practice the following extract:

*Every year, tens of thousands of British Muslims travel to Saudi Arabia on their pilgrimage to Mecca. Performing the Hajj is part of a Muslim's vital duty, and he/she must do it once in their lifetime, if their situation allows. Around two million pilgrims visit the Holy Site each year. Of these, many are British-based Muslims, who may need help and support during their journey. This assistance is provided by the British Hajj delegation, which includes medical staff and counsellors, and is made up of volunteers from the UK's Muslim communities. Last year, the delegation provided support to more than 4,000 pilgrims. To ensure a high standard of service is provided to UK citizens, a British Muslim member of staff from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been posted to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. Dawood Mayet works with the Hajj delegation and the British consulate in Jeddah to help and advise British pilgrims. Issues he might assist with include transferring money from the UK, contact details for local lawyers or hospitals and advice on passport and visa matters. Dawood's understanding of issues relating to Hajj mean he is ideally placed to perform his role, which is essentially to act as a link between pilgrims and officials. If Dawood was not in post the consulate would otherwise have needed to source a non-UK Muslim officer to undertake this key role. Not only would this cost more, but such an officer would not be as effective in the job as Dawood is with his specialist, 'insider' knowledge. Dawood's familiarity with the locations involved in the journey, and the problems that may be encountered there, mean a robust support service can be provided to pilgrims. His input ensures British Muslims on their Hajj are dealt with in an appropriate and highly sensitive manner. Dawood, who has served in Jeddah for more than two years, has been commended for his commitment and dedication to the role.*

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This type of portrayal is now common place and in the view of the African-Caribbean respondents demonstrates the preferential treatment being given to Asians, particularly those from the Muslim faith. A further example of this preference relates to Keith Vaz MP<sup>100</sup>, who produced a report in 1997 titled *'The Glass Ceiling'*, specifically addressing the needs of Asian civil servants. If a distinction of this nature is made between Asian and African-Caribbean groups, the question that was put to me by one African-Caribbean respondent was: *who then is looking after the needs of the African-Caribbean civil servants?* **[RM Respondent]**

What lies behind the strongly held views, are, I believe, issues of understanding and acknowledgement. First a need for the Civil Service to understand and recognise the perceived difference in treatment of Asian and African-Caribbean civil servants, and whether this difference is a perception or a reality, a need to deal with it. Second there is a need for all to acknowledge, as Drake (1988 and 1991) made reference to in chapter three, that history demonstrates that discrimination is not the preserve of white people and exists in all races and indeed between races. An Asian person on a progression panel therefore does not ensure that racial inequality is addressed. Indeed, the study, as identified by the comments above, suggests that this is far from the reality.

This hierarchical preference and placement I would therefore see as very much to do with the beliefs of individuals, which, as identified in chapter two, are often not even recognised, but along with the cultural values can be hugely influential in the decisions made and indeed behaviours followed. This issue did come as a surprise and as with the specialist contribution is supported particularly at the senior management positions statistically and through the perceptions of the racial minority respondents in particular.

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<sup>100</sup> Elected by the voters of Leicester East in 1987, Mr Vaz was first appointed to the Labour frontbench five years later as a junior environment spokesman. He was appointed Minister for Europe at the Foreign Office by Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1999 becoming the first Asian minister in the Commons. Since 1987 he has been a strong advocate in Parliament for Asian progression and rights.



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#### 12.3.4 Positive Action

The use of positive action schemes in the Civil Service was an issue specifically referred to as a mechanism for reducing the inequalities faced by racial minority staff in the Civil Service. From the Civil Service organisation respondents, it was interesting to note and observe the fact, as stated by Jewson and Mason (1993:136) that from the white majority *‘There is usually a reaction of extreme hostility’*, or as described by a Civil Service organisation respondent *‘the fear of a backlash from the white staff. [CS Respondent]’* This together with the general view from this respondent group that positive action is inappropriate, because of the *‘small numbers of racial minorities’*, were common excuses as to why positive action schemes were not considered necessary or advantageous. From the research it was clear that such schemes were often resisted covertly if not overtly.

The impact of the Civil Service culture was seen particularly by the Racial Minority individual respondents as a major contributory factor to the lack of progress made by racial minorities, and it is suggested will continue to do so unless there is a recognition of this and positive action taken to deal with the barriers that this culture provides. It was strongly felt by the racial minorities who took part in the research that whilst assistance in the form of positive action was welcomed and needed to redress this cultural impact, it was stressed that special favours were not being sought. Furthermore rather than the ‘lip service’ paid to equal opportunity policies, there was a need for urgent practical action backed, if necessary, by further legislation.

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### 12.3.5 Resistance to Change

The disadvantage faced by racial minorities in the Public Sector is recognised as a 'problem' that requires urgent action. This was highlighted by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in his forward to the 2003 *Racial Minorities and the Labour Market Cabinet Office Strategy Unit* Report, where he made the point that:

Despite the marked progress made by some, too many members of racial minority communities are still being left behind. Even those individuals who achieve academic success do not necessarily reap the rewards in the workplace that their qualifications merit. We need to urgently address this situation.

Notwithstanding this recognition, a notable concern arising from the analysis was the perception of resistance within the Civil Service to taking forward equality issues properly, and as part of that the career opportunities for racial minorities. This resistance to change was an issue of concern that was identified by the majority of respondents in all respondent groups. A clear view from the vast majority of respondents was that moves towards addressing the problem were painfully (and it was argued deliberately) slow, with an apparent acceptance, as stated by a number of those surveyed, that nothing much will change for at least 10-15 years, if indeed ever. A possible reason for this resistance to change can be gleaned from the 26 July 2005 valedictory lecture and farewell letter of Sir Andrew Turnbull, the head of the Civil Service between 2002 and 2005. In defence of the way that the Civil Service operated, including its record on taking forward equality of opportunity, Sir Andrew sought to demonstrate the importance of the Civil Service values systems and its effectiveness. The full valedictory lecture is provided at Appendix E but the statements below give a flavour of this defence:

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My conclusion is that our system has served us well and anyone contemplating change should beware of importing bits of other systems without thinking through the implications for the system as a whole.

I am proud of the organisation that I am leaving to my successor. But although I have seen much change over my tenure as Cabinet Secretary, I know that there will continue to be changes after I have left, but this should not be for change's sake.

My final regret is that we have still not laid to rest some of the old stereotypes, e.g. mandarins and bureaucrats. I haven't seen a bowler hat in Whitehall for 25 years. As for labelling civil servants as bureaucrats I find this comment inaccurate and offensive.

With regard to values, Sir Andrew made these types of comments:

Emphasising the importance I attach to the Civil Service being capable of delivering the tasks set for it, I have in no way sought to downplay the importance of values.

When things have gone wrong at the interface between the Civil Service and politicians they have nearly always been around values and behaviour, not rules and enforcement.

I recently met the Mexican Minister for Public Sector Reform. When I congratulated him on producing a Civil Service Act within 3 years, he looked at me enviously and said. 'Yes but you have 150 years of values'. I was struck recently when I read of the new Chief Executive of Boeing who arrived from Hewlett Packard. He said he was dismayed to find an organisation that was rules rather values driven.

What the statements from Sir Andrew clearly shows is an acceptance of the status quo based on the value systems of those at its head, and indeed a certain degree of resistance to change.

This resistance to change is further demonstrated by the BBC television series '*Yes, Minister*', that took to the air in 1980. Its title took its origins very precisely

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from the Diaries, published in 1975, of Richard Crossman<sup>101</sup>, based primarily in his role as Minister of Housing and Local Government in October in the 1964 Harold Wilson Labour Government. The popularity of *Yes Minister* is based on the recognition by many of how the Civil Service still operates today, slow to change with a clear value system, which Richard Crossman suggested, seeks to control and maintain the status quo.

This value system and the slowness to change have a direct impact on groups such as racial minorities, who may not share the same value systems. It is therefore suggested that if the Civil Service means to make meaningful progress in ensuring greater improvements in racial minority progression and representation at senior levels, then the pace of change, which in many ways is controlled by the Civil Service nature and 'culture', cannot be simply left to regulate and control itself. If this were the case, the problem would persist well into the next century, if not beyond. Whether there should be an expectation of more immediate progress or indeed whether in fact there actually needs to be representation relative to ethnicity are two contentions that have been put forward by some of those interviewed. This type of contention, whilst outside the scope of this study, highlights not only the underlying 'liberal' attitude to race issues (as mentioned above) but also the resistance that exists to any real change. This resistance, it can no doubt be argued relates not only to race. But in the context of this study, the issue of resistance to change is a real one for racial minorities, which with regard particularly to personnel issues, will, unless positively addressed, simply ensure the maintenance of the status quo to the detriment of racial minority staff.

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<sup>101</sup> <http://www.enotes.com/salem-lit/crossman-diaries> (Last accessed 12 January 2007)

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## **12.4 Limitations of the Study**

The theoretical and practical contribution of any study, Bryman (1988) asserts, is tempered by the limitations of the research. The main limitations for this study are considered to be in three areas: general limitations, research design limitations and limitations of methodological approach. These areas are considered and discussed in the epilogue chapter below.

## **12.5 Research Insights**

The research findings and conclusions allow for the provision of a significant number of insights and recommendations to be made. These insights provide the basis for the recommendations that follow.

### **12.5.1 Policies**

The existence of formal equal opportunities policy does not guarantee that the right steps will be taken to promote equality of opportunity for all groups. From the study there were many instances of good career progression policies not implemented properly. This may be for several reasons, for example, the policy may have been imposed or not be seen as relevant. However, a particular reason in the context of this study relates to the cultural values of those individuals with the power to ensure proper implementation, who are able to circumvent formal procedures. This circumvention can be achieved by ignoring or neglecting practices. There is evidence of both neglect and circumvention on the part of Civil Service managers from the study's findings.

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## 12.5.2 Action

In looking at taking action with regard to the positive promotion of equality, this can depend on a number of elements:

these may include : powerful external influences such as legislation and political and social campaigns, internal factors such as strong leadership, resources to carry the project forward, the commitment of senior management, communication and acceptance of the need to change, focusing on the total culture not just organisational systems (Colgan and Ledwith 1996).

Examining the statement in further detail, from the study's findings, it can be seen that to a certain degree, pressure has been exerted on the public sector, especially the Civil Service, to adopt measures to improve opportunities for racial minorities. However, the following statement made by a senior racial minority respondent gives an insight from a personal perspective of what some of the issues might be:

'The culture, structure, systems, attitudes of managers, assumptions about racial minorities, commitment of the organisation and particularly the stereotypical views that managers hold of racial minorities, all play a role with regards to the career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service'. *[RM Respondent - African-Caribbean, Male, 46 to 55, 11-20 years in service]*

A clear view from particularly the racial minority respondents was that to counter the attitude identified in this statement was the need for more extensive positive action initiatives. However, it was also recognised that in using positive action measures (which is often misconstrued as positive discrimination) to improve the career progression opportunities of racial minorities, there is usually a reaction of extreme hostility covertly if not overtly. This hostility and the misrepresentation of positive action can be seen *'to involve the imposition of a collectivist conception on a sphere of social life usually associated, in capitalist societies, with extreme forms of individualism'* (Jewson and Mason, 1993:136).

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This collectivist conception is related to the embedded cultural conceptions of the white males in authority. As a consequence what this often means is that well founded positive action initiatives fail. From this study, there is clear evidence of both hostility and misunderstanding of positive action measures.

### **12.5.3 Monitoring**

If we wish to know whether a particular group enjoys equality of opportunity, we must necessarily have recourse to output measures or results. In short, if it is that we expect equitable opportunity and as a consequence a fair representation of members of under-represented groups across a range of jobs, positions and status that reflects their representation in the population or labour force or some other defined sub-group, then monitoring is vital. In the final analysis, what was clear from the study was that power, paternalism, traditionalist thinking about racial minorities is still reflected in organisations through institutional racism. This racism, as the study shows, is often based on cultural norms, and sadly has a direct impact on the career progression opportunities for racial minorities. With regard to monitoring, probably the most serious indictment of all as to its use is the fact that whenever workforce profiles are analysed, the results are usually the same: namely poor or no representation of racial minorities, particularly African- Caribbean individuals, in positions of authority or power within organisations. The fact that monitoring systems are available to measure advancement (if used), suggests that progress to ensure equality for discriminated against groups should be systematic and relatively quick. However, despite these monitoring systems, the study shows that only limited practical outcomes over a long period, in the case of this study from 1989, have been achieved in the career progression outcomes for racial minorities.

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#### 12.5.4 Representation

The levels at which of racial minority staff were represented in the Civil Service was an ongoing concern raised by respondents. From the study, the lack of interest in dealing with this under-representation of racial minorities particularly at the senior levels, clearly it was suggested, signifies that the 'glass ceiling' or, as Trevor Phillips suggests, the 'snowy peaks' are still very much in evidence. Importantly, this peak or ceiling, it was felt, is now more covert, and is played out through the power and values of the organisational cultures at the top of the pyramid, in the context of this study invariably the power of white men.

From the analysis, whilst it was clear that there were strategies and policies (generally imposed) to increase the representative levels for racial minorities, their effective implementation left a lot to be desired. Although there was an awareness of the situation with regards to racial minorities, there was also unwillingness, and a lack of desire or political inventiveness to encourage such a strategy. The lack of desire could be due to a myriad of reasons, key amongst which may be that those in authority wanting to maintain the status quo. In the context of this study, the maintenance of the status quo clearly relates to the cultural unification and identification referred to by Cockburn (1991:225) who from a female perspective argues:

the idea of multiple masculinities..... should not deflect attention from the consistency in men's domination of women [black men] at systemic and organisational levels, from the continuation of material, structured inequalities and power imbalances between the sexes [races] ... on the other hand, men's power in organisation is maintained through their unification and identification with each other.

This unification and identification, I would suggest, has huge implications for the career progression opportunities particularly to senior levels, for racial minority individuals.



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### 12.5.5 The Limits of the law

From the study there were a number of references made by respondents relating to legal remedies to deal with discrimination. A particular viewpoint summarised by one racial minority respondent was that, *'the limits of the law allied with the power of those (mainly white men) in authority in the Civil Service can lead to a lack of opportunity for racial minorities'* [RM Respondent]. Ultimately it was suggested that going down the legal route was not only demotivating but was also the cause of many who chose that route to leave the Civil Service. A very clear perception therefore, from the study's' racial minority respondents was of little prospect of successfully challenging discrimination through the legal route. Two specific reasons for this pessimistic view were put forward by respondents. First, with regard to the fact that organisations such as the Civil Service invest in their own power, e.g. legal representation and knowledge of the law, this investment empowers them to use the limits of the law to ensure successful defence of cases:

'Each particular rule may be twisted by the defendant, that is used to his advantage ... also, the law involves skills which large-scale employers may be expected to command far more readily than complainants ... and the costs of enforcement are laid upon the victim' (Lustgarten, 1993:21-23).

Second, and of particular relevance to this study, is interestingly the cultural values of racial minorities who, in general terms, as stated by a number of the racial minority respondents, would prefer to leave rather than face the confrontational legal route that in itself takes little or no account of cultural differences.

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## 12.6 Recommendations

Simply noting that things need to improve without offering some alternative is in my view of little practical value. From the insights above it can be seen that there is still a long way to go before the deeply entrenched patterns of inequality with regard to career progression opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service are changed. The recommendations below acknowledge the good intentions, and policies that exist in the Civil Service, but also takes note of the lack of progress, and seeks to offer positive and practical suggestions to take things forward. The recommendations are based on the more feasible suggestions made by those interviewed and whilst they can be considered to be a 'wish list', are put forward for consideration. Implementation, as has already been noted, is the real difficulty.

### 12.6.1 Policies

- Specific cultural diversity and race awareness training for all staff, as considerable gaps in perception remain to be bridged if policy objectives are to be truly met rather than evaded with superficial gestures;
- Training workshops and seminars on the management and implementation of race equality policies;
- A centralised race equality policy monitoring function at both a local and national level. The evidence from the study suggests that moves toward greater delegation are working against the achievement of greater equality.

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### 12.6.2 Action

- The increased use of secondments of racial minority at senior management levels in the Civil Service. Not only graduates, but also inter departmental transfers of existing middle managers;
- The compulsory requirement for a racial minority 'positive action plan' to be developed and published at both the local and national level;
- The greater use of mentoring for the racial minorities, in particular aimed at the racial minorities in the feeder grades;

### 12.6.3 Monitoring

- The racial monitoring for recruitment and career progression rigorously enforced to ensure fair representation at all levels. In this regard excuses such as cost, confidentiality or security in not providing monitoring figures should not be tolerated;
- The monitoring of the different racial groups identifying the specific needs and requirements of the different racial groups, specifically a differentiation between the African-Caribbean and Asian groups;
- A much more pro-active, better resourced race equality monitoring function with inspection and enforcement powers, addressing in particular the accurate reporting of statistical information, for example, the reporting of the 'other' category for racial minority classifications and its distortion of the Civil Service statistical data currently presented.

### 12.6.4 Representation

- The compulsory training for all staff but specifically managers of the impact of organisational culture, in particular to celebrate and encourage difference, recognising that there is not just a 'one way' for the Department or Agencies to operate;
- The positive requirement on individual Departments and Agencies to pro-actively deal with the historical imbalances and ensure that racial minorities are properly represented at senior levels in the Civil Service;
- The setting of specific race equality targets and goals for senior managers with appropriate sanctions to ensure that race equality issues do not fail as a result of cultural inactivity and apathy;

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### 12.6.5 The Limits of the law

- The setting up of an independent body led and chaired by an individual of the complainant's choice as the final arbiter (rather than the need for recourse to the Employment Tribunal) with regard to recruitment and promotion complaints.
- The provision of employment law training for racial minorities and further cultural diversity training for Civil Service managers;
- The recognition of cultural differences and their possible impact with regard to legal complaints, as a consequence the provision of appropriate support mechanisms such as Trade Unions.

### 12.7 Concluding remarks

From the study it is clear that the Civil Service culture (its values, beliefs and traditions) impacts significantly on its racial minorities. Importantly in the context of this study what is also apparent is the strength and power of the underlying issues of race and racism. This underlying issue is well set out in this extract from the *Colours*<sup>102</sup> publication, which states that:

the monoliths called races are a purposeful invention, once used to make Europe's slavery and colonial conquests seem moral and inevitable ... What's going on, we believe, is that people continue to live their lives as if the myths about race were fact. Why? Because it's simpler for those in positions of power if those without power vent all their anger on others without power ... As long as our actions are guided by fear, as long as we regard the myths of race and racism as truth none of us is truly safe (*Colours*, no 4, 1993. p. 68).

This strength and power I believe still prevails in today's society including the way, often unwittingly, in which organisations such as the Civil Service operate. However this is not the whole story and in truth there is no simple answer to

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<sup>102</sup> The COLOURS Organization, Inc. started in a one-room office, where "COLOURS" magazine was launched for African American gay men by four gay men who were leaders in the Greater Philadelphia Area. After 11 years, COLOURS has grown from a \$20,000 annual budget to a \$1,200,000 budget, with 20 employees and 100 volunteers.

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race and racism, which are a complex and sensitive issues. What perhaps the study has most clearly highlighted is that taking note of the prevailing views that are still held about race and racism, that the organisational culture of the Civil Service still reflects traditional cultural ideologies and negative stereotypes with regards to racial minorities in the work environment. This negative viewpoint has not been helped by the view of central government, (both Labour and Conservative) down the years in that racial minorities are regarded as a “problem” and require “special needs” training, so that they are able to compete on equal terms with the indigenous population. The racial minority staff who took part in the survey identified stereotyping as the most typical cultural barrier still faced by racial minorities. In analysing the perceptions that led to this view, what became clear was that whilst there has been an improvement in the overt use of stereotyping, stereotypical views held about certain groupings are still reflected in the psyche of managers in the Civil Service, through what I would contend to be institutional racism. The contention is made so consistently by racial minorities that it is difficult to ignore. The important message that Civil Service managers should take note of is that stereotyping and making certain decisions based on these stereotypes is, at the very least, tantamount to indirect discrimination.

What then emerges is that the issue of racial minority career progression in the Civil Service remains a problem typified by the continuing and consistently low rate of racial minorities at senior management grades, either by recruitment or promotion. Discrimination in employment is more than just an academic question; its detrimental effects on individuals’ lives need to be considered. This is particularly so if the lack of career progression of racial minorities, particularly to senior grades, continues at the level it presently is in the Civil Service. If the attempts to redress the level of discrimination are not successful or commitment to do so is not clearly transparent, the fight for equity in

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equality will hinder progress not only for those oppressed, but also, in this instance, for the Civil Service as a whole. Continuing under-representation at senior levels both morally and economically is in my view an inappropriate and a wasteful underutilisation of the vast racial minority talents available in delivering a better service to the public. As Jenkins (1967) notes:

The next generation however ... will not be immigrants but coloured Britons ... will make no such assumptions, and will expect full opportunities to display their skills. If we frustrate these expectations we shall not only be subjecting our own economy to the most grievous self-inflicted wound, but we shall irreparably damage the quality of life of our society.

This 'next generation' is already here, and it is they who are seeking to enter the Civil Service today, and in the context of this study progress up the Civil Service career structure.

The challenge for the Civil Service managers remains one of first acknowledging and accepting their position of cultural dominance, and then as part of that acceptance, to turn well-intentioned policies and initiatives into genuinely good practice. To assist this challenge it is suggested that as well as mainstreaming equal opportunities into the business of the organisation, there is a fundamental need to address the issue of difference positively and indeed to fully embrace and celebrate that difference.

In summary then, the Civil Service may claim to have made great strides in advancing the cause of equal opportunities but clearly, much remains to be done. If the problems are to be overcome and the expectations of the 'next generation' met, it is necessary to move from the aspiration to the practical and concrete. A realistic, radical plan needs to be developed and pushed forward, as suggested by the then Home Secretary Jack Straw at the Labour Party conference in Brighton in 1997.

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If there is one test, above all, of a self-confident society, it is one which treats people equally. Modern Britain is a multiracial, multi religious society ... Yet, still there is discrimination and prejudice and too few opportunities for Black and Asian people, too many glass ceilings, too many closed doors. (Rt. Hon. Jack Straw MP Home Secretary Brighton 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1997).

In today's Civil Service these 'snowy peaks' need to be melted down.

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## Research Epilogue Reflections 2004

Over the past several years, the research community has been engaged in a vigorous and often contentious debate about the nature and extent of the impact of organizational behavior on the environment. The debate has been fueled by a number of factors, including the growing awareness of the environmental consequences of human activities, the increasing pressure on organizations to demonstrate their social responsibility, and the growing interest in the role of organizations in addressing environmental issues. This research project was designed to explore the impact of organizational behavior on the environment, and to identify the factors that influence this impact. The findings of this project are presented in the following sections.

# EPILOGUE

The findings of this project suggest that the impact of organizational behavior on the environment is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. It is influenced by a number of factors, including the nature of the organization, the nature of the industry, the nature of the environment, and the nature of the organization's activities. The findings also suggest that the impact of organizational behavior on the environment is not always negative. In some cases, organizations can have a positive impact on the environment through their activities. For example, organizations can reduce their environmental footprint by adopting sustainable practices, such as reducing energy consumption, recycling, and using environmentally friendly materials. Organizations can also have a positive impact on the environment through their social responsibility activities, such as supporting environmental conservation efforts and promoting environmental awareness.

## A. Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this project have several important implications for organizations and for society as a whole. First, organizations should be aware of the impact of their activities on the environment and should take steps to reduce their environmental footprint. Second, organizations should be encouraged to adopt sustainable practices and to promote environmental awareness through their social responsibility activities. Third, society should be encouraged to support organizations that are committed to environmental sustainability and to hold organizations accountable for their environmental impact.



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## **Research Epilogue Reflections - 2006**

This chapter provides an opportunity to look back and reflect on the thesis seeking to identify what has been learnt in general terms from undertaking the exercise and what if anything would be done differently. To do this I first provide an introduction setting out the rationale for the study and the overall research findings. I then look at the issues and limitations associated with a study of this nature, including the consideration of the addressing of the length of time that it has taken to undertake this study, what has changed with regard to the subject area during that time, and possible further work needed in this area. I conclude with a short general comment on issues for further consideration and my key learning points from the study.

### **1. Introduction**

This research was undertaken to ascertain the impact of organisational culture on equality of opportunity in employment, specifically, career progression for racial minorities in the UK Civil Service. A major reason for selecting this topic was a concern held by the author, based on his own experiences of the negative impact of organisational culture for racial minorities in the Civil Service. Findings of this research suggest that this concern was well founded based as highlighted in the analysis of both statistics and perceptions at Chapter eleven.

### **2. Limitations and Issues**

Having conducted this research, I recognise that there were a number of limitations and issues that are worth highlighting. These are now reflected upon and provide the basis for the points raised at the end of this epilogue.

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## **2.1 Literature**

The lack of literature available to draw upon with regard to the specific issue of organisational culture and its impact on equality in employment, much less so with regard to the organisational culture of the Civil Service and its impact on career progression opportunities for its racial minorities was a limitation that was apparent from the outset. In undertaking this study, aligned to this lack of specific literature was the number of related issues to this area of research outside the scope of this study that were noted, where again there appeared to have been very little research undertaken. Literature was therefore both an issue and a limitation.

## **2.2 Validity and reliability**

As a specific limitation, the fact that the findings and conclusions of the study relate specifically to the culture of the UK Civil Service, it could be argued that they suffer from limited external validity. An associated limitation was that of the exploratory and descriptive research design adopted. A well documented limitation of research design of this nature is the inability of causality testing, which can place a limitation on the inference that can be drawn of associative relationships in this study, for example, between race and culture. However, in taking note of both of these concerns, it should be noted that the purpose of the study was not to develop universally applicable generalisations but rather to concentrate on the specific 'the culture of an organisation' and as a consequence its impact, and from this to draw general conclusions for further consideration.

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### 2.3 Sensitivity

An area of research such as this can become embroiled in emotions, with participants holding strongly held views (including the author). This can lead both to people being reluctant to discuss some aspects openly, and those strongly held views not being shared. While participants in this research were willing to contribute and were generally highly co-operative and open, they occasionally would not expand on comments or answer certain questions. To a degree, this limited the extent to which perceptions could be fully explored. Associated with this was the need for the 'positioning' of self and others. I was conscious and sensitive to how interactions particularly with the white senior managers may be regarded in conducting interviews with them. At times there was an awkwardness led to a degree of deference to the information provided by the senior managers but subsequently care was taken not to let this reaction influence the interpretation of the data collected.

### 2.4 Size

A further particularly pertinent area of limitation found concerned measurement and sample size. For example, with regard to the measurement of culture there are conflicting views among commentators. As described at chapter two, organisational culture theorists such as Pettigrew, 1979; Dandridge *et al.*, 1980; and Schein, 1985 argue that whilst quantitative measures can be utilised to measure the more objective aspects of culture (for example, cultural artefacts), the examination of aspects such as deeper level cognitions cannot be achieved satisfactorily through a questionnaire construct of culture. A similar limitation was identified with regard to race, as identified at Chapter seven by Price (1969), Bean and Frisbee (1978) and Ladner (1973) who makes reference to the problems associated with numerical accuracy of race figures within the census; the difficulty in relation to properly identifying ethnic

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minority classifications; and the measurement of racial minorities against an alien set of western norms. With regard to sample size the nature and context specific focus of this study contributed to restricting the type of data collection forms and indeed the respondent groups which were suitable. As discussed at Chapter six, a larger sample size would have enabled the use of more advanced forms of data analysis which could potentially have provided a clearer understanding of associations and interactions. But as also pointed out, the time and cost needed for this larger sample would not have been proportional to the potential (and only a potential) of a clearer understanding.

## 2.5 Time Span

A particular issue and limitation related to time. As a part time student it has taken some seven years to complete this study, which in itself poses a number of issues and potential difficulties, not least the changes that have taken place contextually and within the Civil Service with regard to equality issues.

Amongst these changes has been a raft of new equality legislation and with regard to the race focus of this study, of particular importance has been the requirements and obligations placed on public authorities by the *Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)* (RRAA).

The obligations set out in the RRAA mean that public authorities such as the Civil Service now have to promote race equality positively and proactively, and importantly for this study, identify any differential impact in both employment and service provision of their policies. Work is going on within the Civil Service designed to meet these obligations but this work is limited<sup>103</sup> and also subject to interpretation and priority by the different Civil Service Departments and Agencies.

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<sup>103</sup> CRE - RRAA Public Sector Progress Report - Commission for Racial Equality Published July 2004 - ISBN 1 85442 552

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Since starting writing this thesis (in theory at least) there has been a much greater emphasis placed by the government on equality issues. This can be seen by the range of debates, discussions, pronouncements and initiatives, that there has been and indeed is ongoing. Debates, such as the Trevor Phillips 'snowy peaks' seminar, and discussions, within and without the Civil Service in the light of the Single Equality Body,<sup>104</sup> have explored whether race is in fact any longer an issue that warrants separate discussion. Pronouncements made by a range of Ministers and senior civil servants, particularly since the 9/11, and 7/7 bombings, which in many ways has moved the 'race' agenda from the issue of ethnicity to the issue of religion. Yet another initiative has been put forward to improve the issue of diversity within the Civil Service. The 2005 10-point plan has been designed by the newly appointed Asian Muslim Cabinet Office Diversity lead (and as a consequence, the most senior equality representative in central government). The plan itself provides a number of positive statements and aspirations and as with other such initiatives has the 'full backing of the Civil Service leadership'. The concern, however, is that as this study suggests, as with the other initiatives seeking to promote diversity and improve diversity outcomes in the Civil Service, whilst genuine in its intentions, the plan itself may be doomed to failure. I fear that the fundamental need of respecting and celebrating cultural difference, and as a consequence changing the cultural norms of the Civil Service, have not been truly bought into by those who are in positions of power and influence.

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<sup>104</sup> The Single Equality Body (The Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR))– This new body will replace the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Disability Rights Commission. As well as taking on the remit of these three organisations it will also tackle discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion and age. It will also be in charge of promoting human rights. The proposed new commission is to be set up in 2007

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## **2.6 Dated Data**

The time span has also caused difficulties in the currency of the literature cited in the thesis. This difficulty was because the literature review for the study in the main was undertaken in 1998 and 1999. There was therefore a need for a specific updating exercise to be undertaken toward the end of the exercise, whilst little had changed with regard to the fundamentals of the concepts and thinking identified in 1998 and 1999, this meant a good deal of additional time had to be spent in reviewing more up to date literature and where appropriate updating the references. This time lapse could, however, also be seen as a positive, in that the review gave an opportunity to reflect and revisit the earlier material.

## **2.7 Uncertainty**

At times, the author was subject to limitations of his own creating. The learning process especially confounded his common sense from time to time. This was particularly true with the pressure of conforming to protocols of academic regularity, which led at times to periods of awkwardness. As this apprenticeship evolved, I realized some early steps had been performed without the insight of full fluency of a seasoned academic. As a result some decisions were made during early stages which could have been better thought out and planned particularly in conducting the research activities.

## **2.8 Due Process**

Hindsight has convinced the author that there is significant benefit to be gained from following due academic process. While I benefited from various workshops offered, these could not always be undertaken due to work commitments. In retrospect these workshops would have been of real tangible benefit in laying out a foundation on which to build research and do so in a more efficient sequence.

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### 3. What I have learnt

Taking note of the above, there are perhaps four main points that I consider need to be made, all of which I can say are things that I have learnt from undertaking this study:

- First and perhaps worryingly what the study has highlighted is that the Civil Service culture has a direct negative impact on its racial minority staff and as a consequence that there is the real need for the good words and policies of the Civil Service to be turned into practical action;
- Second, associated to the first point, is the significant number of issues needing further consideration that were identified during the course of the research but could not be addressed due to lack of time and the need to remain focussed on the specific research aims. These now need to be addressed;
- Third with regard to the study limitations highlighted above, it is accepted that these could have had the impact of limiting the findings of the study and the conclusions that could be reasonably justified. The in depth initial planning and research methodology considerations were invaluable as they led to the recognition of these potential limitations from the outset, and as a consequence led to a robust research design and data collection approach enabling the proper handling of these limitations;
- Fourth and last, with regard to the time span, is the real difficulty in holding down a full time job and undertaking a doctorate, the simple advice therefore is that if at all possible do this full time.

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#### 4. What I would have done differently

Whilst acknowledging the writing of the thesis is in part a 'learning exercise', as to what I could have done differently, (apart from doing this full time) four very clear issues come to mind:

- First with regard to the scope of the thesis, as the themes and issues emerged, I could have and with hindsight perhaps should have undertaken a much more focussed piece of work. Concentrating on, for example, the appraisal process where the relationship and interaction between the mainly white managers and racial minority staff members would have provided a fascinating insight and understanding into workplace discrimination;
- Second with regard to the research design and methods I would have sought a more varied sample base looking at, for example, the views from various grades within the Civil Service organisations interviewed, and with regard to the interviews the possibility of the use of a white interviewer which may have provided a different set of responses from those interviewed;
- Third, at times a more stringent critique of the information presented. A view perhaps of being 'too kind' in my commentary about what were at times obvious discriminatory practices and procedures;
- Fourth and last, a more thorough and expansive questionnaire survey, which, for example, for the more open questions should have provided the opportunity for comment and/or a scale of response.



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## APPENDIX A - THE CIVIL SERVICE CODE

The Civil Service Code was developed by the Civil Service Commission in 1979. It is a set of principles and standards that govern the way in which public servants should behave. The Code is based on the values of integrity, honesty, objectivity, and fairness. It is a key part of the Civil Service's commitment to high standards of conduct and performance.

1. The Civil Service Code is a set of principles and standards that govern the way in which public servants should behave. It is based on the values of integrity, honesty, objectivity, and fairness.
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# Appendix A - THE CIVIL SERVICE CODE

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## Appendix A - THE CIVIL SERVICE CODE

The Civil Service Code sets out the constitutional framework within which all civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. It is modelled on a draft originally put forward by the House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee. It came into force on 1 January 1996, and forms part of the terms and conditions of employment of every civil servant. It was revised on 13 May 1999 to take account of devolution to Scotland and Wales.

1. The constitutional and practical role of the Civil Service is, with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity, to assist the duly constituted Government of the United Kingdom, the Scottish Executive or the National Assembly for Wales constituted in accordance with the Scotland and *Government of Wales Acts* 1998, whatever their political complexion, in formulating their policies, carrying out decisions and in administering public services for which they are responsible.
2. Civil servants are servants of the Crown. Constitutionally, all the Administrations form part of the Crown and, subject to the provisions of this Code, civil servants owe their loyalty to the Administrations in which they serve.
3. This Code should be seen in the context of the duties and responsibilities set out for UK Ministers in the Ministerial Code, or in equivalent documents drawn up for Ministers of the Scottish Executive or for the National Assembly for Wales, which include: accountability to Parliament or, for Assembly Secretaries, to the National Assembly; the duty to give Parliament or the Assembly and the public as full information as possible about their policies, decisions and actions, and not to deceive or knowingly mislead them; the duty not to use public resources for party political purposes, to uphold the political impartiality of the Civil Service, and not to ask civil servants to act in any way which would conflict with the Civil Service Code; the duty to give fair consideration and due weight to informed and impartial advice from civil servants, as well as to other considerations and advice, in reaching decisions; and the duty to comply with the law, including international law and treaty obligations, and to uphold the administration of justice; together with the duty to familiarise themselves with the contents of this Code.
4. Civil servants should serve their Administration in accordance with the principles set out in this Code and recognising: the accountability of civil

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servants to the Minister or, as the case may be, to the Assembly Secretaries and the National Assembly as a body or to the office holder in charge of their department; the duty of all public officers to discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law; the duty to comply with the law, including international law and treaty obligations, and to uphold the administration of justice; and ethical standards governing particular professions.

5. Civil servants should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. They should give honest and impartial advice to the Minister or, as the case may be, to the Assembly Secretaries and the National Assembly as a body or to the office holder in charge of their department, without fear or favour, and make all information relevant to a decision available to them. They should not deceive or knowingly mislead Ministers, Parliament, the National Assembly or the public.
6. Civil servants should endeavour to deal with the affairs of the public sympathetically, efficiently, promptly and without bias or maladministration. Civil servants should endeavour to ensure the proper, effective and efficient use of public money.
7. Civil servants should not misuse their official position or information acquired in the course of their official duties to further their private interests or those of others. They should not receive benefits of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity.
8. Civil servants should conduct themselves in such a way as to deserve and retain the confidence of Ministers or Assembly Secretaries and the National Assembly as a body, and to be able to establish the same relationship with those whom they may be required to serve in some future Administration. They should comply with restrictions on their political activities. The conduct of civil servants should be such that Ministers, Assembly Secretaries and the National Assembly as a body, and potential future holders of these positions can be sure that confidence can be freely given, and that the Civil Service will conscientiously fulfil its duties and obligations to, and impartially assist, advise and carry out the lawful policies of the duly constituted Administrations.
9. Civil servants should not without authority disclose official information which has been communicated in confidence within the Administration, or received in confidence from others. Nothing in the Code should be



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taken as overriding existing statutory or common law obligations to keep confidential, or to disclose, certain information. They should not seek to frustrate or influence the policies, decisions or actions of Ministers, Assembly Secretaries or the National Assembly as a body by the unauthorised, improper or premature disclosure outside the Administration of any information to which they have had access as civil servants.

10. Where a civil servant believes he or she is being required to act in a way which: is illegal, improper, or unethical; is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code; may involve possible maladministration; or is otherwise inconsistent with this Code; he or she should report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the appropriate guidance or rules of conduct for their department or Administration. A civil servant should also report to the appropriate authorities evidence of criminal or unlawful activity by others and may also report in accordance with the relevant procedures if he or she becomes aware of other breaches of this Code or is required to act in a way which, for him or her, raises a fundamental issue of conscience.
11. Where a civil servant has reported a matter covered in paragraph 11 in accordance with the relevant procedures and believes that the response does not represent a reasonable response to the grounds of his or her concern, he or she may report the matter in writing to the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners
12. Civil servants should not seek to frustrate the policies, decisions or actions of the Administrations by declining to take, or abstaining from, action, which flows from decisions by Ministers, Assembly Secretaries or the National Assembly as a body. Where a matter cannot be resolved by the procedures set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 above, on a basis which the civil servant concerned is able to accept, he or she should either carry out his or her instructions, or resign from the Civil Service. Civil servants should continue to observe their duties of confidentiality after they have left Crown employment.

## Appendix B – Interview Schedule Questions

## Appendix B - Interview Schedule - Questions

For ease of reference the interview schedules have been reformatted in tabular form, but contain full details of the questions asked of the different groups to whom they were asked.

General Questions	Group(s) asked
<p><b>1. Has your organisation a written equal opportunities policy?</b>            If Yes            Does it make specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities            If No            Are there any specific reasons for this?            Is it the intention of the organisation to develop a written equal opportunities policy?            Will/Should this policy make specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>2. Does your organisation undertake monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion by ethnic origin?</b>            If Yes            How does this take place?            Has this improved the representation of racial minorities?            What else could be done to improve representation?            If No            Are there any specific reasons why monitoring does not take place?            Are there any plans to introduce ethnic monitoring?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>3. Does your organisation advertise vacancies with specific regard to attracting racial minorities?</b>            If Yes            How does this take place?            Has this improved the representation for ethnic minorities?            If No            Are there any specific reasons for not specifically seeking to attract racial minorities?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>4. Does your organisation have in place recruitment, selection and progression procedures with regard to ensuring equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?</b>            If Yes            What are these procedures?            How do they operate?            Does this ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?            If No            Are there any specific reasons why there are no specific procedures in place?            Would these procedures ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>5. Does your organisation have any special programmes such as positive action initiatives for the recruitment and progression of racial minority staff?</b>            If Yes            What are these initiatives?            Does the organisation consider these necessary?            Has this improved the situation for the racial minority staff? – If so how.            Has this improved the situation for the organisation? – If so how.            If No            Are there any specific reasons why there are no positive action initiatives?            Would this improve the situation for the racial minority staff? – If so how.            Would this improve the situation for the organisation? – If so how.</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>6. Does your organisation provide race awareness training for its staff – With particular regard to staff involved with recruitment and progression interviews?</b>            If Yes            In what way is this provided?            Does this include specific in-depth race equality recruitment and selection awareness?            If No</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>

<p>Is there a specific reason why race awareness training is not provided?  Would this improve the situation for the racial minority staff? – If so how.  Would this improve the situation for the organisation? – If so how.</p>	
<p><b>7. What commitment is there to Equal Opportunities within your organisation?</b>  How is this commitment demonstrated?  Who takes the lead in demonstrating this commitment?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>8. Has your organisation adopted the recruitment recommendations of the Civil Service Programme for Action to Achieve Equality of Opportunity for People of Ethnic Minority origin (PAR) launched in 1990?</b>  If Yes  How was the organisation made aware of this recommendation – How was this received by staff;  What were the specific steps taken to implement this recommendation;  What difficulties have been faced in taking this forward;  What progress can you report;  If No  Interviewer to give an explanation of PAR and ask:  Whether there were any recruitment initiatives that the individual was aware of with regard to racial minorities?  The manner in which policy directives with regard to race equality issues are generally communicated to the staff members?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>Culture Questions</b></p>	<p><b>Group(s)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Would you say that the Civil Service has or is perceived to have a specific, identifiable organisational culture?</b>  If Yes  What are the attributes (the make-up) of this culture (values/beliefs) ?  Is it a culture that is shared and/or practiced by the majority of staff?  Is it a strong culture?  Where do you think this culture comes from?  What is the impact on those who do not share the same cultural values?  If No  What would you say are the key values/beliefs (the way of doing things) under which the organisation operates?  Are these key values shared and/or practiced by the majority of staff?  What is the impact on those who do not share these same cultural values?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>10. Would you say that your/ the organisation has or is perceived to have a specific, identifiable organisational culture?</b>  If Yes  What are the attributes (the make-up) of this culture (values/beliefs) ?  Is it a culture that is shared and/or practiced by the majority of staff?  Is it a strong culture?  Where do you think this culture comes from?  What is the impact on those who do not share the same cultural values?  If No  What would you say are the key values/beliefs (the way of doing things) under which the organisation operates?  Are these key values shared and/or practiced by the majority of staff?  What is the impact on those who do not share these same cultural values?</p>	<p><b>CS Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>

## Research Question 1

To what extent does the organisational culture of the Civil Service help or hinder the progression and career development opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service?

Progression specific Questions	Group(s)
<p><b>11. Does the perceived 'culture' of the organisation/ Civil Service create barriers for racial minorities in progressing through the/your organisation?</b>            If Yes            What are these barriers?            How can they be removed?            If No            Why do you consider there appears to be a significant discrepancy in progress for racial minorities within the Civil Service?            Is there anything more that the organisation can do to help their progress?</p>	<p><b>Civil Service Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b>   <b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>12. Does the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create supervision problems for racial minority staff?</b>            If Yes            What sort of problems?            What can be done to address them?            If No            Why do you consider there appears to be so much disgruntlement on the part of racial minority staff members in this issue?            Is there anything the organisation/managers can do to improve the situation?</p>	<p><b>Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b>   <b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>13. Does the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create appraisal difficulties for racial minority staff?</b>            If Yes            What sort of difficulties?            What can be done to address them?            If No            Why do you consider there appears to be so much disgruntlement on the part of racial minority staff members on their appraisal markings?            Is there anything the organisation/managers can do to improve the situation?</p>	<p><b>Organisations</b>   <b>Racial Minority Individuals</b>   <b>Other Organisations</b></p>

## Research Question 2

To what extent do the realities of the personal experiences of racial minorities in the Civil Service support the statistical perception of inequality of opportunity in recruitment and progression in the Civil Service?

Perception Specific Questions	Group(s)
<p><b>14. Have you had cause to complain about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion?</b>            If Yes            About which of these?            What can be done to address the issues faced?            If No            Are you aware of any racial minority individuals who have?            What can be done to address the issues faced?</p>	<p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p>
<p><b>15. Have you in the past year received or been aware of a complaint about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority Civil Service staff member?</b>            If Yes            About which of these?            What can be done to address the issues faced?            If No            If there were issues - What can be done to address the issues faced?</p>	<p><b>Civil Service Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>16. The Civil Service statistics show that there are very few senior ethnic minority managers in the Civil Service.</b>            Have you a view as to why, if the statistics are to be believed, there are so few ethnic minority senior managers?            What if anything do you think needs to be done to improve the situation?            If the situation does need improving, are you aware of anything specific that your own organisation is doing to improve the situation?            What if any are the barriers, you consider are faced by racial minority staff in reaching senior management positions?            If there are barriers, How can these be overcome?</p>	<p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p> <p><b>Civil Service Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>
<p><b>17. It is government policy to encourage positive action in the recruitment and progression of racial minorities – Is this a good thing?</b>            If Yes            Why and what are its benefits/drawbacks?            If No            Why and what are its benefits/drawbacks?</p>	<p><b>Racial Minority Individuals</b></p> <p><b>Civil Service Organisations</b></p> <p><b>Other Organisations</b></p>

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**INFORMATION REQUESTED FROM CIVIL SERVICE  
ORGANISATIONS**

1. Statistics - A breakdown of employees by grade, ethnic origin and gender at present and if possible from 1989 (if not, the earliest years figures with ethnic minorities identified available).
2. Recruitment - A breakdown of the number of jobs advertised by grade of job, numbers of applicants by ethnic origin, and gender.
3. Selection – A breakdown of appointments from the jobs advertised above by grade of job, ethnic origin and gender of those appointed.
4. Promotion – A breakdown of promotions within the organisation to senior management positions (Grade 7 and above) by ethnic origin and gender.
5. Copy of the organisations' written Equal Opportunity Policy
6. Copy of PAR Action Plan.

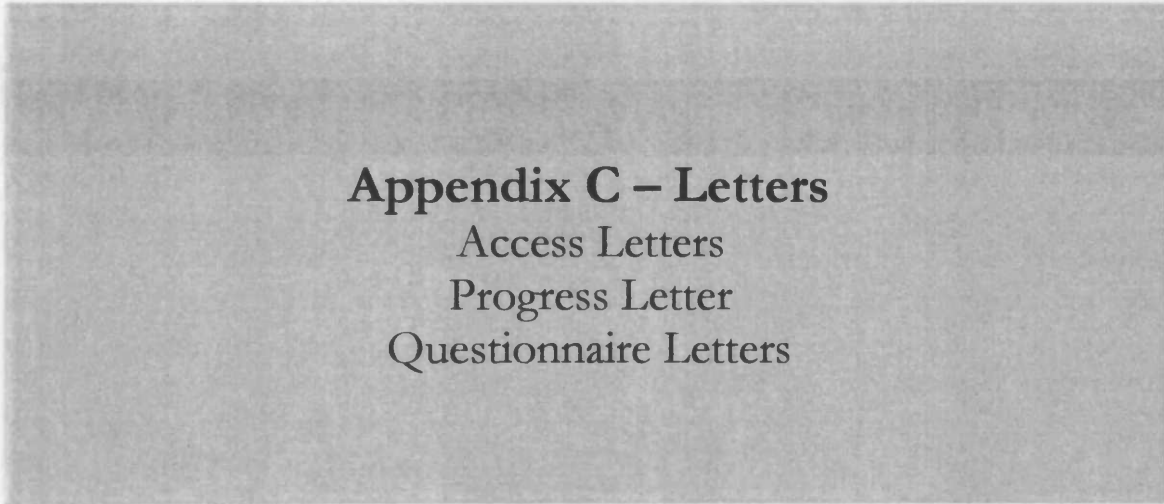
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Appendix C – Letters

Access Letter – Letter to Service Providers

This document is a letter to service providers that explains the purpose of the study and the importance of their participation. It also includes information about the study's goals and objectives.

Access Letter





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## Appendix C(i) - Access Letters

### Access Letter – Civil Service Organisations and Equality Organisations

This Access letter was sent to each of the identified Civil Service Organisation and Equality Organisation participants. To assist the interview process appended to the letter was a relevant interview schedule, together with an information request schedule.

#### Access Letter

Name  
Job Title  
Department Name, Address, Postcode

Dear (Name)

Further to our telephone conversation of ..... I am writing as promised with a copy of the interview schedule which will be used as the basis for our discussion on the.....

As I explained on the telephone, the interview will last for no longer than 2 hours and will be informal in nature. All your answers will be treated with complete confidence, and only I will have access to your responses which will be destroyed immediately after use.

This is a unique and significant research project which will help to better understand any recruitment or progression issues relating to ethnic minorities in the Civil Service.

I very much look forward to meeting with you on the date and time agreed but should you encounter any difficulties or wish to clarify any matters please do not hesitate to contact me on 029 20 874000.

Finally can I thank you for your kind assistance, which is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Charles Willie  
PhD Research Student  
Cardiff Business School

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## **Access Letter – Racial Minority Individuals**

This Access letter was provided to each racial minority individual interviewed prior to the interview itself. To assist the interview process the participants were provided with the letter and a relevant interview schedule and asked to return for the interview once they had taken the time to read and digest the contents of the interview schedule.

### **Access Letter**

Name

Job Title

Department Name, Location

Further to our discussions please find a copy of the interview schedule which will be used as the basis for our discussion. As I explained the interview will last for no longer than 2 hours and will be informal in nature. All your answers will be treated with complete confidence, and only I will have access to your responses which will be destroyed immediately after use.

This is a unique and significant research project which will help to better understand any recruitment or progression issues relating to ethnic minorities in the Civil Service.

I very much look forward to our discussions and can I thank you in advance for your kind assistance, which is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Charles Willie  
PhD Research Student  
Cardiff Business School

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## Appendix C(ii) – Progress letter

### Progress Letter – Civil Service Organisations and Equality Organisations

This progress letter was sent to all participants.

#### Progress Letter

Name

Job Title

Department Name, Address, Postcode

Dear (Name)

Thank you for participating in this research study, which I am pleased to advise is progressing very well.

This type of research is only possible because of the generosity of those like yourself who donate their valuable time.

I hope that the final product from this research will be valuable not only to my research but also to you and more specifically those working in the Civil Service.

I look forward to sending you the results as soon as they are available.

With many thanks again for your kind participation.

Yours Sincerely

Charles Willie  
PhD Research Student  
Cardiff Business School

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## **Appendix C(iii) – Questionnaire Letter**

The questionnaire survey was sent to eight selected individuals/organisations from all three interview groups. The information sent included a letter of introduction, completion instructions, a request for general demographic information and the actual questionnaire itself.

### **Cover Letter**

Name

Job Title

Department Name, Address, Postcode

Dear (Name)

Further to our telephone conversation I am writing as promised with a copy of the questionnaire that you kindly agreed to complete for me. As I explained on the telephone, all your answers will be treated with complete confidence. Only I will have access to the questionnaires which will be destroyed immediately after use.

This is a unique and significant research project which will help to better understand any recruitment or progression issues relating to ethnic minorities in the Civil Service.

I hope that the questionnaire is self explanatory but if you object to answering any question then of course you may leave it blank. Please do not abandon the whole questionnaire.

I have enclosed a freepost envelope for the return of the questionnaire and I hope that you will be able to respond within the next 3 weeks. Should you encounter any difficulties or wish to clarify any matters please do not hesitate to contact me on 029 20 874000. In return for your assistance, I will send you an analysis of the results in due course.

Finally can I thank you for your kind assistance, which is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Charles Willie  
PhD Research Student  
Cardiff Business School

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## RECRUITMENT and PROGRESSION in the UK CIVIL SERVICE

### Appendix D - Questionnaire

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## RECRUITMENT and PROGRESSION in the UK CIVIL SERVICE



This Questionnaire is part of a national study looking at the issue of recruitment and progression opportunities for ethnic minorities in the UK Civil Service. Our objective is to help to better understand what if any issues exist for potential and existing ethnic minority Civil Servants.

The completion of the questionnaire should take no longer than 15 minutes, requiring in the main a yes/ no response to the questions posed. Please answer all of the questions as fully and as honestly as possible, if you are unwilling or unable to answer a question please leave it blank. Your contribution will be invaluable to the success of this research and I would thank you in anticipation for taking the time to complete this.

All information in this questionnaire will remain completely confidential. The responses will be collated and will be seen only by myself. The questionnaire will be destroyed immediately after use.

## Questions - Individuals and Civil Service Organisations

	Yes	No
1. Has your organisation a written equal opportunities policy?		
2. Do you think that this policy should make specific reference to the recruitment and development of racial minorities?		
3. Does your organisation undertake monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion by ethnic origin?		
4. Do you believe that monitoring improves the recruitment of racial minorities?		
5. Do you believe that there is more that could be done to improve the recruitment process?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
6. Does your organisation advertise vacancies with specific regard to attracting racial minorities?		
7. Do you believe that advertising in the ethnic press improves the recruitment of racial minorities?		
8. Does your organisation have in place recruitment, and selection procedures with regard to ensuring equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?		
9. Do you think that such specific procedures would ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?		
10. Does your organisation have any special programmes such as positive action initiatives for the recruitment of racial minority staff?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
11. Do you consider positive action initiatives to be a good thing?		
12. Do you consider that positive action initiatives would improve the recruitment opportunities for racial minorities?		
13. Do you consider that positive action initiatives would improve the organisations profile?		
14. Does your organisation provide race awareness training for its staff – With particular regard to staff involved with recruitment?		
15. Do you consider that providing race training for staff would improve the recruitment opportunities for racial minorities?		
16. Do you consider that providing race training for staff would improve the organisations profile?		
17. Would you say your organisation demonstrates a commitment to Equal Opportunities?		
18. Is there evidence to support a commitment to Equal Opportunities within your organisation?		

	Yes	No
19. Would you say that the Civil Service has or is perceived to have a specific, identifiable organisational culture?		
20. Do you think that the 'Culture' (Values) of the Civil Service has an impact on the recruitment and progression of racial minorities to the Civil Service?		
21. Would you say that your organisation has or is perceived to have a specific, identifiable organisational culture?		
22. Do you think that the 'Culture' (Values) of your organisation have an impact on the recruitment and progression of racial minorities within your organisation?		
23. Would you see the Civil Service a career of choice for racial minorities?		
24. Do you consider that the perceived cultural values of the Civil Service create a barrier to the Service being a career of choice for racial minorities?		
25. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of your organisation/ Civil Service creates barriers for racial minorities in applying for posts?		
26. Is there more that the organisation can do to encourage a greater number of applications from racial minorities?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
27. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service creates problems at the recruitment interview for racial minority candidates?		
28. Is there anything more that the organisation can do to improve the pass rate of racial minorities?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
29. Have you heard of the Civil Service Programme for Action to Achieve Equality of Opportunity for People of Ethnic Minority origin (PAR) launched in 1990?		
30. Do you know whether the organisation has adopted the recruitment recommendations of (PAR)		
31. Does the perceived 'culture' of the organisation/ Civil Service create barriers for racial minorities in progressing within our organisation?		
32. Is there more that the organisation can do to help their progress?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
33. Does the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create appraisal difficulties for racial minority staff?		
34. Is there anything the organisation/managers need to do in this area?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
35. Does the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create supervision problems for racial minority staff?		
36. Is there more that the organisation/managers can do in this area?		
<i>Please State What:</i>		
Have you had cause to complain about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion? <b>(Individuals)</b> Or Have you in the past year received or been aware of a complaint about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority Civil Service staff member? <b>(Organisations)</b>		
37. Are you aware of any racial minority individuals who have complained?		



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### General Demographic Information

Your Gender (Please Tick)	Male		Female	
Age range 18-25, 26- 35,36-45, 46-55,56 and over				
Ethnicity (E.g. White British, Black British, Black Caribbean, Asian British, Asian Indian etc)				
Length of time in the Department/ Civil Service)				

### Any other Comments or views:

Once completed please return this questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope provided to: Charles Willie  
Cardiff Business School  
University of Wales College Cardiff  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Aberconway Hall  
Cardiff CF11 1YU

## Questions - Other Organisations

	Yes	No
1. Should organisation undertake monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion by ethnic origin?		
2. Do you believe that monitoring improves the recruitment of racial minorities?		
3. Do you believe that there is more that could be done to improve the recruitment process within the Civil Service?		
Please state what::		
4. Do you believe that advertising in the ethnic press improves the recruitment of racial minorities?		
5. Do you think that organisations that have in place specific recruitment, and selection procedures for racial minorities would ensure equality of opportunity for racial minority staff?		
6. Do you consider positive action initiatives to be a good thing?		
7. Do you consider that positive action initiatives would improve the recruitment opportunities for racial minorities in the Civil Service?		
8. Do you consider that positive action initiatives would improve the profile of the Civil Service?		
9. Do you consider that providing race training for staff in the Civil Service would improve the recruitment opportunities for racial minorities?		
10. Do you consider that providing race training for staff would improve the profile of the Civil Service?		
11. Would you say that the Civil Service demonstrates a commitment to Equal Opportunities?		
12. Would you say that the Civil Service has or is perceived to have a specific, identifiable organisational culture?		
13. Do you think that the 'Culture' (Values) of the Civil Service has an impact on the recruitment and progression of racial minorities to the Civil Service?		
14. Do you see the Civil Service as a career of choice for racial minorities?		
15. Do you consider that the perceived cultural values of the Civil Service create a barrier to the Service being a career of choice for racial minorities?		
16. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service creates a barriers for racial minorities in applying for posts?		
17. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service creates problems at the recruitment interview for racial minority candidates?		
18. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create barriers for racial minorities in progressing?		
19. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create appraisal difficulties for racial minority staff?		
20. Do you consider that the perceived 'culture' of the Civil Service create supervision problems for racial minority staff?		
21. Have you in the past year received or been aware of a complaint about recruitment, supervision, appraisal or promotion from a racial minority Civil Service staff member?		
Please state:		

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**General Demographic Information**

Your Gender (Please Tick)	Male		Female	
Organisational Position / Title (E.g. Senior Manager, Middle Manager, Supervisor, Director, Administrative)				
Age range 18-25, 26- 35,36-45, 46-55,56 and over				

**Any other Comments or views:**

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Once completed please return this questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope provided to:

Charles Willie  
Cardiff Business School  
University of Wales College Cardiff  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Aberconway Hall  
Cardiff CF11 1YU

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Appendix E - Sir Andrew Turnbull's valedictory lecture to the Board of the Civil Service Commission 2001 and 2002

I have been very fortunate to have been asked to give this valedictory lecture to you on this important day. It is a privilege and an honour to be asked to do this and I am sure that you will all find it an interesting and informative session.

The Commission has been very successful in leading the way in the reform of the public sector and in the delivery of public services. It has been a pleasure to work with you and I am sure that you will all find it an interesting and informative session. I am sure that you will all find it an interesting and informative session.

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## **Appendix E - Sir Andrew Turnbull's Andrew Turnbull (the head of the Civil Service between 2002 and 2005) valedictory lecture**

I have been talking to a variety of audiences about Civil Service Reform several times a week for 3 years. So this occasion provides an opportunity to draw the threads together, to see how far the civil service has come, and where it now stands.

When one is given the privilege of leading an organisation like the Civil Service, one builds on the work of predecessors and hopes to leave the organisation in better shape. One must go beyond the full repairing lease that Mrs Thatcher referred to in her famous environment speech. This responsibility has been accepted by successive governments.

'No government owns the public service. It must remain a national asset that services the national interest, adding value to the directions set by the Government of the day. The responsibility for any government must be to pass onto its successors a public service which is better able to meet the challenges of its time than the one it inherited. My Government clearly accepts that responsibility.'

Though these sentiments were actually expressed by John Howard of Australia, they are fully endorsed by our Prime Minister.

The British Civil Service enjoys an excellent reputation and it is particularly admired abroad. I have received many visitors seeking to learn what we are up to and we have many imitators. I particularly enjoyed the straight crib of the Citizens' Charter at Windhoek airport.

Yet it also has its detractors and critics, particularly at home. I have reflected on this and have come to the conclusion that the Civil Service has been strongly shaped by the Northcote-Trevelyan report and the traditions which have developed from it, but that this has also given rise to many of the features which people find unsatisfactory.

The Northcote-Trevelyan report grew out of the clash between a growing state and an administration based on nepotism. It recommended a series of changes, which have shaped the organisation even to this day. These were:

- A permanent and impartial civil service;
- Accountable to Ministers who are in turn accountable to Parliament;
- Recruitment and promotion on merit;

- 
- Based on self sufficiency, i.e. largely developing its own talent with a presumption of one employer for a whole career;
  - Providing services from within with little outsourcing;
  - Highly federal, organised into Departments each of whom has a Secretary of State accountable to Parliament.

What we get from this is a well organised service, attractive to able people who wish to develop a long term career. The transition costs between governments are low, knowledge and experience are retained. Our values are developed and passed on, producing a high integrity organisation. It produces a service highly competent at managing the processes of government such as policy development, legislation, international negotiations and, as we saw 3 weeks ago, crises. It is an economical service too; as Northcote and Trevelyan noted, recruiting people early in their careers is cheaper than attracting them from the market.

Apart from some interruptions during the two world wars, the civil service was a more or less like this for the first 140 years of its existence until change started in the early 1990s.

We should recognise, however, that the UK model is an extreme. Permanency goes right to the very top. There are virtually no changes at the time of an election. The other end of the spectrum is the Communist state where one has to be a Party member to hold even minor public office. Among democracies the US is probably at one extreme, the top three or four tiers rotating with each administration. This is not a system I like but one has to acknowledge that within the wider framework with which it operates, there are three checks and balances:

- there is pretty regular political rotation, not least because a President can serve no more than two terms;
- there is a well developed network of places where the 'outs' go while waiting for the call to return, so their expertise is to some degree preserved;
- many of the senior posts are subject to congressional confirmation by Congress.

But giving the power of hire and fire which a US President has to a British Prime Minister backed by a three figure majority in the House of Commons would be something quite different.

In Australia, though it is apparently quite close to us, there is in fact significantly more political influence over the appointment of Secretaries

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(sensibly they have dropped the claim to be Permanent some years back). Another system, which I dislike, is that in France in which formally people serve in one organisation but there are informal political allegiances, i.e. politicisation without the transparency of the US system to go with it.

My conclusion is that our system has served us well and anyone contemplating change should beware of importing bits of other systems without thinking through the implications for the system as a whole.

But the benefits of the Northcote–Trevelyan tradition, and they are huge for the UK as an economy and society, come with a price.

- the civil service has historically been more focussed on policy and administration than delivery, particularly for those services that are delivered through others such as education, health and law and order. It's noteworthy that those who joined the Fast Stream in the 1970s were known as 'Administrative Trainees';
- the structure has been hierarchical and inflexible and cross departmental working has been difficult;
- the reward system was based on slow maturing careers with long pay scales and final salary pensions;
- it has changed, but not rapidly enough;
- for too long the civil service was a closed world, limiting its ability to attract talent and the outside world's understanding of it;
- it has been too reliant on the skills of those recruited many years earlier, leaving it underpowered when requirements changed;
- it lacked diversity, drawing on too narrow a slice of the nation's talent;
- little priority was given to developing leadership;
- it has been slow to take full advantage of outsourcing and to equip itself to manage large projects
- incentives to improve efficiency were weak, both for the organisation or for individuals.

So what have I and my senior colleagues been doing to respond to the concerns expressed?

We no longer claim a monopoly over policy advice. Indeed we welcome the fact that we are much more open to ideas from think–tanks, consultancies, governments abroad, special advisers, and frontline practitioners. In developing policy we not only consult more widely than we used to but involve outsiders to a far greater degree in the policy making process, e.g. the extensive use of outside reviewers – Turner, Eddington, Hampton, Higgs etc. The teams which the Strategy Unit puts together are highly multi disciplinary.

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Some commentators regret the fact that permanent officials no longer occupy the dominant place they used to. In response let me quote my Australian counterpart, Peter Shergold:

‘Let me make it clear that I extol the fact that public service policy advice is increasingly contested. I welcome it intellectually: our perspectives and strategies benefit from challenge. I also welcome it professionally, as a public servant. In my view, more Ministerial advisers does not represent the ‘politicisation of the APS’ (Australian Public Service), still less the demise of an independent public service or undermining of the Westminster tradition’.

Let me give you two examples which question the existence of a golden age in which civil servants led the policy process, unlike today when special advisers are alleged to dominate.

The first was the Selective Employment Tax, introduced in 1966. It was the brainchild of a special adviser, Lord Kaldor. Nikki was a remarkable man and an inspirational teacher. He had the ability to get hundreds of Cambridge economics students, such as Hayden Phillips, John Eatwell and myself, out of bed first thing on a Saturday morning to hear his lectures. This was the only time he was available as he was working in London during the week. When I met him later in the Treasury as a special adviser, working with him was extremely stimulating. But the SET was a nonsense which tried to hold back the tide of economic history. It represented an extra tax on employment in the services sector which came to represent the most dynamic part of our economy.

For those who believe that policy making is not what it was, I contrast the special adviser devised SET, and the untested theories upon which it was based, with the Treasury’s analysis of the Five Tests for joining the Euro published in June 2003. This was thorough and evidence based, drawing on a wide range of outside advice. Above all it was correct in its conclusions and there must now be many countries in the Euro who wished they had undertaken such a comprehensive study, either to inform their decision to enter or to inform the policies needed to make it a success.

But I digress from the theme of reform. Other components of our reform programme have been:

- the Professional Skills for Government initiative will, I believe, turn out to be a historic change. We are engaged in serious upgrade of our professional skills. Instead of our division between ‘specialists’ and ‘generalists’, we will give parity of esteem to three broad career groupings



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– policy delivery, corporate services and operational delivery. We will define the skills and experience needed for each;

- we are strengthening performance management;
- we analyse and manage risks much more thoroughly – and I pay tribute here to the work of Sir David Omand who has led this work for the past two years;
- Departments now attach much more importance to preparing real well thought out strategies;
- we organise both our policies and our structures with much greater focus on the customer, e.g. DWP, which is now organised around two broad client groups;
- we have opened up our recruitment to people in mid-career as well as straight from school or university. Hence the phrase with which I am now eternally linked ‘a permanent civil service not permanent civil servants’. One in five senior civil servants have been recruited from outside. This has given us a tremendous injection of talent and promoted greater understanding between the civil service and the world beyond. This too is an example of risk taking. Recruits from outside can sometimes let you down, but the upside of a successful appointment can be massive;
- we have improved our diversity but recognise we are still a long way from where we need to be. In the year I took the fast stream entrants exams only 22 percent of the successful candidates were women. Last year that figure was 42 percent;
- we now take leadership development seriously and have created a number of training opportunities which relate to each step in one’s career. We have improved leadership training. Indeed we are pioneering a development centre for Permanent Secretaries. Last month I launched the new National School of Government. We have shed our inhibitions about mentoring and coaching. Our arrangements for succession planning and for the identification of high potential people draw on private sector best practice;
- we have set up a number of Centres of Excellence to raise standards in Procurement and Project Management, Communications, HR and Finance and the exploitation of Information Technology. Setting up the OGC was one of the best things I have ever worked on;
- we are accelerating our programme to transform the delivery of public services through ICT. Unheralded we have migrated 13m benefit recipients from paper to electronic payment. The next two years will see huge further advances;
- We have shed the presumption of in-house provision and are now harnessing the private sector through PFI and outsourcing, to get not only the inputs we need but also to provide services direct to customers;

- 
- We are on track to deliver a major efficiency programme.

It is my contention, but your verdict, that the civil service has made huge advances in recent years. But you may ask what is distinctive about the most recent changes. The first is the focus on delivery and the broader canvas on which we seek to deliver; the second the effort to address whether we have the right people and skills to achieve our goals.

There are times when change takes place, and it is obvious that it is historic. There are others where full implications of what is happening are not fully grasped at the time. An example of this was in the summer of 1998 when the Treasury was looking for a way of signalling that the Comprehensive Expenditure Review was a 'something for something' deal, i.e. Departments were given a three year spending allocation in return for committing themselves to deliver certain specified outcomes.

Following the establishment of Public Service Agreements in 1998, Departments' ambitions are now defined not at the boundary of the department itself or its agencies but as a wider outcome much further beyond its boundaries. DfES is seeking outcomes at the level of schools, or even seeking to influence the behaviour of parents, whether they send children to school in the first place. The Department of Health is seeking improvements in health such as the reduction in death from cancer, and to improve some indicators of quality of service such as waiting times. Home Office is seeking a reduction in crime, i.e. a change in behaviour in society itself. The effect has been to change the focus from delivery by a department itself to the much more difficult challenge of involving all the providers in the long chain of delivery – teachers, doctors, police, courts etc. No longer is it enough to frame the legislation, agree the funding and then issue circulars and guidance in the hope that things will happen;

With PSAs came framework documents and targets, previously applied successfully by a department to its agencies, but now applied to all the players in the delivery chain.

The application of targets to wider outcomes across a longer delivery chain has proved controversial. It has been criticised by some as too top down, demeaning professional standards, encouraging gaming, undermining trust, distorting priorities. (Though why relieving suffering earlier – as in the case of waiting lists for instance – should be seen as a distortion I don't know). Baroness Onora O'Neill has put this case with great eloquence.

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There is another side to the coin, put equally eloquently by Julian Le Grand in his excellent book 'Motivation, Agency and Public Policy – of Knights and Knaves, Pawns and Queens'. In it Julian questions whether it is safe to assume that knightly professionals, left to their own motives, will produce high quality and continuously improving public services. Or whether it is more likely that they will produce service of a level that they consider is good, but which in fact represents a comfort zone.

The GP's surgery is a good example. Historically it has been highly valued but ultimately it involves attending a GP at a place of his or her choosing (usually near where you live) at a time of his or her choosing. For some, e.g. those who need a long term relationship with a particular GP, this is fine; but on other occasions it is a huge inconvenience. We have to ask whether state hospitals, state schools, and state housing, and the criminal justice system, all largely left to the professionals for much of the post war period, did in fact improve as they should have done.

The proponents of targets argue that they provide focus, ambition, transparency, a basis for management intervention and accountability. Without targets it has to be asked whether waiting times of over a year would really have been a thing of the past. Would the reduction in asylum claims, which rose to eight thousand a month in autumn of 2002, now stand at under two thousand? Would the improvements in English and Maths in primary schools have occurred? Would street crime have come down and the number of ineffective trials been reduced?

In short, there has been sustained pressure through the use of targets to push professionals (and I include civil servants in this) out of their comfort zones, to focus their efforts, to require them to work more closely with others in the delivery chain, to accept redefinitions of professional demarcation e.g. classroom assistants and community safety officers.

The past has been controversial, but I detect a greater degree of consensus going forward:

- targets need to be refined, with greater involvement from frontline professionals and greater emphasis on agreed outcomes. This is important not simply to get buy-in but also to get the frontline practitioners readier to acknowledge publicly improvements in their services, an important component of reducing the perception gap;
- validation of performance needs to be improved to raise public confidence;

- 
- accountability needs to move downwards with greater voice for users, greater choice for users, and more personalisation.

In short we have to reverse polarity. Accountability has hitherto been largely upwards. Even concepts such as new localism, earned autonomy, freedoms and flexibilities, are still only variants of the upward accountability model, where the organisation at the top decides what the tier below needs to do to earn what privileges. Going forward, users need to have a greater say in setting standards and enforcing them either by using power of voice or by the power to move their custom elsewhere.

In addition to the greater focus on delivery, the second difference from early initiatives to reform the Civil Service has been the emphasis on greater capacity/capability. As well as adopting better systems, we also ask ourselves whether we have the right people with the right skills, and leaders with the right experience and confidence, with the right tools and premises to do the job.

When Mr Blair became Prime Minister in 1997, he found in the Cabinet Office the traditional secretariats responsible for managing and coordinating government business, a number of units responsible for propriety and ethics, plus an HR function still vested in administration rather than development. In No.10 he found a small private office and a small communications function but one dealing only with news and one with the national media. The leader of the large organisation would expect to find far more than this at its centre. He was entitled to ask 'is that it?'

There was no central strategy capability, little ability to harness the use of IT across government, no central procurement capability, nor one for project management, no effective mechanism to pursue delivery of the government's objectives, and no capability to develop proper two-way communications with frontline staff and the users of public services.

These shortcomings have now been addressed and centres of excellence set up for each – the Strategy Unit, e-Government Unit and so on, each led by an experienced and respected practitioner. And each is responsible for identifying the skills needed, working with Departments to raise their own capacity while taking on those functions which it makes sense to do at the centre. In parallel the Treasury is developing the finance and accounting capability across government.

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## Values

Let me now turn to the question of values. Northcote–Trevelyan expressed concern that ‘the public service suffers both in internal efficiency and in public estimation’, i.e. they recognised 150 years ago that the civil service faces **two** threats to its reputation. It has to **be good**, embodying high standards of propriety and integrity. We now know quickly the reputation of a brand can evaporate. But to sustain its reputation it also has to **do good**. If it is good but ineffective, the public and the politicians will turn to other sources of advice, other means of delivery; and it will not maintain its ability to attract people of talent.

Emphasising the importance I attach to the Civil Service being capable of delivering the tasks set for it, I have in no way sought to downplay the importance of values. Nevertheless I have been accused by some of not taking values seriously enough, as evidenced by the fact that I have not seen a Civil Service Act as a priority, though I would guess that it commands an overwhelming consensus in this room.

I have always thought that the proponents of a Civil Service Act had completely unrealistic expectations of what it would achieve. Most of the problems that concern people would not in my view have been addressed by such an Act while some new problems would be created.

When things have gone wrong at the interface between the Civil Service and politicians they have nearly always been around values and behaviour, not rules and enforcement. For example, I do not see how what the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) called ‘These Unfortunate Events’, at DTLR would have been influenced one way or the other by the existence of a Civil Service Act.

I recently met the Mexican Minister for Public Sector Reform. When I congratulated him on producing a Civil Service Act within 3 years, he looked at me enviously and said. ‘Yes but you have 150 years of values’. I was struck recently when I read of the new Chief Executive of Boeing who arrived from Hewlett Packard. He said he was dismayed to find an organisation that was rules rather values driven.

By contrast I believe that in some respects an Act as drafted by the PASC would do actual harm. One of the provisions of their draft was that the Minister may make provision by statutory instrument:

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- a. prescribing the number, grading and classification of posts in the civil service;
  - b. determining the conditions of service of all persons employed in the civil service, including remuneration, expenses and allowances, holidays, hours of work, part-time and other working arrangements, retirement, redundancy and redeployment;
  - c. regulating the conduct of the civil service, other than the Civil Service Code or other codes under section see above; and
  - d. regulating recruitment of persons to situations in the civil service, including qualifications relating to age, knowledge, ability, professional attainment, aptitude and potential.

(2) An order under this section should be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament’.

The argument which the PASC put forward for this is that ‘it is simply a way of ensuring that both Houses are properly informed about the operation of Service for which they vote the funds’. There is a much simpler way of obtaining this information, and that is to ask for it.

In my view this clause is totally misguided. As a practical matter, turning all our structures and terms and conditions into statute could only be done with a much more centralised system than we have at present. It would remove one of the sources of strengths of the UK Civil Service which it is that it has flexibility to adapt. Those leading the reforms of the civil services in countries like France and Italy are deeply envious of our ability to implement change quickly and flexibly.

Equally, I do not see how keeping politics out of the civil service is best served by giving Parliament a role in its detailed management. In any case Parliament should be holding us to account on the outcomes we achieve, not details of our internal management. This clause is not in the Government’s draft bill, but if its addition were one of the conditions for securing passage of an Act then, I would have to say ‘Thanks but no thanks’.

If, as I believe, a Civil Service Act is likely to disappoint its champions and could bring unwanted problems, what then should we be doing to entrench our values? There are a number of provisions in the two draft Acts, (PASC’s and the Government’s) which can be implemented on a non-statutory basis and our approach has been to adopt these where ever possible:

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- the position of the First Civil Service Commissioner has been strengthened by undertaking that the leaders of the main Opposition parties will be consulted on the appointment;
  - in addition the First Civil Service Commissioner has herself strengthened her office by appointing a panel of a dozen or so Commissioners, all with serious public reputations – something that is now also proposed for the Commissioner for Public Appointment;
  - the increase in the number of open competitions means that **more** civil service appointments now come within the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commissioners;
  - we have worked with the Commissioners to increase understanding of the Civil Service Code, especially for new entrants, and to increase understanding of the role of nominated officers to assist in the resolution of disputes;
  - we are now working on a joint project with the Civil Service Commissioners to look again at the Civil Service Code to see if it needs to be updated and in particular if it can be written in a way which is accessible to more than the cognoscenti of the Armstrong Memorandum;
  - we have updated the Ministerial and Special Adviser Codes,

If there is to be a Civil Service Act my message is:

- be realistic about what it will achieve;
- use it to underpin the existing constitutional settlement rather than to change it;
- put most of your effort into values and behaviour.

The theme of Special Advisers runs through the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. They acknowledge the need for special advisers to work collaboratively with officials but in practice, in my view, many of their proposals seek to ghettoise them. I have met objections to the proposition that special advisers should be able to request papers from officials rather than going through a process like the request for the royal piece of toast in which a special adviser asks the Private Secretary who then asks officials who return the material to the private office and hence back to the special adviser.

My approach has been that Ministers, special advisers and officials are three points of a triangle, each with separate roles, each respecting that of the other. There is nothing worse than a special adviser who sticks like a limpet to the Minister, feeding his prejudices and paranoia, largely ignorant of the work of officials. The key element is trust. This is not, in my view, achieved if traffic does not flow freely along all three sides of the triangle.

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To allow this to happen, I personally drafted what I saw as a key omission from the old Special Adviser Code, i.e. how special advisers should interact with officials. Getting special advisers to understand this and live with the principles will achieve more than setting a limit on their numbers or putting their existence on to a statutory basis.

I make three appeals to the Committee on Standards in Public Life. First. Please set aside the thinly disguised hostility which pervades much of your thinking about special advisers. Secondly, please think constructively about the way special advisers, as an important resource for Ministers, can work more effectively. Thirdly, please go and visit some Departments to see how special advisers are working day to day.

Our system is undoubtedly delicate and subtle. The borderline between what civil servants do and do not do is very fine. For example, on the one hand we frequently present Ministers' case, e.g. why they think the policy they are following is right in the circumstances to the media, to select committees, and to stakeholders. On the other hand, we should not praise a policy in a way which could be held to imply support for the approach of the party in power, or undermine the opposition's confidence that we would serve them with equal commitment. This is a difficult line to draw, even for experienced civil servants, let alone people recruited from outside. Occasionally civil servants do stray off side, as do Ministers and special advisers. But this does not happen often.

How is this borderline policed? To some extent by the Civil Service Commissioners, the Committee for Standards in Public Life, the PASC and by a corpus of 'soft law' enshrined in various Codes hence the emphasis I have placed on increasing understanding of the Civil Service Code. But principally by values and culture which are handed down through generations of civil servants, which now have to be inculcated into special advisers and into those recruited in mid career.

### **Conduct of business**

Much has been written about the conduct of government business so may I take this opportunity to record a few facts.

The way Cabinet works has changed significantly in my time in the civil service. Interestingly this change is not exclusive to the last eight years. In 1975 Cabinet met 56 times and received 146 memoranda. By 1990, Mrs Thatcher's last year, Cabinet met 40 times and received only 10 papers. Most of the formal decision making had been moved either to Cabinet Committees or to Ad Hoc groups



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under the Prime Minister's chairmanship. In 2002, the year I came into this job, Cabinet met 38 times and received 4 papers and 1 presentation.

Since then there have been a number of developments:

- Cabinet now regularly receives presentations on major new policy developments. For example, 5-year strategies published by the main Departments were presented in this way. Provided the actual text of the document is also circulated to a Cabinet Committee or in correspondence, I think it is a good thing that Ministers respond by exercising their political judgement rather than reading from the departmental brief. In 2004 Cabinet met 38 times and receiving 9 papers and 23 presentations;
- After the last election a significant reorganisation of the Cabinet Committee structure was announced, providing separate committees for the Prime Minister's priorities e.g. Health, Education, Anti-Social Behaviour, where these were previously taken through an all-purpose Domestic Affairs Committee or through ad hoc meetings. Changes were made to membership to ensure that as far as possible Committees were chaired, either by the Prime Minister himself or by other neutral Chairs, rather than the Minister with the policy lead.
- We are now circulating for the first time with the Cabinet agenda a note listing the Committees which met the previous week with a summary of the outcome plus the Committees scheduled for the following week with the agenda. This is designed to allow a Minister not on a particular Committee to intervene if they have interest which has been overlooked.

This is a subject on which views have become polarised and entrenched. All I ask is that those that who proclaim the demise of Cabinet and its Committees should retain both some historical perspective and recognise that the style in which Prime Ministers conduct business ebbs and flows over time. The history of the first Wilson Cabinet, for example, tells you that not everything came out of the Cabinet Office manual. As the Butler Report stated:

'we do not suggest that there is or should be an ideal or unchangeable system of collective government, still less that procedures are in aggregate any less effective now than in earlier times.'

I suggest that one needs to look also at the outcomes of the way government business is conducted, something I will return to at the end.

Let me conclude with some personal reflections on the most significant events of my career, and some issues I am leaving unresolved.

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## Unresolved issues

I am proud of the organisation that I am leaving to my successor. But although I have seen much change over my tenure as Cabinet Secretary, I know that there will continue to be changes after I have left. There are three particular issues that I am sorry to be leaving unresolved to my successor.

First, the issue of civil service pay, particularly at senior levels. The theory is that our pay is market facing, designed not to match best of the private sector, but for the target rates for each grade in the Senior Civil Service to be about 80% of the private sector median. There are two problems with this theory:

- our target rate has now fallen significantly below 80% of the private sector median;
- only 20% of senior civil servants have yet reached the target rate.

I recognise that setting pay for a group who work close to the political interface is difficult. But the failure to address it will mean one of two outcomes:

- that the civil service cannot recruit the talent it needs, whether from the private sector or the wider public sector or;
- the two tier pay system which is emerging becomes even more pronounced and eventually indefensible.

The second is the issue of the pension age. There seems to be agreement that new entrants should be recruited on the basis that their pension age is 65, but it is argued that the position of existing staff should be preserved. But it is not sustainable in my view, to argue that we must preserve the right of 25 year olds we have recently recruited to retire at 60 in 2040.

The second part of this issue is the final salary pension scheme. This needs to change if only for the reason that as we work longer our final year may well not be our best. I well understand the FDA argument that this is the only bit of 'smooth' in SCS remuneration package. But I do not believe it is right or sustainable to shore up an unsatisfactory pay system by appropriating a cross subsidy from the pensions of junior staff, early leavers and late joiners. Two wrongs do not make a right.

My final regret is that we have still not laid to rest some of the old stereotypes, e.g. mandarins and bureaucrats. I haven't seen a bowler hat in Whitehall for 25 years. As for labelling civil servants as bureaucrats I find this comment inaccurate and offensive.

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In my many visits as Head of the Civil Service, I have been fortunate enough to meet civil servants engaged in a wide range of different tasks. I have met people:

- who provide benefits to pensioners;
- who help young people with few skills and even worse attitudes get into work and so become productive citizens;
- who run our courts and help witnesses through the daunting experience of giving evidence;
- who equip and supply our armed forces in the field of battle;
- who help Ministers to develop their policies and account for them in Parliament;
- and finally all those who collect the taxes to pay for all of this.

My civil service colleagues have played many other important roles – for instance the civil servants from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency who in the floods at Boscastle put their lives at risk to rescue others; or those who have helped set up the centre for families bereaved by the 7 July bombs. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor can rightly take credit for changing the commitment of the rest of the G8 to tackling the problem of poverty in Africa. In this historic endeavour, they have been supported all the way by our civil servants and diplomats.

It has been a privilege to serve alongside these thousands of civil servants who, in their different ways, have served this country with commitment and integrity.

### **Significant events**

First, in 1984–85, when I was in No.10, I worked almost full time in the miner's strike. Its end established two principles which changed the course of our history – that economic change could not be resisted, and that undemocratic trade unionism had no place in Britain. Had the outcome been the other way, the course of British politics would have been completely different and our economic revival would have been suppressed or at best delayed for many years.

Secondly, out of the wreckage of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, I worked, with many others, on building a macro-economic system which is admired around the world:

- regular meetings to discuss interest rates;
- proper documentation presented to those meetings (it seems amazing nearly a decade and half later that that was not the case before);

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- an inflation target;
  - minutes of meetings and explanations of interest rate changes;
  - unmuzzling of the Bank's Inflation Report.

It was on these foundations that Gordon Brown built operational independence for the Bank of England, and the separation of responsibility for monetary policy from financial supervision, and the separation of the responsibility to market the government's debt. In addition, of course, he also created a set of fiscal rules and debt management.

Thirdly, I worked closely on ending the constitutional nonsense under which a Minister in the Cabinet responsible for administering a large part of the criminal justice system was also a judge and the presiding officer of the House of Lords. I accept that there was a failure of presentation at the time but the substance of the proposals has proved sound. We will soon have a proper process for judicial appointments, with carefully worked out understandings about the extent of the Minister's discretion, and clear identification of the Lord Chief Justice as the head of the Judiciary. We will also have a Supreme Court so that those who increasingly sit in judgement on the actions of the executive, as in the Belmarsh case, do not sit as part of the legislature. I was delighted to see that the House of Lords has just agreed to take up the offer to choose its own presiding officer.

Fourthly, despite the unresolved problems about local government finance and responsibilities, I take great satisfaction from the improvement in the working relationship between civil service officials and local government officers. The result has been mutual parity of esteem, in which we recruit actively from them and they from us.

Lastly, when I took up this appointment, I identified that, post 9/11, we needed a very senior post to develop a counter-terrorism strategy and to build up on resilience to terrorist attack and to other threats, rather having the Cabinet Secretary dealing with these matters inevitably on a part time basis. The Intelligence and Security Committee was initially a bit sniffy about this and I took some criticism either for evading important responsibilities, or some have contended, weakening the service provided to the Prime Minister. After the response to the events on 7 July, which drew heavily on the work of David Omand as Intelligence and Security Coordinator and of his successor Bill Jeffreys, I now feel vindicated, and I am confident that the support to the PM has been strengthened.

Let me end with a few thank you's. First to my many civil Service colleagues who give this country strength and integrity. Then to my Permanent Secretary

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colleagues who have provided strong and consistent support and who have taken up the cause of civil service reform with enthusiasm.

I am also indebted to the Civil Service Commissioners, and in particular Usha Prashar the First Civil Service Commissioner, who have embraced the reform agenda while retaining their role in upholding our values.

I have admired the seriousness of purpose with which the PASC have pursued a variety of issues on the performance and governance of public services. In particular, I want to pay tribute to the courtesy with which its chairman, Dr Tony Wright, has conducted its proceedings.

Finally, as I reflect on 37 years in the public service – 2 working for the Government of Zambia, 2 for the IMF, 19 working for a Conservative government and 14 for a Labour one – I see a country transformed for the better from the time I joined in 1970.

In the early 1970s, the government of the day was unable to exert its authority and trade unions were rampant. The management of the economy was a failure and our G10 partners had to organise a whip round to keep us afloat until an IMF programme could be organised. Our micro-economic policies were not working and we were growing more slowly than our principal competitors. Having failed to join the EU at its inception we were inevitably playing catch up. We were pitied and mocked by our allies.

Now I see a country whose image and self image are transformed. Our economic performance is one of relative improvement rather than relative decline. We are making the running on the debate about the future of Europe and have just led the G8 to improve its contribution to aid and debt and to increase its commitment to Africa.

All this has not come about by accident, but by the sustained exercise of political leadership over 30 years, by politicians on both sides of the political divide. They deserve enormous credit for this. So my final thank you is to them. I am proud to have been associated with them in this endeavour

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## APPENDIX F- DELIVERING A DIVERSE CIVIL SERVICE A 10 point plan

### Appendix F- Delivering a Diverse Civil Service A 10 point plan

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## **APPENDIX F - DELIVERING A DIVERSE CIVIL SERVICE A 10-**

### **Point Plan**

#### **WHAT IS IT?**

THE 10-POINT PLAN SETS OUT 10 KEY POINTS THAT THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND THE CIVIL SERVICE MANAGEMENT BOARD HAVE COMMITTED TO. IT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE A MORE DIVERSE CIVIL SERVICE WORKFORCE, ESPECIALLY AT SENIOR LEVELS.

#### **WHY DO WE NEED IT?**

THE CIVIL SERVICE MUST BE RELEVANT TO THE CUSTOMERS IT SERVES. AS PART OF A WIDER COMMITMENT TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE TO DELIVER EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICES, THROUGH IMPROVING LEADERSHIP, SKILLS AND DIVERSITY, THE GOVERNMENT SET NEW DIVERSITY TARGETS TO ACHIEVE BY 2008:

- 37% of the Senior Civil Service to be women;
- 30% of top management posts to be filled by women;
- 4% of Senior Civil Service to be from minority ethnic backgrounds;
- 3.2% of the Senior Civil Service to be disabled people.

#### **THE 10 KEY AREAS FOR CHANGE**

##### **1. TARGETS**

TARGETS FOR THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE (SCS) AS A WHOLE ARE NOW UNDERPINNED BY DEPARTMENTAL TARGETS.

Departments have their own stretching targets for their Senior Civil Service and feeder grade populations. They will have robust plans, signed off by their Permanent Secretaries or Chief Executive equivalents, to meet these targets. Diversity delivery plans will be fully integrated into business plans and current and emerging Equality Schemes.

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## **2. MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION**

WE NEED TO KNOW WHETHER OUR ACTION IS SUCCEEDING. DEPARTMENTAL AND CORPORATE MONITORING WILL PROVIDE CHECKPOINTS ON PROGRESS, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE DIFFERENT ACTION WHERE NECESSARY.

The Cabinet Office will continue to publish SCS data every six months and will continue work to improve data quality, collection and coverage. Departments will also continue to work to improve data coverage and quality.

## **3. DELIVERING ON DIVERSITY THROUGH THE DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS' NETWORK (DCN)**

WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT CHANGE HAPPENS ACROSS THE WHOLE CIVIL SERVICE. THE DCN IS A NETWORK OF VERY SENIOR DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS ACROSS DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.

It is chaired by the Civil Service Diversity Champion and supported by the Chief Diversity Adviser. DCN members are responsible for driving delivery of the 10-Point Plan in their Departments and Agencies. They are individually responsible to the Permanent Secretaries or Chief Executives for the delivery of their organisation's diversity targets. The DCN will monitor progress on the 10-Point Plan and report to the Civil Service Management Board annually. The DCN meets quarterly and works in self-running sub-groups on key issues in between whole network meetings.

## **4. LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

VISIBLE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY IS A KEY ENABLER OF SUCCESS.

Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives are accountable for diversity in their Departments and Agencies, including departmental diversity targets for their SCS and feeder grade populations. The Head of the Home Civil Service will hold Permanent Secretaries to account for their diversity targets in the performance discussions he holds with each one. Diversity Champions will provide 6-monthly reports to the network on progress on departmental action plans.



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## **5. RECRUITMENT**

WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE IS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE FOR TALENTED PEOPLE FROM UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS.

Departments will ensure that positive action is incorporated in all recruitment policies and practices, including outreach and marketing; targets for contracts with search consultants, or recruitment advertising agencies on attraction of under-represented groups. The Fast Stream Development Programme is the main graduate entry route for Senior Civil Service careers. We will continue to improve the diversity profile of its intake to build a more diverse talent pool for the future.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT**

IDENTIFICATION AND ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF TALENTED PEOPLE FROM UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE GRADES JUST BELOW THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE IS KEY TO SUCCESS.

Corporate diversity development schemes are being redeveloped and re-launched following a review. These will be complemented by Departmental schemes. Departments will also have targeted and appropriate development for staff below the feeder grades.

## **7. BEHAVIOUR AND CULTURE CHANGE**

THE CIVIL SERVICE MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS A POLICY OF ZERO TOLERANCE OF DISCRIMINATION ON ANY GROUNDS AND OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR.

We will promote and embed equality and diversity in every aspect of people management systems, including meaningful and measurable diversity objectives linked to reward systems. We will increase understanding among managers of their role in challenging discrimination and unacceptable behaviour. And we will continue to work with our partners in Trade Unions and staff networks to influence organisational culture change.

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## **8. DIVERSITY IMPACT OF THE EFFICIENCY AND RELOCATION REVIEWS**

MAINTAINING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE AND TALENT POOL FOR THE FUTURE IS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVE OUR LONGER TERM AIM OF A CIVIL SERVICE THAT REPRESENTS THE POPULATION AT ALL LEVELS.

We want to ensure that the Service remains representative of the population in terms of gender and ethnicity, and to improve representation of disabled people. We will keep a watch on the overall diversity impact of efficiency and relocation plans and Departments are carrying out impact assessments to ensure that no particular group of staff is unfairly discriminated against.

## **9. MAINSTREAMING DIVERSITY**

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MUST BE ON THE AGENDA AT ALL LEVELS, IN EVERY PART OF OUR ORGANISATIONS IF IT IS TO SUCCEED. IT CANNOT BE A BOLT ON TO OTHER POLICIES AND INITIATIVES.**

This means it must be mainstreamed or embedded in policy development, service delivery and business and workforce planning. Departments will use existing statutory duties on race – that will be mirrored for disability and gender – to provide a starting point for introducing a discipline of integration of equality and diversity matters across the range of departmental policy and operational functions.

## **10. COMMUNICATION**

THERE WILL BE AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AT CORPORATE AND DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL, FOR CLEAR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MESSAGES, TO ENSURE SUCCESS OF THE PLAN.

Communication plans will form part of departmental diversity plans and will articulate the business, moral and ethical case for diversity.

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## **WHO IS IT FOR?**

INCREASING LEVELS OF KEY GROUPS OF PEOPLE AT THE TOP OF THE SERVICE WILL PROVIDE A VISIBLE SIGNAL OF BROADER CHANGE.

The 10-Point Plan aims to increase diversity across the whole Civil Service, across all diversity strands. It will affect you and the way you work, whether you are a Diversity Champion, an HR or Diversity Director or practitioner, a member of the Senior Civil Service, someone who falls into one or more diversity strand, a line manager, or a staff member from a majority group.

### **Permanent Secretaries**

Permanent Secretaries are responsible for delivering equality and diversity in their Departments and Agencies. They strongly support this plan and are accountable for achieving their Department's SCS and feeder grade targets. As members of the Civil Service Management Board (CSMB), Permanent Secretaries own the plan.

### **Network of senior Diversity Champions**

Diversity Champions' Network is clear on their leadership and accountability role in driving this agenda forward in their Department and across the Service. The responsibility for ensuring that Diversity Champions understand and will deliver the plan lies with individual Permanent Secretaries and their Chief Executive equivalents.

### **HR Directors**

HR Directors have an important role to deliver and take forward specific work, drive and monitor delivery. Members of the SCS and wider civil service SCS members have a key leadership role in demonstrating commitment to equality and diversity, for example, through mentoring junior staff from under-represented groups. All civil servants – especially those who are line managers – need to take personal responsibility for promoting inclusive behaviour and challenging discrimination and unacceptable behaviour.

### **Trade Unions and staff networks**

Trade Unions and staff networks, at both corporate and departmental level, are important partners in implementing this plan and informing intervention and action.

