

**DO INDUSTRIAL/ ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY JOURNAL ARTICLES REFLECT A  
MANAGERIAL BIAS WITHIN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE?**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Science (Psychology) in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. I confirm that an external editor was used and that my supervisor was informed of the identity and details of my editor. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Social Science (Psychology) in the Faculty of Humanities, Development, and Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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## **ABSTRACT**

A perception exist that Industrial/Organisational Psychology focuses more on managerial concerns at the expense of the concerns of employees and that this is reflected in both research and practice. With the disciplines inception in the early 1900s, a symbiotic relationship between management and Industrial Psychologists was forged (Isaacs, Bobat & Bradbury, 2006). To date it seems Industrial Psychologists are concerned with motivating employees to align with organisational objectives so as to ensure the optimal functioning of the profit-driven organisation (Isaacs et al, 2006). The study aims to investigate to what extent this perception about Industrial/ Organisational Psychology, and its research and practice, is true and reflected within journal articles. Qualitative content analysis was used the analyse both the manifest and latent content of 26 randomly selected journal articles from the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology. The results show that a managerial bias is present in both the manifest and latent content of the research. The principle intent of this research is to stimulate other Industrial Psychologists and researchers to be reflexive about the discipline and to question who they should serve.

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*“Because so many industrial social scientists have been willing to serve power instead of mind, they have been themselves a case study in manipulation by consent” (Baritz, 1960:210).*

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background and Outline of Research Problem:**

A perception exists that Industrial/Organisational Psychology focuses more on managerial concerns at the expense of the concerns of employees and that this is reflected in both research and practice. With the discipline's inception in the early 1900s, a symbiotic relationship between management and Industrial Psychologists was forged (Isaacs, Bobat & Bradbury, 2006). To date it seems Industrial Psychologists are concerned with motivating employees to align with organisational objectives so as to ensure the optimal functioning of the profit-driven organisation (Isaacs et al, 2006).

This study aims to investigate the extent to which this perception about Industrial/Organisational Psychology, and its research and attendant practice, is true and reflected within journal articles. In other words, the aim is to establish whether or not Industrial Psychologists are serving the needs and interests of management/ employers only, or those of employees as well. For the purpose of this study, the terms Industrial Psychology, Organisational Psychology, Occupational Psychology and Psychology will be used interchangeably. Industrial Psychology is a sub-discipline of Psychology and is defined by Schultz (1978:6) as "the application of the methods, facts and principles of psychology to people at work" (cited in Fullagar, 1984:95). Ultimately Industrial Psychology is, firstly, a Psychology and, secondly, a managerial science. The principal intent of this research is to stimulate other Industrial Psychologists and researchers to be reflexive about the discipline and to question who they should serve.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### ***2.1. History of Organisational Psychology***

The ways in which work and society were viewed were irrevocably transformed by the industrial revolution. The invention of steam power, among other things, gave rise to industrialisation and the factory system and, by the early 1800's the factory system was the norm across Europe (Isaacs et al, 2006). Large numbers of people were employed and had to work under tedious, exploitative conditions for long hours (Beder, 2000). Adam Smith pioneered the division of labour which resulted in work becoming meaningless (Beder, 2000). Karl Marx argued that this new industrial mode of production resulted in people becoming alienated from the process and products of work, as well as from themselves and other workers (Beder, 2000; Isaacs et al, 2006). Their labour was becoming a commodity and alienation resulted in inequality, disempowerment and a loss of meaning and satisfaction in their work (Isaacs et al, 2006).

By the early 1900s industrial efficiency and increased productivity were becoming a primary concern for those involved in production and later a primary concern for Industrial Psychology (Beder, 2000). In 1911 Frederick Taylor published *The Principles of Scientific Management* in an attempt to address concerns regarding industrial efficiency and the lack of work ethic among workers (Beder, 2000; Fullagar, 1983; Isaacs et al, 2006). Taylor advocated selecting the best person for the job, training them to do the job in the most efficient manner and giving the best workers incentives in the form of higher wages (Isaacs et al, 2006). In 1913 Hugo Munsterberg, who shared many of Taylor's views, was the first Psychologist to apply psychological methods to select workers, design work situations and apply psychology to sales (Isaacs et al, 2006; Moore and Hartmann, 1931). "Munsterberg started a long tradition of psychologists offering their services to organisations as business and efficiency consultants" (Isaacs et al, 2006:12). "In reality, scientific management gave industrial psychology its purpose" (Brief, 2000:343).

Due to Taylor and Munsterberg's work, the *Principles of Scientific Management* emerged as a standard work practice (Isaacs et al, 2006). Scientific management was based on four principles (Beder, 2000). The first principle was using scientific methods to determine the most efficient manner in which to complete a task and, secondly, carefully selecting and

training workers to perform these tasks in specific ways (Beder, 2000). The third principle is the close supervision and control exercised by management and rewarding employees with bonuses for following exact directions (Beder, 2000). Fourthly, the planning and thinking around work was controlled by management (Beder, 2000). Furthermore, Scientific Management was based on certain assumptions about human nature. These include that people are rational and make rational decisions that will increase their welfare and satisfy their needs; that people are naturally competitive, self-interested and concerned with their own survival; that the market economy is driven by individuals' selfish pursuit of their own interests; and that people are inherently lazy, find work distasteful and will not work more than is necessary to sustain themselves, meaning that incentives are required if they are expected to work harder (Isaacs et al, 2006).

Industrial Psychology was born after Frederick Taylor's (1911) success in demonstrating the importance of the human aspect in increasing productivity (Beder, 2000). Right from the start Industrial Psychology adopted a utilitarian approach by using the theories and principles of psychology to solve industry-related problems (Isaacs et al, 2006). "Consequently, from the outset, industrial psychology was under an obligation to management to promote the industrial efficiency of the individual worker" (Fullagar, 1983:4). Industrial Psychology, therefore, from its inception, colluded with management in finding subtle ways to manipulate workers (Isaacs et al, 2006).

World War I gave Psychologists the chance to show what they could do (Brief, 2000). The army was a huge testing ground for the development of personnel selection techniques (Brief, 2000). "The war focused management's attention on personnel problems, leading to increased prevalence of centralised personnel offices" (Brief, 2000:343). After the war several psychologists were turned loose and many saw the economic opportunities (Brief, 2000). James McKean Cattell founded the Psychological Corporation in 1921. According to Baritz (1960:53), Cattell "established psychological work as a legitimate means for producing profits". Industrial Psychologists' advice, selection and regulation of workers and working conditions was on the increase, especially with the growth of the aptitude test industry (Lawthom, 1999). "These tests individualised work practices in terms of individual employees and boasted the potential for improving the viability of recruitment and ongoing monitoring exercises" (Lawthom, 1999:68). According to Lawthom (1999:68), "occupational psychology

offered itself as a knowing scientific ally to industrialisation”.

During the 1930s and 1940s, social scientists, including Industrial Psychologists, advocated the Human Relations Approach to increase work ethic and efficiency (Beder, 2000). It became popular after the Hawthorne experiments on the effect of lighting on worker productivity revealed that productivity increased during the experiments, due to the fact that the workers felt valued after having being specially selected by the researchers (Beder, 2000; Fullagar, 1983; Isaacs et al, 2006). The Human Relations Movement was based on the principle that the satisfaction of employees would determine their work performance (Isaacs et al, 2006). However, C. Wright Mills claimed that the Human Relations Approach’s ultimate aim was to manipulate workers (Beder, 2000). He further argued that social scientists, including Industrial Psychologists, were all too willing to side with management and its viewpoints in their studies (Beder, 2000). Their aim was to find ways to get workers to cooperate with management, raise work ethic among workers and to increase productivity and industrial efficiency, while at the same time paying them a lower wage (Beder, 2000). “Clearly, industrial psychologists aimed to serve management” (Brief, 2000:343).

The Human Resource Movement emerged as a popular method during the 1960s and was built on the foundations of the Human Relations Approach (Beder, 2000; Isaacs et al, 2006). Increased resistance by workers and the ideas of Maslow, McGregor and Herzberg that pioneered the Human Resource Movement, resulted in a more humane approach being applied to workers. Maslow argued that humans had a hierarchy of needs and, in this hierarchy, basic needs (food and shelter) need to be met before higher-order needs (love and status) could be obtained (Beder, 2000; Isaacs et al, 2006). Herzberg proposed that “whilst salary, adequate working conditions and security were necessary to prevent dissatisfaction, motivation required workers to feel a sense of achievement, advancement, recognition and responsibility” (Beder, 2000:109). Herzberg’s ideas resulted in workers being put together in groups to complete a whole task so that the worker’s psychological and social needs could be met while experiencing job satisfaction in seeing the end product (Beder, 2000). McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y saw the worker as inherently lazy with a tendency to avoid responsibility, lacking in intrinsic motivation and discipline (Fullagar, 1983). Ultimately, although the Human Resource Movement attempted to adopt a more humane approach towards workers, it simply sought better ways of manipulating and coercing individuals into working harder

(Isaacs et al, 2006). Heather (1976:104) proposes that the interests of workers and management are irreconcilable and that this new humanistic approach to Industrial Psychology “is a trick to persuade the worker into thinking that this conflict of class interests does not exist”.

Baritz (1974) points out that the discipline has produced scientists who are “servants of power”, “who objectify the performance of their chosen object of assessment, that is, the employee, where such applications have control and power at the heart of their intervention” (Lawthom, 1999:68). In recent years Industrial Psychology turned its focus towards person-centeredness within the workplace and concepts like “empowerment” and “total quality management” have become very popular (Lawthom, 1999). A specific focus has been on “diversity management”. According to Cheng (1997), diversity management literature merely illustrates the perception that individual subjectivity can be managed, whether it is race, gender or sexuality (Lawthom, 1999). Hooks (1989) argues that diversity management discourse is reductionist and divisive (Lawthom, 1999). “Instead of recognising the multiple identities of employees and the various ways in which work practices constrain and enable, the ‘managing diversity’ banner attempts only to manipulate individuals rather than the social conditions” (Lawthom, 1999:69).

In contemporary society, the aim and focus on Industrial Psychology has remained the same: “to increase the fit between the workforces and the workplace” (Isaacs et al, 2006:17). Heather (1976: 103) argues that “Industrial Psychology *always* serves the interests of management (and employers) and is *invariably* calculated in the long run to increase profits”.

## ***2.2. Epistemology of Organisational Psychology***

The assumptions that underlie Industrial Psychology endeavours need to be understood if we hope to understand the ways in which such assumptions guide and shape the practice of the discipline. Pietersen (1989) notes that scientific theorising is based on certain assumptions which reflect two different styles of reasoning: analytic and synthetic. Analytic reasoning is closely linked to the positivist paradigm, which considers the aim of social science to be the acquirement of factual, objective knowledge about reality (Pietersen, 1989). The discipline of Industrial Psychology can be located predominantly within this paradigm, which sees scientific practice as involving the formulation and verification of logical statements,

propositions and theories (Pietersen, 1989). The analytic paradigm is primarily interested in achieving factual, objective and scientific information and knowledge, which is only considered valuable in so far as it can be scientifically validated (Pietersen, 1989). This approach holds that knowledge exists independently and externally of the researcher and that the researcher's personal values do not, and should not, influence the "scientific process of knowledge acquisition" (Pietersen, 1989:103). It aims to discover universal, value-neutral, objective knowledge and attempts to understand reality by breaking it down into its component parts (Pietersen, 1989). Heather (1976:45) argues that positivism serves to "preserve what is there in the form of fact and to prevent question or change". In other words, neither the methodology nor the effects of the non-epistemic factors are ever called into question.

The synthetic approach, on the other hand, sees knowledge as subjective and internal, influenced by the researchers' beliefs, values and assumptions. This influences their choice of theoretical and methodological components in research as well as the manner in which these results are interpreted (Pietersen, 1989). The synthetic approach aims to understand the behaviour and practices of groups of individuals and is not concerned with whether or not the findings can be generalised (Pietersen, 1989). Observation of and participation with individuals and groups is seen as necessary to reach an understanding of larger social and behavioural phenomena (Pietersen, 1989).

The research methods and practice of Industrial Psychology are guided, to a large extent, by the ideals of value-freedom which stems from the analytic paradigm (Pietersen, 1989). Heather (1976) argues that this value-freedom is impossible as values lie at the core of human sciences. Industrial Psychologists' values unavoidably shape the research questions that they pose (Brief, 2000). According to Fox (1985a:2), "value-free objectivity is not possible... attempts to maintain an objective stance simply serve the purpose of those who benefit from the prevailing ideological positions in society". Industrial Psychology views the organisation as an external entity to be examined and studied and emphasis is placed on the researcher adopting an objective, rational stance in the research process and in this process, ignoring the broader contextual factors that impact on the organisation and the knowledge construction process (Pietersen, 1989).



The influence of analytic notions can be seen to operate in the discipline of Industrial Psychology in a number of ways. The discipline is interested in developing a “general or universally true logic of organisational functioning” (Weeks, 1973, cited in Pietersen, 1989:105). The analytic approach advocates the use of quantitative research methods in an attempt to discover ways in which to predict and control events and these methods are primarily used by Industrial Psychologists in an attempt to predict and control events within the organisational setting (Pietersen, 1989). Research conducted within the scope of Industrial Psychology can be understood as theory-validating rather than theory-formulating, with the purpose of finding substantive evidence of a proposed theory or hypothesis (Pietersen, 1989). Pietersen (1989) notes that in recent years there has been a move toward an action research approach in Industrial Psychology, whereby meaning is created and shared by all organisational members. This represents a move towards the integration of certain elements of the synthetic paradigm into the discipline (Pietersen, 1989).

Industrial Psychology generally provides trans-historical accounts of organisational phenomena which, within an analytic paradigm, are considered to be valid across time and space (Pietersen, 1989). Industrial Psychology has been heavily criticised for neglecting the worker and the context of the labour relationship in particular conflict, in its attempts to develop a universal logic of organisational functioning (Pietersen, 1989). According to Fox (1985b:57), “basic assumptions about the proper method of social science research stand in the way of more creative approaches to the study of social change”. Buss (1975), cited in Fox (1985b:57), argues that Psychology should become holistic and humanistic and “academic overspecialisation and rigid adherence to the dominant experimental paradigm is not likely to lead to comprehensive social change”.

In the 1950s Alec Rogers (cited in Thompson and McHugh, 2002:214) gave a neat description of Industrial Psychology as “fitting the man to the job and the job to the man (FMJ/FJM)”. “Such a definition relies heavily on the notion of a value-neutral, objective science that is independent of the power relations in the organisations and societies within which it is practiced” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:214).

Billig (2008) notes that psychologists have long claimed that their study of humans is based upon objective analyses of facts (data produced during controlled experiments) and not upon

subjective biases. However, Gergen (1973) argues that psychology should be historical as it does not stand outside of history but rather is “primarily an historical inquiry” (cited in Billig, 2008:9). According to Billig (2008), Gergen’s (1973) argument was against the fact that psychologists place their trust in experimentation and that they assume that their observations within the controlled conditions of a laboratory can be generalised. This assumption of generalisability and universality is mistaken as our behaviour is socially and historically bounded (Billig, 2008). Therefore, Psychology and Psychologists need to develop an historical outlook which is sensitive to historical and ideological processes (Billig, 2008). Psychologists have to realise that their theories and methods do not stand outside of history (Billig, 2008). Psychologists need to become historically sensitive, be reflexive about themselves and their discipline and thus “historical reflexivity becomes an essential component of the scientific process” (Billig, 2008:13). It is only through reflexivity that we can achieve real social change.

Psychology should be viewed as a “social and historical construction with its own myths, biases and disciplinary powers”. The psychological study of human beings takes place within particular social contexts and is thus a social act itself (Billig, 2008). Furthermore, Psychologists should not be studying the isolated, de-historicised individual, but rather apply themselves to understanding how both historical and social forces come together to construct an individual (Billig, 2008). According to Billig (2008:17), “orthodox psychology lacks an historical consciousness”. Experimentalism should be viewed as an historical product that has narrowed the theories and scope of the discipline, rather than being portrayed as a method that produces scientific facts (Billig, 2008).

“Conventional psychology, with its focus on the de-historicised individual, has failed to analyse how social inequalities have created many of the psychological phenomena that psychologists study” (Billig, 2008:19). According to Danziger (2001), conventional histories of Psychology create the false impression of a united discipline based on scientific progress (Billig, 2008). Danziger (2001) points out that the majority of undergraduate Psychology textbooks give an overview of the history of the discipline with the aim of making the students appreciate, rather than criticise, their chosen discipline (Billig, 2008). “In this way, the historical accounts of the past are directly serving the pedagogic and disciplinary purposes of the present” (Billig, 2008:15).

### ***2.3. Management and Industrial Psychology***

Historically, a symbiotic relationship between management and Industrial Psychologists emerged, in which management funded the discipline's research and practitioners, in turn, focused their attention on those aspects of organisational functioning specified by management (Beder, 2000; Fullagar, 1984). Fullagar (1984:97) notes that "as representatives of managerial ideology, they (Industrial Psychologists) cannot investigate relations as so-called 'objective social scientists'". Industrial Psychologists, as a result of their association with management, avoided employee issues that would show management or managerial goals in a negative light, and even if Industrial Psychologists did address the political and ethical implications that their work had on industrial relations, they would ultimately do so from a managerial perspective (Baritz, 1960). According to Fullagar (1984:95), the research of Industrial Psychologists has "focused mainly *on* workers rather than being done *for* or *with* them". It could therefore be argued that Industrial Psychologists focus on managerial concerns as opposed to the concerns of employees and that Industrial Psychology research (as published in journals) reflect a managerial bias.

Management, which was responsible for the recruitment of Industrial Psychologists in the first instance, expected results in terms of increased levels of efficiency and productivity, and if Industrial Psychologists expected to remain employed, these managerial demands needed to be met (Baritz, 1960). Baritz (1960:195) states that "demanding that the social scientists in their employ concentrate exclusively on the narrow problems of productivity and industrial loyalty, managers made of industrial social scientists a tool of industrial domination". As Fullagar (1984:97), states "from its beginning, Industrial Psychology was under some form of obligation to management to promote the industrial efficiency of the individual worker...because of Industrial Psychology's need for managerial sponsorship to carry out the research necessary to build its theories". The picture presented by Industrial Psychologists was, therefore, not an objective or even accurate one, but rather a representation of the organisation from a managerial perspective. Rose (1990:58) argues that "by concentrating upon theories and techniques that would sell it to managers, the psychological expertise of production has inevitably adopted a managerial perspective". In doing so, Fullagar (1984) claims that Industrial Psychologists moved away from a social science perspective and placed the discipline within the realm of management science.

Essentially, the inclusion of Industrial Psychologists in the work environment by management was not done in an attempt to better industrial relations for the good of all organisational members, it was a mechanism by which managers hoped to achieve the maximum output from employees. Baritz (1960) notes that the primary interest of management is to increase productivity and profit and, to achieve this goal, they hire Industrial Psychologists.

#### ***2.4. Knowledge Construction***

Sociology proposes that individual realities and knowledge of the world and institutions are socially constructed through the interaction of humans with each other (Heather, 1976). However, Heather (1976:53) argues that “not everybody plays an equal part in this process of knowledge-construction; some people’s activity is far more important in determining the dominant conceptions man has of himself and his world”. “Knowledge does not exist as some abstract entity. Rather it is the product of intentional human activity... knowledge is always sought with a purpose, goal or aim in mind” (Stablein and Nord, 1985:13). Individuals’ realities and self-images are constructed by specific ‘experts’, one of which Psychology claims to be (Heather, 1976). These ‘experts’ distort the natural experience of life by cutting individuals off, and thus alienating them, from their experiences and their environments and by viewing them as mere objects (Heather, 1976). By creating a split between individual experiences and environments, Psychology ensures that the individuals will not come to realise that society does not exist independently and they will therefore not realise that they have the power and the responsibility to change their realities (Heather, 1976).

According to Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore (1989:226), “the problem of knowledge devolves around how the interpretation of a given reality and the diversity of interests centre on the uses and usability of knowledge”. Danziger (1990) maintains that the production of knowledge is goal-directed and a certain type of knowledge is produced based on the realities of social power and influence. Knowledge producers, such as Psychologists, possess a large amount of power based on their established monopoly over certain types of knowledge products (Danziger, 1990). The knowledge producers (Psychologists) manage to thrive because of their strategic alliances with the dominant influences in society (Danziger, 1990). New knowledge can only be produced if it has a significant social value in line with the dominant ideology (Danziger, 1990). “So, in the end, those with sufficient social power to have an input into this process are likely to get the kinds of knowledge products that are compatible with their

interests” (Danziger, 1990:182). The community of knowledge producers develop norms and values in line with those of the dominant ideology (Danziger, 1990). They do this unwittingly and tend to take these norms for granted, therefore believing that they are making rational decisions with regard to the methodology they use (Danziger, 1990). Psychologists, as knowledge producers, have achieved great success, to the extent that the knowledge they produce has been termed ‘expert’ knowledge (Danziger, 1990). Danziger (1990:192) argues that “if the history of psychological research demonstrates anything, it demonstrates the extraordinary pliability of human beings”.

Although Industrial Psychologists claim that the purpose of studying organisations and organisational behaviour is to improve the effectiveness of organisations, there are many who argue that “studying organisations with a view to enhancing their effectiveness culminates in ideologies of work and domination” (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989: 225). According to Habermas (1971) in Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore (1989:229), the goals of such studies merely serve to justify authority relations and become an “instrument for control, distort the communication of ideas and erode the ability of individuals to construct their realities”. From a critical perspective, “effectiveness is an ideological goal and is a subterfuge of dominant corporate and class groupings” (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989:226). Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore (1989) further argue that the improving of organisational effectiveness leads to oppression and serves to legitimise the status quo. From this critical stance researchers within the social sciences, including Industrial Psychologists, should concern themselves with a constant critique of power and ideology for “ideology is but the handmaiden of power” (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989:226). Habermas (1971) further proposes that the task of research should be to unmask the knowledge objectifying ideology and it is only then that “knowledge is wedded to the project of emancipation” (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989:232).

Hogan and Sinclair (1996) argue that the study of organisations (especially from a psychological point of view) is filled with problems, intellectual biases and academic ideologies ranging from Marxism to behaviourism, humanistic psychology and postmodernist deconstruction, with an emphasis on contextual, historical and structural factors, while at the same time ignoring the individual level and characteristics. Hogan and Sinclair (1996) further posit that researchers tend to focus on problems that are easy to solve, easy to study and which

lead to publishable results. They agree with Fullagar (1984) that “the reward structure of science tends to dictate what gets studied... the amount of research conducted on a topic is directly proportional to the amount of federal and private funds available to study that problem” (Hogan and Sinclair, 1996: 379). Ross (1974), in Hyagreeva-Rao and Pasmore (1989:229), concurs that “standards of relevance are decided by sponsors of research and usefulness becomes a pathway for the creation of a ‘contract economy’ of knowledge”. According to Anderson, Herriot and Hodgkinson (2001), there are various stakeholders who have an interest in the objectives and outcomes of Industrial Psychology research. These stakeholders will exercise a considerable amount of power to maintain their interests and it becomes clear that various forms of pressure are exerted on academics and practitioners by these stakeholders (Anderson et al, 2001). Anderson et al (2001) contends that unless Industrial Psychologists become aware of the pressures exerted upon them by the various stakeholders in their environments, they will never be able to address the problems facing the profession.

### ***2.5. Psychology, Knowledge and Power***

According to Hook, Mkhize, Kiguwa and Collins (2004:13), an investigation into the relationship between power and psychology will reveal that “psychology itself is powerful... psychology plays a part in maintaining and extending existing relations of power”. They further posit that psychology is a political tool and an instrument of power (Hook et al, 2004). When psychology is referred to as a political tool, it is not used in the sense of government politics but rather refers to politics in terms of relationships of power. In other words, these refer to relationships of authority, control and subordination (Hook et al, 2004).

The knowledge that psychologists produce and their subsequent practices also constitute power relationships (Hook et al, 2004). Hook et al (2004:14) argues that “psychology is not a neutral science, not an unbiased, simply objective way of knowing the world... on the contrary, power ‘runs in the veins’ of psychology; there is no form of psychological knowledge or practice that does not set up or support a certain relationship of power”. Furthermore, Psychology has always attempted to play down its political nature and the discipline’s avoidance of the questions of power and politics points to the ideological functioning of power (Hook et al, 2004).

According to Foucault (1978, cited in Kinsella, 1999:172), “power and knowledge are intimately related and operate through discourse”. Knowledge is produced by scientific work which is based on the production of consensus amongst scientists (Kinsella, 1999). Traditional views of science emphasise the autonomy of scientists and this remains a common ideology even when various institutional constraints intensify on scientists and researchers (Kinsella, 1999). These constraints are ideological themselves and demonstrate the close relationship between scientific knowledge and organisational power (Kinsella, 1999). Kinsella (1999:174) further argues that science can be viewed as “fundamentally a set of communicative practices. Scientific questions and problems are formulated within particular discourse communities, findings are established through persuasive appeals to the members of these communities, and scientific knowledge is deployed within and beyond these communities to produce what Foucault (1972) would call the discursive formations that we know as science”.

Embedded within the social organisation is social power and consequently the exercising of discipline (Kinsella, 1999). This discipline is not, however, imposed coercively or overtly, but it is rather a more subtle product of the organisational discourse and culture (Kinsella, 1999). Deetz (1992:40) argues “rarely is explicit power displayed by management”. The key to achieving this level of implicit control lies within the ideology of modern humanism (Knights and Willmott, 1989). It misleadingly envisages the individual as separate from society and this individualisation increases the individual’s dependence on the systems of knowledge and power operating within organisations in order to attain a stable identity (Feldman, 1999). “Furthermore, because the self-society dichotomy is taken for granted, the individual is unaware of the role ideology plays in his or her institutionalised dependency” (Feldman, 1999:231).

From a Foucault inspired view, “power and knowledge are seen as coterminous. One begets the other” (Feldman, 1999). Feldman (1999) adopts a Foucauldian perspective on knowledge and power and maintains that knowledge is socially produced, in a ritualistic manner, through consensus. This knowledge then becomes an instrument of power (Feldman, 1999). Before something can be controlled it must first be known and then it can be manipulated and changed (Feldman, 1999). Knowledge is therefore not as objective as it claims to be as it is the product of various practices of power (Feldman, 1999). Alvesson and Deetz (1996:205) argue that the power/knowledge “discourses structure the world, they at the same time structure the

person's subjectivity, providing him/her with a particular social identity and way of being in the world".

Embedded within postmodern power/knowledge systems is the philosophy of individualism (Feldman, 1999). According to Feldman (1999), this is clearly evident in organisation theory where concepts such as leadership, motivation and competition are key focus areas. All of these concepts assume that individuals are ahistorical, acultural and autonomous (Feldman, 1999). By focussing on issues concerned with the autonomous self, organisation theory de-emphasises aspects surrounding relationships in organisations such as class, power and conflict and results in the limiting of the self within the workplace (Steffy and Grimes, 1992).

## ***2.6. Organisational Control***

Control is integral to the manner in which organisations operate (Jermier, 1998).

Contemporary society is uncomfortable with the exercise of blatant hierarchical control as it questions basic taken-for-granted values, the processes through which these values are instilled, and makes us aware of the fact that people are not as free as we want to believe (Jermier, 1998). "Consequently, contemporary mechanisms of control are often unobtrusive" (Jermier, 1998: 235). According to Jermier (1998: 235), recent organisational, managerial and technological advances have been lauded for creating a revolutionary paradigm shift, but this is deceiving as "they disguise control in the rhetoric of emancipation and, therefore, seem more humanistic... their substance lies in the unstated promise of providing more thorough control for elites". Rose (1985), cited in Lawthom (1999), points out that power is enacted in subtle and contradictory ways under Psychology's guise of expertise, authority and specialisation.

Although it has been argued that organisations generally make use of a variety of strategies of control, some strategies have been more popular than others during specific historical periods (Jermier, 1998). From the late nineteenth century, managerial practices have relied on coercive control and shifted to technological control and, later, more bureaucratic forms of control in the mid-twentieth century (Jermier, 1998). A shift occurred from "authoritarianism, hierarchical control and punishment as discipline, to psychological manipulation, incentives and internal self-discipline" (Abel, 2005:504). These shifts in the use of control were accompanied by shifts in the nature of work and labour relations (Jermier, 1998). Naturally,



Industrial Psychologists went along with these changes, supporting the regimes of control through their research and practices and establishing various movements in support, such as the Human Relations Approach in the 1930s and the Human Resource Movement in the 1960s. It has also been suggested that “contemporary organisations are making more use of post-bureaucratic systems of control, which rely heavily on advanced technology and on the inculcation of emotions, values, and worldviews congruent with the interests of the more powerful constituents” (Jermier, 1998: 246). Jermier (1998) argues that organisations use these modern forms of control but, at the same time, they rely on more conventional forms of control such as coercion. As an example, Jermier (1998) refers to Buroway’s (1985, cited in Jermier, 1998) concept of “hegemonic despotism” which refers to new systems of control based on warnings of outsourcing, plant closure and other forms of capital losses. Another new technique of control is that of shared decision-making, “...shared forms of decision-making...are calculated to instill self-discipline in the employee as a more subtle, an omnipresent form of control that hierarchical, authoritarian direction and supervision might not accomplish” (Abel, 2005: 504).

“While ideologically, organisational psychology presents itself as a neutral domain of technical expertise to be applied to organisations, for the good of all, interventions also bring control” (Lawthom, 1999:68). According to Baritz (1960), social scientists (including Industrial Psychologists) have served (and possibly still do serve) the powerful well by providing them with explicit and detailed techniques to facilitate these forms of managerial control. Baritz (1960) further argues that these techniques satisfied the elite at the expense of the disadvantaged and the broader society, in other words, the controlled or dominated.

## **Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework**

### ***3.1. Ideology***

Prilleltensky (1989:795) claims that “society predisposes science to adopt a scientific set of epistemic...and nonepistemic values...congruent with its predominant ideology”. At any point in time, there are a set of ideologies (values, beliefs and ideas that are perpetuated as truth or reality) in place which influence the ways in which reality is perceived by society (Kirkbride, 1992). According to Prilleltensky (1989:796), ideology is “the social beliefs of a community, developed with the purpose of justifying and promoting their economic and socio-political economic interests”. Heather (1976: 43) defines it as a “process of persuading people to accept a definition of their existence in which they are transformed into passive consumers without responsibility for their own lives and in which, in return for obeying the decisions of others, they are rewarded by the increased consumption of goods they have come to believe they need”. Foster and Louw-Potgieter (1991: 347) suggest that “ideology is essentially a society-wide phenomenon which assists in both positioning and constituting us as social beings”. From a Marxist perspective, ideology assists “in maintaining uneven relations and distribution of resources and power in society” (Foster and Louw-Potgieter, 1991). The pervading ideology in place is usually the one that serves to benefit those in positions of power or dominance at the expense of those who do not have power (Kirkbride, 1992). Both the exploited individuals and the individuals in power (exploiters) are not necessarily aware of this exploitation as the truth is hidden and disguised by a system of illusions that serve to legitimise it (Heather, 1976). Ideology thus refers to a ‘false picture of reality’ that is created by the dominant group to gain power over other groups in such a way that the oppressed do not know that they are being exploited (Nafstad, 2002).

Industrial psychology as a discipline and, consequently, Industrial Psychologists, are not exempt from the influence of ideology. On the contrary, the dominant ideologies present in society influence the ways in which Psychologists view reality and the role of their practice within society in which they can be located, and also influence the process of knowledge construction (Prilleltensky, 1989). Although Industrial Psychology, and Psychology as a whole, presents itself as an objective, value-neutral science, Prilleltensky (1989) points to the influence of a dominant ideology or set of ideologies in the way in which Psychologists perceive reality. Through socialisation Psychologists are conditioned to accept the current

order of things and not to challenge or question the status quo (Prilleltensky, 1989). According to Martin-Baro (1994), cited in Nafstad (2002), mainstream Psychology has never fought against the predominant capitalist ideology in place. Prilleltensky and Fox (1997:9) concur and state “by and large, psychologists fit comfortably within a capitalist system that gives lip service to both freedom and equality, but in practice supports the freedom of the free market” (cited in Nafstad, 2002:4). Baritz (1960:194) claims that “the usual industrial social scientist, because he accepted the norms of the elite dominant in his society, was prevented from functioning critically, was compelled by his own ideology and the power of...managers to supply the techniques helpful to managerial goals” and therefore entrench relations of domination.

Organisational ideologies play a crucial role in underpinning identities (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). “If internalised by employees, ideologies have the effect of reducing uncertainty for dominant groupings and thus increasing their situational power in securing strategic identities” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:349). Ideologies in the workplace survive in part “because dominant groupings have the power to shape cultural meanings at the workplace. They can, in turn, call on the expertise of their peers and outside professionals to justify them or supply the technologies of regulation to make them applicable to changing circumstances. The technologies of regulation employed include the development of initiatives, team reviews, performance counselling and redesign of jobs” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002: 349). The outside professional called upon to provide these technologies of regulation are more often than not Industrial Psychologists.

Not only is Psychology not exempt from the influence of the predominant ideologies that operate in society, but Psychology itself has a prevailing ideology (Fox, 1985a). The discipline of Psychology is primarily based on a number of assumptions (Fox, 1985a). Firstly, the discipline of Psychology adopts a primarily positivist view and determining causality is seen as the purpose of social science (Fox, 1985a). Secondly, in line with the positivist view, quantification and experimentation is viewed as the only reputable scientific method that should be employed in research (Fox, 1985a). Although alternative (qualitative) research methodologies are often used within Psychology, the prevailing positivist ideological position often dismisses these as less important (Fox, 1985a). Third, the individual level of analysis is regarded as a more important focus in research than the wider context in which the individual

is located (Fox, 1985a). “Individuals are treated, measured, assessed, advised, trained and rejected while inadequate environments are left intact” (Lawthom, 1999:69). A fourth assumption is that specialisation in the discipline of Psychology is not only necessary but also preferable (Fox, 1985a). Fifth, the considerable amount of knowledge that Psychology has built up is valuable in bringing about improvements in society (Fox, 1985a). Sixth, the ideal focus of research within the discipline is on individual change rather than focusing on institutional change (Fox, 1985a). As a result, Psychology is seen as “positivist or empiricist and hence apolitical, non-dynamic and individual blaming” (Lawthom, 1999). Kaye (2000:201) argues that “psychology, far from being neutral, serves social, ideological and political interests”, furthermore “it privileges concepts and practices which benefit dominant groupings in society at the expense of the marginalised and less powerful”.

Psychologists, according to Sarason (1981), are not only responsible for failing to challenge, but also for actively endorsing existing social beliefs (cited in Prilleltensky, 1989). According to this view, Psychology can be seen as operating in a cycle as it is shaped and guided by the dominant discourses and ideology that exist in society, and serves to perpetuate these through its practice and research findings. Psychology is in a position of considerable power due to its ability to influence what is considered natural and normal within society and, if the discipline reinforces beliefs that serve the interest of those in power, it seems logical that its findings will be endorsed by those that benefit from it. Therefore it can be argued that Psychology is not as objective and unbiased as it claims to be. In any society the ruling class relies on the dominant ideology to support its position in society and Psychology plays a large role in advocating that the current social order is natural and normal, reducing the possibility that any individual will question and challenge the social order (Prilleltensky, 1989). Far from being an objective, value-neutral science, “applied psychology is inherently political since its findings may shift the balance in favour of one party at the expense of another” (Fullagar, 1994:98).

Due to the fact that the discipline adopts a primarily positivist approach, in which the individual is considered to be asocial and ahistorical, the burden of responsibility for any problem or predicament lands on the shoulders of the individual (Prilleltensky, 1989). The solution to any problem lies within the self and not within the broader socioeconomic context (Prilleltensky, 1989). This in turn serves the interests of those in power since individuals are unlikely to consider the social order as playing a role in their predicament, thus preserving the

status quo (Prilleltensky, 1989).

Therapy is also aimed at changing the individual as opposed to addressing the larger societal problems (Prilleltensky, 1989). Rose (1999:89) describes therapy as a technology “for the government of the autonomous self”. Rose (1999:90) argues that psychologists “elaborate complex emotional, interpersonal and organisational techniques by which the practices of everyday life can be organised according to the ethic of autonomous selfhood”. Psychology does this in two ways (Rose, 1999), firstly, by influencing the practices of those with authority over others, such as teachers and managers (Rose, 1999). In this way Psychology ensures that these individuals direct others over which they have authority into striving for productivity and individualism (Rose, 1999). Secondly, Psychology, through its “psychotherapies of normality, promulgates new ways of planning life and approaching predicaments, and disseminates new procedures for understanding oneself and acting upon oneself to overcome dissatisfactions, realise one’s potential, gain happiness and achieve autonomy” (Rose, 1999:90). Psychotherapy has even permeated the work arena and Rose (1999:91) notes that “we are no longer merely productive or unproductive bodies or even normal or maladjusted workers. We are ‘people at work’ and we bring to work all our fears, emotions and desires, our sexuality and our pathology.” Psychology, along with psychotherapy, has produced an ideology and discourse of the autonomous self, of individualism, where all problems and difficulties can be traced back to the individual. Rose (1999:93) states that “the norm of autonomy produces an intense and continuous self-scrutiny, self-dissatisfaction and self-evaluation in terms of the vocabularies and explanations of expertise. In striving to live our autonomous lives, to discover who we really are, to realise our potentials and shape our lifestyles, we become tied to the project of our own identity and bound in new ways into the pedagogies of expertise”.

Prilleltensky and Fox (1999:4) define mainstream psychology as “psychology most often taught in universities and practised by clinicians, researchers and consultants. It is psychology portrayed as a science, with objective researchers and practitioners”. They highlight three concerns with regards to mainstream psychology (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994). The first concern is that “mainstream psychology strengthens values and institutions that prevent many people from living meaningful lives” (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994:5). This is achieved through placing emphasis on individualism within careers and communities, thus hindering interaction,

caring and communication (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994). This in return allows those in positions of power to make decisions for the rest of society, who are blinded to the effects of their individual actions (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994).

A second concern for Prilleltensky and Fox (1994: 6) is around oppression and inequality and they argue that “the negative consequences of societal values and norms do not fall equally on all segments of the population”. At times oppression is easy to identify and oppose, but the majority of times oppression is institutionalised in subtle ways, thus making it very difficult to identify and oppose (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994). In both instances those in positions of power maintain their power at the expense of others although these individuals might not even realise they are being oppressed (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994).

Lastly, a third concern for Prilleltensky and Fox (1994: 6) is the fact that “mainstream psychology’s traditions reinforce oppressive institutions even when individual psychologists have no such goal in mind”. Although Psychologists generally do have good intentions, they identify their problems in narrow terms and choose to help individual clients (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994). Mainstream Psychology’s norms typically reflect the values, assumptions and interests of middle- to upper-class individuals (Prilleltensky and Fox, 1994).

Prilleltensky (1989) notes that Psychologists do not intentionally set out to deceive society, rather that they are involved in the process of reinforcing an inequitable system as a result of their socialisation within a context of dominant, pervading ideologies. According to Sarason (1981) “to be socialized means that one has absorbed and accommodated to predetermined conceptions of the way things are and ought to be” (cited in Prilleltensky, 1989:796). It must also be remembered that the positions occupied by Psychologists in society are, largely, those that benefit from the dominant ideology, providing them with even less reason to challenge the status quo (Prilleltensky, 1989). Industrial Psychologists do not consciously choose to align themselves with management out of a sense of agreement with managerial views, but rather that they can be located in a position where such an alignment is virtually automatic or taken for granted as the way the world is (Prilleltensky, 1989). Alternatives therefore seem impossible to conceive of and this is the power of socialisation and of ideological influences.

In order to be able to challenge or attempt to change the ideologies that dominate society, individuals need to be aware of these ideologies and the ways in which they impact on society. The role of Psychology, as a social science, should be to expose the dominant ideologies in place in order to foster social change and Psychology should be involved in a process of conscientisation, as proposed by Freire (1975), “whereby people achieve an illuminating awareness both of the socio-economic and cultural circumstances that shape their lives and their capacity to transform reality” (cited in Prilleltensky, 1989:800). Conscientisation is a process of removing all obstacles and myths created by ideology, in an attempt to make individuals aware of their reality and their power to change it (Prilleltensky, 1989). However, if psychology as a discipline were to take on the role of creating awareness it would have to go through a process of conscientisation itself first (Prilleltensky, 1989). This is a very modernist perspective and it is not clear if Industrial Psychology would ever achieve this transcendental power. Furthermore, Freire (1975) suggests that a process of annunciation should also be adopted, to provide society with an ideal replacement of the current social system with that of a just system in which the well-being of the population is fostered (cited in Prilleltensky, 1989). Fullagar (1984:99) urges Psychologists to “reassess their values and to learn how these impinge on the research process so that they can be controlled”. Fox (1985b:56) agrees that Psychologists have to be “more willing to question their own personal ideologies, values and goals”. Heather (1976) suggests that Psychology should become a moral science by making the values regarding human nature and society explicit and open for discussion. Heather (1976:60) further states that Psychology should develop “forms of inquiry by means of which people might arrive at a greater understanding of, and a greater degree of control over, *their own* behaviour and experience, *their own* relationships with others, and *their own* place in the social order”.

### **3.2. Power**

Power is a complex, multidimensional concept (Hardy and Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998). “Most traditional organisational behaviour textbooks simply do not have chapters on power or, if they do, admit that it has been largely ignored or subsumed within other issues such as leadership” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:118). At the most simplest level power is defined as the ability of one person to get another to do something they would not otherwise do, despite resistance (Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

French and Raven (1959) identified five bases of social power located in organisational resources that managers could use either singly or jointly depending on the perceptions and responses of the subordinates (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002). The first base of power is reward power (based on the ability of those in power to reward others) where rewards are used to get employees to deliver a target (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Secondly, coercive power refers to the capacity to enforce discipline, which could include psychological or material punishment (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Thirdly, referent power is similar to charismatic power, where the personal characteristics of a manager are used to influence employees (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Legitimate power is linked to the idea of authority and the acceptance by employees that a manager holds power over them because of his/her position (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Lastly, expert power is a form of power that an individual has because of the expertise or skills that he/she possess and can also include the power an individual possess because of the information/ facts in his/her possession that others might need (French and Bell, 1999; Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

Thompson and McHugh (2002) argue that, due to the nature of French and Raven's (1959) research, which was conducted through the use of questionnaires, the five bases of power may give more information regarding the cultural expectations, rather than the actual work practices. As the researchers relied on the perceptions of the respondents, they might have been measuring perceived influence or the relationship between influence, tactics and outcomes (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). In addition, French and Raven's five bases of power are regarded as too individualistic to use as a framework of power (Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

Lukes (1974) explored the concept of power further and developed the three-dimensional view of power. In the first dimension power is exercised to influence the outcome of decision-making processes through the use of various resources (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). The one-dimensional view of power thus focuses on the observable activities of particular subjects and rests on the behavioural assumption that power can always be observed and measured (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). In the second dimension power is exercised by controlling access to decision-making processes (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). The two-dimensional view of power argues that by controlling the agendas and mobilising bias



inherent in access to resources and values, they keep to safe issues and exclude others that threaten their interests (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Both the first and second dimensions are based on the assumption that power is only activated or used in the face of conflict or opposition and remains on the terrain of observable power (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998; Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

Power is exercised in the third dimension through hegemonic processes in which the use of power is legitimised through cultural and normative assumptions (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). The third dimension recognizes that power can be used not only to defeat conflict, but also to ensure that conflict never arises (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). Lukes (1974) points out that "power in the traditional sense of force and domination may be exercised not only by coercion but by inducing people to willingly do something against their self-interest as well... hence individual desires and goals may be manipulated so as to facilitate their acting voluntarily in ways that are not self-defined and quite often contrary to their real interests" (Abel, 2005:504). By accepting that power can prevent conflict, the third dimension recognises the possibility of maintaining the status quo through societal and class mechanisms (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). Power does not necessarily need a subject and is not always observable in the traditional sense (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). "Power might be both the production of effects and the *capacity* to produce them" (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:123). Although the processes cannot always be measured, the outcomes can in the form of the structural inequalities created between groups (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). "Power is ideological, as well as economic and structural. Through the production of everyday beliefs and practices, power is used to produce apparent consensus and acquiescence, replacing visible controls by hidden cultural forms of domination" (Hardy and Leiba O'Sullivan, 1998:456).

Due to the developments in the study of power (notably Michel Foucault) since the work of Lukes (1974) on the three-dimensional view of power, it is now possible to explore the various aspects of power further, beyond the third dimension. From a Foucauldian perspective, power does not come from above or from a central body, rather power is embodied in the micro-practices of everyday life (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Foucault also maintains that power is not stable but discontinuous, as there is a ceaseless process of shifting tensions and alliances, and that it is not possessed by any individual or group (Thompson and McHugh,

2002). "Power lies outside its possessor, in routines and narratives that confer fluid, temporary capacities to act effectively" (Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

This is a post-structuralist idea in which power does not operate through agencies with specific interests, but through discourses (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). The pre-modern sovereign power was dependant on the personal bonds of obligation between individuals (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Techniques of disciplinary power were developed and refined in religious institutions, hospitals, asylums and prisons and were concerned with observing, recording and evaluating individuals in a detailed manner (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). In modern institutions power has become increasingly focused on the body as an object (Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

Foucault uses the image of a panopticon, a circular building with an observation tower, to describe the power of surveillance used in the modern organisation (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). The central observation tower of the panopticon facilitates a unidirectional disciplinary gaze (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). "In other words the observed can be seen but cannot see, while the observers see everything but cannot be seen. So effective are such practices that individuals begin to discipline themselves to be, in Foucault's words, docile and useful bodies" (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:126). Although modern organisations are not panopticons, electronic and self-surveillance constitutes organizations, and their employees as subjects of power (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). "Organisational processes act to produce corporate obedience... the culture and discourses of the modern corporation have become a crucial means through which human feelings, emotions and thoughts have become increasingly managed and governed" (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:127).

The knowledge products of Industrial Psychology provide management with the capacity to "gaze at, scrutinize, classify and count individual characteristics and behaviours. Collected data are analysed and stored; ensuring that an individual's legacy, good and bad, is not forgotten" (Steffy and Grimes, 1992:192). Industrial Psychology thus facilitates the Foucauldian idea of surveillance within modern organisations. However, today "the effects are greater than the prison exemplar, because the modern corporation goes home with its members and colonizes competing institutions such as the media" (Deetz, 1992:38)

Thompson and McHugh (2002: 214) argue that "new practical and theoretical knowledge

from the repertoire of organisational behaviour can function as ‘technologies of regulation’, used to control and discipline employees”. New production techniques such as Just-In-Time (JIT) and Total Quality Management (TQM) are simply more effective surveillance techniques that serve to enhance managerial control of the labour process (Thompson and McHugh, 2002).

The rise in Information Technology (IT) allows organisations to centralise information and extensive information systems are used to collect data on worker performance and behaviour (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). This is described as the “electronic panopticon that brings the disciplinary gaze to every aspect of worker activity” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:128). The idea of an electronic panopticon has been reinforced by the proliferation of call centres, whose sophisticated surveillance capacities had led to them being labelled “electronic sweatshops” (Ferne and Metcalf, 1997).

Foucault (1980) further expands his concept of power by explaining how power can be used not only to maintain the status quo, but can also be used to change the status quo (Abel, 2005). Knowledge and power do not exist independently of each other, rather “knowledge constantly induces effects of power...it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power” (Abel, 2005:510). “Knowledge itself opens a field of potential force relationships...those involved in particular force relationships may come to understand how those particular relationships came to be and how they operate by analyzing the processes, concepts, categories and grammars involved in both the construction of a particular knowledge and the discourses about those relationships” (Abel, 2005:510). Foucault (1980) argues that it is possible for science (including Industrial Psychology) to be mobilized to transform and reverse the “prescriptive patterns of power relationships” that it has developed and instilled within organizational life (Abel, 2005:514).

It is within this conceptual framework of ideology and Foucauldian power that the study will attempt to uncover both the ideological positions (their particular view of the organisation and its employees) occupied by Industrial Psychologists as well as the knowledge produced by them to maintain the status quo, and the way in which this is reflected in their published research articles.

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology**

### ***4.1. Research Questions:***

1. To what extent do Industrial/Organisational Psychology journal articles (published in the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology) reflect managerial bias within published research?
2. To what extent do published journal articles (published in the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology) reflect a focus on managerial concerns as opposed to the concerns of the employees?
3. To what extent do published journal articles (published in the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology) reflect the influence of non-epistemic factors in the knowledge production process?

### ***4.2. Broader Issues to be Investigated***

The research study will also aim to investigate the broader theoretical and non-epistemic (political, social and ideological) factors that play a role in the knowledge construction process of Industrial/Organisational Psychology. In particular, the effects of ideological factors at play in the domination-producing effects of Industrial Psychological knowledge and practice will be investigated. In other words, the study will attempt to determine whether there are hegemonic effects in Industrial Psychology endeavours as a science and its attendant practice.

For the purposes of the research study, a journal article will be considered to be biased towards management when it focuses on managerial issues and concerns (for example focusing on productivity, leadership, effectiveness and employee motivation/manipulation) as opposed to focusing on the concerns of employees for example. In other words, the research will aim to establish whether or not Industrial Psychologists are serving the needs and interests of management or those of both employees and management.

### ***4.3. Research Aim***

The aim of the research is to undertake a critical research stance to determine to what extent Industrial/Organisational Psychology journal articles reflect a managerial bias in published research. A further aim of the study is to establish to what extent these journal articles reflect managerial concerns as opposed to the concerns of employees and the hegemonic effects

(impact of non-epistemic factors) thereof. The expected findings of the research study are that both these statements regarding Industrial Psychology research in South Africa are true.

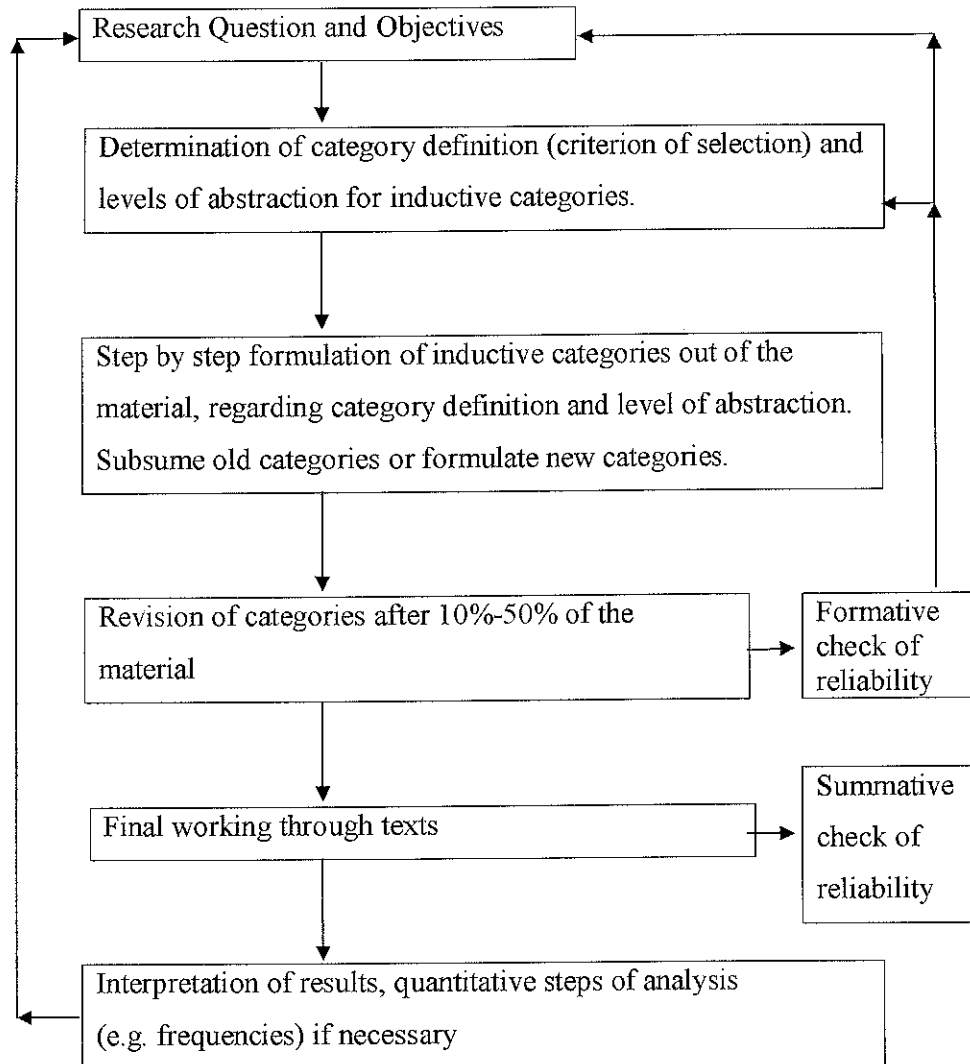
#### ***4.4. Research Method and Data Analysis***

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the sample of 26 journal articles with the aim of making inferences regarding the position the researcher takes (either focused on managerial concerns or employee concerns). Krippendorff (2004:18) defines content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use”. Qualitative content analysis allows the researcher to “interpret social reality in a subjective but scientific manner” (Zhang, 2006). It is a method of inquiry into the symbolic meaning of messages (Krippendorff, 1980). The content can refer to words, pictures, ideas, themes, meanings or messages that can be communicated (Neuman, 1997). Content analysis is a non-reactive and unobtrusive research technique, can be used on unstructured material, and is context sensitive and able to cope with large volumes of data (Krippendorff, 1980). Furthermore it is cost-effective and provides a means to examine data of processes that span across a number of years (Berg, 2001). However, content analysis examination is limited to recorded messages and is also considered ineffective for testing causal relationships between variables (Berg, 2001).

The current research focused on an analysis of both the manifest content and the latent content within the sample articles. Manifest content refers to the obvious and visible aspects of the journal articles while latent content on the other hand, refers to the underlying meanings embedded within the text being analysed (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Qualitative content analysis can be done through inductive reasoning or deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is the process through which themes and categories emerge from the raw data as the researcher immerses him- or herself within the data (Zhang, 2006). Deductive reasoning is used when the researcher uses concepts, themes and categories from theories or previous studies to code the data (Zhang, 2006). The research used inductive reasoning to develop themes and categories.

The following steps to qualitative inductive content analysis, as outlined by Mayring (2000), were used to conduct the research:

*Figure 4.1: Step model of inductive content analysis (Mayring, 2000)*



#### **4.5. Sample**

Probability, random sampling was used to select 30 journal articles from the online database of the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology. Probability sampling was used to ensure that “all sampling units have the same chance to be included in the sample” in order to eliminate any bias in answering the research questions (Krippendorff, 2004:113). Furthermore, random sampling was employed to reduce the large volume of text to a more manageable sample size. In order to do this, all the volumes and issues of the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology that were available on the online database were listed. All issues and volumes dating back to before 1994 were excluded from the research as the articles published within this time-period were tainted by the apartheid ideology of the day. Issues and volumes directly after 1994 (post-apartheid) were also excluded as these articles focused mainly on the transition from apartheid to democracy within organisations and South Africa. The reason for the exclusion of the pre-democracy and post-apartheid research was the fact that it warranted a research topic of its own and would make the scope of this particular research project too big. As a result, the project focused on all articles in the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology, from Volume 26 (1), 2000 to Volume 33 (3), 2007. Upon examining the content of the remaining research articles, further exclusions were made. All psychometric research, book reviews and articles printed in Afrikaans were excluded because of time constraints and the consequent translation of these articles into English for analysis purposes.

The remaining articles, from Volume 26 (1), 2000 to Volume 33 (3), 2007, were listed and numbered accordingly. An online random number generator (Stat Trek, 2009) was employed to select 30 random articles for analysis. The articles selected are listed in table 4.1 in the random number column. As the focus of the research is on the published research articles of South African Industrial Psychologists and researchers, four non-South African research articles were excluded from analysis (see column 2 of table 4.1). The remaining 26 articles were reassigned with new numbers, as indicated in column 3 of table 4.1.









**Table 4.1: Sample Selection and Numbering**

<b>Random Number</b>	<b>Exclusions</b>	<b>Newly Assigned Number</b>
114		1
97		2
147		3
94		4
100		5
140		6
64		7
130		8
156	Non-South African Research	X
132		9
87		10
1		11
39		12
42		13
35		14
56		15
122		16
49	Non-South African Research	X
13		17
120		18
85		19
18		20
105		21
6		22
84		23
53	Non-South African Research	X
57		24
40		25
51	Non-South African Research	X
26		26

The titles, issues and volume numbers of the sample articles are indicated in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Sample Articles: Titles, Issues, Volumes and Authors**

No	Article
1	Job satisfaction among South African aircraft pilots (Hoole and Vermeulen, 2003), 29(1), 52-27
2	The relationship between burnout, personality traits and coping strategies in a corporate pharmaceutical group (Storm and Rothmann, 2003), 29(4), 35-42
3	Emotional intelligence as a determinant of leadership potential (Stuart and Paquet, 2001), 27(3), 30-34
4	Coping, stress and burnout in the South African Police Services in Kwazulu-Natal (Wiese, Rothmann and Storm, 2003), 29(4), 71-80
5	Apparel shopping behaviour (part 2): Conceptual theoretical model, market segments, profiles and implications (Du Preez and Visser, 2003), 29(3), 15-20
6	Enhancing service production and service quality (Govender, 2002), 28(1), 33-36
7	Employment equity practices in three South African information technology organisations. A systems psychodynamic perspective (Cilliers and Stone, 2005), 31(2), 49-57
8	The alignment between effective people management, business strategy and organisational performance in the banking and insurance sector (Kock, Roodt and Veldsman, 2002), 28(3), 83-91
9	The measurement of work stress within South African companies: a luxury or necessity? (Van Zyl, 2002), 28(3), 26-31
10	Management perceptions of competencies essential for middle managers (Mbokazi, Visser and Fourie, 2004), 30(1), 1-9
11	Strategic importance of motivational rewards for lower-level employees in the manufacturing and retailing industries (Arnolds and Venter, 2007), 33(3), 15-23
12	Entrepreneurial self-efficacy in a multicultural society: measures and ethnic differences (Urban, 2006), 31(1), 2-10
13	Leader and team behaviour during organisational change: a systems psychodynamic stance (Cilliers, 2006), 23(1), 33-41
14	The unemployed mid-career adult: stressors and support (Ribton-Turner and De Bruin, 2006), 32(2), 31-38
15	Affective-cognitive consistency of attitude as a moderator of the job satisfaction-performance relationship (Visser and Coetzee, 2005), 31(3), 62-69
16	Contemporary organisational change and the importance of trust (Bews and Russouw, 2002), 28(4), 2-6
17	An empirical investigation of job and family stressors amongst fire-fighters in the South African context (Oosthuizen and Koortzen, 2007), 33(1), 49-58
18	An evaluation of the facilitators of trustworthiness (Bews and Martins, 2002), 28(4), 14-19
19	Expectations of and satisfaction with the SAPS in the Rustenburg area (Kleyn, Rothman and Jackson, 2004), 30(1), 37-35
20	Managing reality shock: expectations versus experiences of graduate engineers (Riordan and Goodman, 2007), 33(1), 67-73
21	An exploration of individual experiences of constant organisational change (Williams, Crafford and Fourie, 2003), 29(2), 98-105
22	The prevalence and nature of sexual harassment in the workplace: a model for early identification and effective management thereof (Ramsaroop and Parumasur, 2007), 33(2), 25-33

23	Concept redundancy and contamination in employee commitment research: current problems and future directions (Roodt, 2004), 30(1), 82-90
24	Executive coaching experiences. A systems psychodynamic perspective (Cilliers, 2005), 31(3), 23-30
25	Exploring the social construction of life roles of career-oriented women (Franks, Schurink and Fourie, 2006), 32(1), 17-24
26	Managerial level, managerial motivation and sense of coherence (Coetzee and Visser, 2006), 32(3), 35-42

The final sample of 26 articles was downloaded from the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology. The articles were converted from Adobe format to Microsoft Word format and loaded up to the QSR Nvivo 7 computer-aided software, used for coding and analysis.

#### ***4.6. Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability***

Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are the naturalist or qualitative equivalent to internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Marsh, 2006; Zhang, 2006). Credibility is achieved when all the important factors in the research question have been identified and a complete description is offered on the way in which these factors are reflected in the data gathered (Marsh, 2006). Credibility can be achieved by using triangulation, member check, peer reviews, and prolonged engagement with the material (Zhang, 2006). Transferability is the extent to which the findings of the research can be applied to other contexts (Graneheim and Lundman, 2003; Marsh, 2006; Zhang, 2006). Transferability is facilitated by the researcher giving clear descriptions with regards to the selection, data collection and analysis procedures used (Graneheim and Lundman, 2003). The degree to which the researcher accounts for changes in data and changes in decisions during the research process determines the dependability of the research (Graneheim and Lundman, 2003; Zhang, 2006). Dependability can be verified by inspecting the consistency of the process of study (Zhang, 2006). Lastly, confirmability refers to the examination of the internal coherence of the data, findings, interpretations and recommendations of the research by someone other than the researcher (Zhang, 2006).

#### ***4.7. Limitations***

There are various limitations that would have to be kept in mind when analysing and making inferences from the sample. The findings of the research will only be applicable to the South African context and South African Industrial Psychology research. This in return creates a gap for future research to extend upon this study to compare and contrast the published journal articles from different journals and different countries. Therefore a larger and broader study, which is not bound by financial and time constraints, would be the ideal.

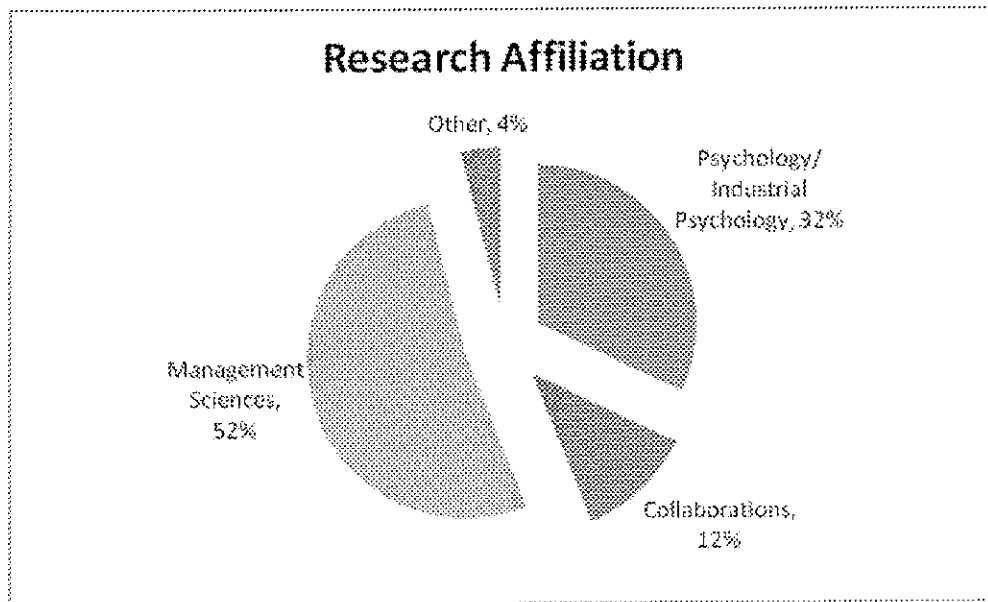
#### ***4.8. Conclusion***

Qualitative content analysis was adopted to explore whether or not managerial bias exists within Industrial Psychology research as published in the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology. Both manifest and latent content analysis were employed to not only analyse the visible aspects of the journal articles, but also the underlying meaning embedded within the text. The qualitative, inductive step model, as outlined by Mayring (2000), was followed during analysis and the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research was kept in mind at every step of the process.

## Chapter 5: Research Results and Analysis

### 5.1. Manifest Content

**Graph 5.1: Articles' Research Affiliation**

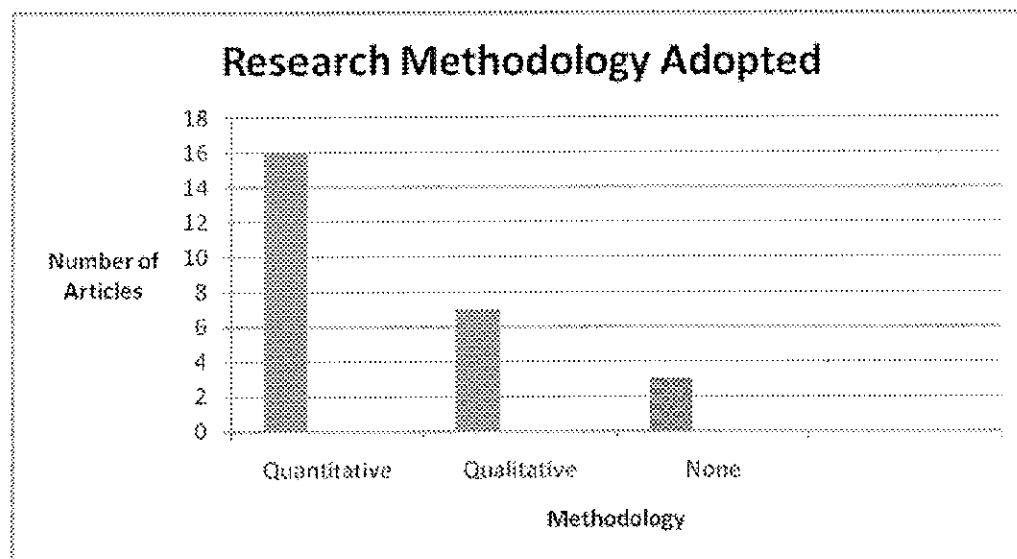


Graph 5.1 illustrates the composition of the sample articles' affiliation to various departments within South African Universities. Of the sample, 4% of the articles was produced by researchers based within the departments of Philosophy and Sociology (articles 16 and 18) and People, Policy and Performance (article 19). The sample (12%) also consisted of research collaborations between different departments, for example, collaborations between Consumer Science and Industrial Psychology (article 5), between Human Resource Management and Psychology (article 14), as well as between Industrial Psychology and Sociology (article 18). The majority of the researchers of the articles in the sample was based within the realm of management sciences. These management sciences include departments of Human Resource Management (articles 1, 8, 10, 21, 23 and 25), Economic Management (article 2), Management Science (article 20), Business Management (articles 6 and 11), Statistics (article 11) and Entrepreneurship (article 12).

The majority (52%) of the sample articles' researchers are based within, or affiliated with, departments at universities that can be classified within the sphere of management sciences.

Research produced from within the management sciences would ultimately adopt a managerial perspective and would focus mainly *on* workers rather than being conducted *for* or *with* workers (Fullagar, 1984). This confirms Rose's (1990:58) argument that "by concentrating upon theories and techniques that would sell it to managers, the psychological expertise of production has inevitably adopted a managerial perspective". Fullagar (1984) further argues that the discipline of Industrial Psychology has moved away from the social sciences towards the realm of management science.

**Graph 5.2: Research Methodology Adopted**



Graph 5.2 depicts the range of methodology adopted within the sample articles. The majority (73,9%) of the researchers adopted a quantitative research methodology, with only 30,4% opting for a qualitative research methodology. Of the sample, three articles were papers without a methodology. Table 5.1 below indicates which specific articles adopted a qualitative, quantitative or no methodology at all.

Graph 5.2 and Table 5.1 confirms Pietersen's (1989) statement that the discipline of Industrial Psychology can be located primarily within the analytic paradigm which is closely linked to the positivist paradigm. The aim of these quantitative research articles is to achieve factual, objective knowledge that can be scientifically validated (Pietersen, 1989). Quantitative research "preserves what is there in the form of fact and to prevent question or change" (Heather, 1976:45). The fact that the majority of the articles within the sample adopted a



quantitative research methodology points to the fact that Industrial Psychology still serves to maintain the status quo by validating theories instead of questioning them.

**Table 5.1: Articles, Methodology and Affiliation**

Article Number	Quantitative	Qualitative	No Methodology	Affiliation
1	X			Management Sciences
2	X			Management Sciences
3	X			Industrial/Psychology
4	X			Management Sciences
5	X			Collaboration
6	X			Management Sciences
7		X		Industrial/Psychology
8	X			Management Sciences
9			X	Industrial/Psychology
10	X			Management Sciences
11	X			Management Sciences
12	X			Management Sciences
13		X		Industrial/Psychology
14		X		Collaboration
15	X			Industrial/Psychology
16			X	Other
17	X			Industrial/Psychology
18	X			Collaboration
19	X			Other
20		X		Management Sciences
21		X		Management Sciences
22	X			Management Sciences
23			X	Management Sciences
24		X		Industrial/Psychology
25		X		Management Sciences
26	X			Industrial/Psychology
TOTAL	16	7	3	

It is also interesting to note that the majority of the quantitative research articles are also affiliated with the management sciences departments. It could therefore be argued that Industrial Psychological research is conducted from a management perspective and serve to maintain the status quo favouring management.

## 5.2. *Latent Content*

The sample articles were coded using the QSR Nvivo 7 computer-aided software. Inductive reasoning was used to develop the coding scheme. The codes that emerged are indicated in table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2: Codes**

Management
- Managerial competencies
- People Management
Employees
- Employee Commitment
Leader/ Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
Motivation
Organisational Change
Trust
Job Satisfaction
Stress
Coaching
Personality
Burnout
Sense of Coherence
Career-oriented Women
Sexual Harassment
Unemployment

The codes were examined in further detail to discover the underlying meanings (latent content) embedded within the articles and this is discussed below.

## Management

All the codes indicated in table 5.2 are all managerial concerns that could potentially be detrimental to the productivity and effectiveness of an organisation if it is not managed correctly. Historically, a symbiotic relationship between management and Industrial Psychologists emerged, in which management funded the discipline's research and practitioners, in turn, focused their attention on those aspects of organisational functioning specified by management (Beder, 2000; Fullagar, 1984). Therefore it is not surprising that the majority of the sample articles cover the issue of **management, people management and managerial competencies** extensively. The perceived importance of having competent managers within organisations is reflected in the statements below:

*"Within an organisational context, it appears crucial to develop competent managers who can be entrusted with the responsibility to transform their organisations accordingly... management - especially middle management- creates the vital link between the desired economic progress, the required organisational effectiveness and the actual performance of the people involved" (Sample article 10).*

*"... management is seen as a very important factor that influences the competitiveness of a country, and also a company" (Sample article 25).*

Not only is current Industrial Psychological research focused on the organisational effectiveness resulting from effective management, but it is also concerned with the effect that management can have on the employees of an organisation.

*"... management is able to influence the primary antecedents of job attitudes" (Sample article 1).*

*"In the competitive financial industry, people need to be a differentiating factor to achieve superior organisational performance" (Sample article 8).*

*"... lower employee productivity, through active disengagement, is not always the result of the lack of a work ethic among workers, but possibly the inability of managers to manage their human resources properly" (Sample article 11).*

A further focus of Industrial Psychological research in terms of management is that of the specific competencies that managers would require to effectively manage organisations and employees.

*“... it is the competence of managers that, to a large extent, determines the returns that organisations realise from their human capital (Sample article 10).*

*“... it appears crucial to develop competent managers who can be entrusted with the responsibility to transform their organisations accordingly...” (Sample article 10).*

*“Three broad domains of managerial competence appear to emerge: Firstly, the competency to manage the task; secondly, the competency to manage people and thirdly, the competency to manage the ‘self’” (Sample article 10).*

It is interesting to note that Industrial Psychological research never questions the structure of organisational life, or the structure of social life. The discourse of management is accepted without question and no alternatives to the current status quo are explored. According to Martin-Baro (1994), cited in Nafstad (2002), mainstream Psychology has never fought against the predominant capitalist ideology in place. Prilleltensky and Fox (1997:9) concur and state “by and large, psychologists fit comfortably within a capitalist system that gives lip service to both freedom and equality, but in practice supports the freedom of the free market”.

### **Employees**

Research on management goes hand in hand with research on employees. Essentially, the inclusion of Industrial Psychologists in the work environment by management was not done in an attempt to better industrial relations for the good of all organisational members, it was a mechanism by which managers hoped to achieve the maximum output from employees. Consequently, Industrial Psychology’s focus has always been on predicting employee behaviour by manipulating observable employee characteristics.

*“One strategy that could help organisations achieve... is to predict effective job performance by selecting, training and placing people into appropriate jobs” (Sample article 10).*

Furthermore, the research produced by Industrial Psychologists is aimed at empowering management to predict and control employee behaviour.

*“... emphasis is on the responsibility of the manager to, firstly, set objectives, plan, take decisions, and organise work in the organisation. The second task requires the ability to motivate, measure, control and develop other people. Clearly, the focus in this instance is on managing both the task and the people” (Sample article 10).*

In order to predict and control employee behaviour, effective employee competencies are researched extensively and used in selection and recruitment processes.

*"...a competency is viewed broadly as an underlying characteristic of an employee that enables him to complete a task successfully" (Sample article 10).*

Employee commitment research is often linked to research surrounding motivation and trust and aims at getting employee "buy-in" on managerial objectives.

*"High employee commitment is a prominent feature of world-class companies... employee commitment is an important variable to predict organizational performance and even the performance of national economies..." (Sample article 23).*

There is always a strong focus on individualism in employee-oriented research conducted by Industrial Psychologists. The focus on individualism is related to empowering management to control employee behaviour. According to Knights and Willmott (1989), the key to achieving implicit control lies in the ideology of modern humanism. It misleadingly envisages the individual as separate from society and this individualisation increases the individual's dependence on the systems of knowledge and power operating within organisations in order to attain a stable identity (Feldman, 1999).

### **Leader/ Leadership**

Leadership is a concept that has been researched extensively over the last decade or two by Industrial Psychologists.

*"Leadership has been described as the art of persuading people, rather than dominating them." (Sample article 3)*

Leadership is a new management tool used to persuade employees to follow their lead to achieve organisational goals.

*"Leadership has been defined as the competencies and processes required to enable and empower ordinary people to do extraordinary things in the face of adversity. It is also the ability to constantly deliver superior performance to the benefit of oneself and the organisation" (Sample article 3).*

Leadership is usually researched in conjunction with change management practices to give

management new tools and techniques to use when experiencing resistance to change.

*“The new economy demands new leadership styles because of the ever changing intra and inter organisational relationships and the wisdom it requires to explore new ways of coping and managing” (Sample article 13).*

*“Over the last decade many change leadership programmes have been implemented to counter-act the negative effects of change” (Sample article 13).*

*“... the profound effect of the leader in determining the organisational culture and furthermore indicated the leader's influential role on the team's dynamic functioning relating to change... ” (Sample article 13).*

Within the sample articles, emotional intelligence emerged as a research area linked to that of leadership. Emotional intelligence was researched as part of a process to predict which characteristics are exhibited by effective leaders, thereby allowing management to predict and control the behaviour of the leaders they appoint to persuade employees. The controlling and dominating effects of leadership are never considered as topics for research. Research focus is always on leadership as a positive process and never forms part of the broader discussion of the domination of workers in the workplace.

*“... emotional intelligence factors considered to be characteristic of effective leaders” (Sample article 3).*

### **Motivation**

Motivation emerged as a popular research topic amongst Industrial Psychologists. The reason for this can be attributed to the fact that motivation is regarded as a tool which managers can use to push employees to become more productive.

*“Motivation is fundamental to employee behaviour, such as loyalty, good citizenship and job performance at high output and high quality levels” (Sample article 11).*

*“One of the biggest challenges that managers face in executing business strategies to achieve competitive advantage, is the selection and employment of motivational techniques or rewards that build wholehearted commitment to operating excellence and winning attitudes among employees... a properly designed reward structure is management's most powerful tool for mobilizing organisational commitment to successful strategy execution” ( Sample article 11).*

The study of motivational techniques within Industrial Psychological research is not only

limited to that of employees, but also includes managerial motivation techniques, allowing those in positions of power control over both management and employees.

*"The concept of managerial motivation is important in identifying future managers" (Sample article 26).*

Motivation is a concept based on the philosophy of individualism and assumes that individuals are ahistorical, acultural and autonomous (Feldman, 1999). By focusing on issues concerned with the autonomous self, Industrial Psychological research de-emphasises aspects surrounding relationships in organizations, such as class, power and conflict, and results in the limiting of the self within the workplace (Steffy and Grimes, 1992).

### **Organisational Change**

Another big research concern for Industrial Psychologists is that of organisational change.

*"It is generally accepted that all organisations are influenced by change, that change may manifest uniquely in every organisation, and that change management is one of the greatest challenges to the modern organisation" (Sample article 13).*

As it is generally accepted that organisational change is unavoidable, the focus of organisational change research in Industrial Psychology features around issues of employee resistance to change, leadership/management needed during organisational change as well as the various change management practices that can be adopted. The focus is on establishing methods for management to use to ensure a smooth and effective organisational transformation, without any resistance or challenge to the status quo.

*Change itself is not the problem – rather, the problem is seen as the meaning or interpretation that staff members attribute to change" (Sample article 13).*

*"... the profound effect of the leader in determining the organisational culture and furthermore indicated the leader's influential role on the team's dynamic functioning relating to change" (Sample article 13).*

*"... change management logic, which is the way the organisation believes, either implicitly or explicitly, that change should be managed" (Sample article 21).*

Organisational change research generally does not focus on the effects thereof on the individual employee, but rather on the resulting costs to the organisation that resistance by

employees can have. The focus remains on organisational efficiency and productivity.

*“... emphasized the importance of considering individuals during organisational change... although the changes are generally essential and overdue, the potential cost to the individual and the company in terms of medical expenses, lost productivity and lowered motivation and morale cannot be ignored” (Sample article 21).*

Industrial Psychological research seems to highlight the positive effects of change or the necessity thereof, while at the same time down-playing the negative consequences it holds for employees, for example the emergence of atypical employment practices and labour brokering in contemporary organisations. Research is never dedicated to investigating alternative forms of organisational ownership such as worker co-ops. The privately owned business is accepted as the only possible option – a clearly ideological assumption.

### **Trust**

Trust is another important research area for Industrial Psychology. Management needs to secure their employees' trust in order to further their agenda without any resistance, thus colonising the employees' subjectivity. Various management tools and techniques are used to secure the trust of employees which are “calculated to instill self-discipline in the employee as a more subtle, an omnipresent form of control that hierarchical, authoritarian direction and supervision might accomplish” (Abel, 2005:504).

*“With the breakdown of hierarchical structures in favour of flatter organisational structures, participative management is increasingly becoming the norm. As participative management hinges upon interaction and cooperation, it is evident that it can hardly work without a fair share of trust amongst those participating in managing the company” (Sample article 16).*

*“Knowledge has become the new capital of business... trust facilitates the flow of information that has become so vital to the survival and success of organisations” (Sample article 16).*

*“... trust inspires loyalty within the business, which may result in self-sacrificing behaviour in order to advance the interests of the organisations...” (Sample article 16).*

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction has been researched extensively within the field of Industrial Psychology.

Although the concept seems noble in that Industrial Psychologists and their allies (management) want employees to experience job satisfaction, their concern is not for employees but rather for the organisation and management.



*"It is commonly accepted that job satisfaction is one of the most widely researched variables in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. The interest in job satisfaction can generally be attributed to the relevance of job satisfaction to the physical and mental well-being of employees, because current studies suggest that the well-being of employees is in the best interest of the employer" (Sample article 15).*

If employees do not experience job satisfaction, various costs to the organisation are incurred, affecting the organisational productivity and efficiency.

*"... job satisfaction is a major contributor to productivity, absenteeism, turnover, in-role job performance and extra-role behavior and roles stress, as well as the belief that management is able to influence the primary antecedents of job attitudes" (Sample article 1).*

*"... satisfied employees are more cooperative, more helpful to their colleagues, more punctual and time efficient, report for more days of work and stay with the company longer than unsatisfied employees" (Sample article 15).*

## **Stress**

Stress experienced within organisations by employees is another big research area within the field of Industrial Psychology. On the surface the research seems to be in favour of the employees of an organisation. However, closer examination of such research reveals that it is a big concern to Industrial Psychology and management due to the resulting costs to the organisation.

*"... stress and strain remain a matter of serious concern to medical and organisational professionals. The concern is for two reasons: one being economic, as mismanaged stress can cost organisations billions of rands every year in lost productivity and health care costs; the other being humanitarian, as it is not desirable to over-stress individuals... it is in the organisation's best interest to intervene and minimize the amount of stress..." (Sample article 21).*

*"Stress is a reality of life, it is unavoidable, good and bad, constructive and destructive... the destructive nature of stress is reflected in its cost side... to reduce the costs of stress in South Africa, more attention should be paid to the measurement of stress within the organisational context" (Sample article 9).*

*"It seems that stress and health related problems result in great costs within the organisational context" (Sample article 9).*

*"The direct costs of stress and the resulting poor performance show up in a number of ways. Numerous research studies have shown that individuals experiencing stress make errors, are absent more often, must be replaced more frequently, are involved in work accidents, strikes,*

*as well as work slowdowns. It has been estimated that South Africa loses roughly R500 million each year just in absenteeism and to a loss in productivity” (Sample article 9).*

*“Indirect costs include the question of the cost of lost opportunities... stressed employees are less creative, less effective decision-makers and inadequate communicators... other indirect costs due to high stress can include a lack of confidence in management and colleagues, poor labour relations, low morale, etc” (Sample article 9).*

*“Stress measuring allows companies to respond in a preventative manner to identified problem cases and areas that can reduce or eliminate direct and indirect costs” (Sample article 9).*

### **Coaching**

Coaching has become a popular focus area for Industrial Psychological research and is often related to leadership or managerial research. The focus of coaching research is purely managerial in nature in that it is concerned with improving managerial effectiveness.

*“... executive coaching is one of the new management tools to cope with these changes and complexities” (Sample article 24).*

*“... this specific executive coaching relationship has empowered and authorized the executives in taking up their organisational leadership roles” (Sample article 24).*

### **Personality**

Personality research is a very old and continuously updated research field in Industrial Psychology. The reason for this is Industrial Psychology’s attempt to reduce the employee to an object that can be manipulated and controlled and whose behaviour can be predicted at all times. Personality research is often used in recruitment and selection processes and training in organisations and is based on the idea that individual employees can be better managed by having a better understanding of their personalities.

*“... organisations contain a mixture of... personality styles... which characterise and motivate organisational behavior” (Sample article 13).*

In the 1950’s Alec Rogers, (cited in Thompson and McHugh, 2002:214), gave a neat description of Industrial Psychology as “fitting the man to the job and the job to the man (FMJ/FJM)”. The use of personality testing in recruitment and selection confirms the practice of FMF/FJM in modern organisations. Such practices show that Industrial Psychology “relies heavily on the notion of value-neutral, objective science that is independent of the power

relations in the organisations and societies within which it is practised” (Thompson and McHugh, 2002:214).

### **Burnout and Sense of Coherence**

A further research interest that emerged from the sample articles was the areas of burnout and sense of coherence.

Burnout, much like the research conducted on stress, seems employee-orientated on the surface, but is in fact researched for the benefit of management and the organisation.

*“Research over the past two decades has shown that burnout is not only related to negative outcomes for the individual- including depression, a sense of failure, fatigue and loss of motivation – but also to negative outcomes for the organisation, including absenteeism, turnover rates and lowered productivity” (Sample article 2).*

As burnout negatively affects the efficiency and productivity of the organisation, methods are sought to prevent employees from experiencing burnout.

*“High levels of burnout are associated with ineffective coping strategies... ” (Sample article 2).*

Sense of coherence is a well-researched concept used to give management the tools to identify and place individuals who possess effective coping mechanisms, thus reducing the costs incurred by those individuals who cannot cope with the work-load. Once again the ideology and discourse of the autonomous self, of individualism, is played on where all problems and difficulties can be traced back to the individual. The blame is laid at the door of the individual not being able to cope, whereas the work-load or situation is never brought into question.

*“... sense of coherence appears to be a good indicator of general psychological well-being” (Sample article 26).*

*“... in an organisational environment, persons with an orientation towards a strong sense of coherence would experience productive performance, recognition, reward and promotion” (Sample article 26).*

*“Firstly, managers and employees should become aware of the causes and symptoms of burnout. This could help them become aware of their own and others’ emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment, and intervene before the effects of*

*burnout are too serious. Secondly, individuals could be selected who have constructive coping strategies and are not too neurotic, but who are more open, agreeable and conscientious” (Sample article 2).*

### **Career-oriented women**

As more women are entering the workforce each year, career-oriented women have become a popular research topic within the field of Industrial Psychology.

*“... women are prone to role-overload...” (Sample article 25).*

*“... additional challenges confronting women who have to integrate and invest in a variety of different life roles as well as to employers having to address job dissatisfaction, low morale, absenteeism and turnover...” (Sample article 25).*

*“... such information may inform appropriate organisational policies regarding childcare and working hours, to satisfy the needs of these women as well as assisting local employers to employ women, resulting in fewer problems like absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and unproductive employees” (Sample article 25).*

Although the research seems employee-oriented on the surface, further examination reveals that the research is focused on ways to reduce job dissatisfaction, low morale, absenteeism and turnover with the ultimate aim of making career-oriented women into productive, efficient employees.

### **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment was another research area that emerged from the sample articles. Although sexual harassment is an important concern for both employees and management, the aim of the research seemed to remain focused on the negative effects that sexual harassment has on organisational effectiveness and productivity.

*“The purpose of any organisation is goal accomplishment, survival, effectiveness and organisational growth. Attaining these goals depends on the four factors of production, namely, entrepreneurship, capital, natural resources and labour. Human capital is a vital resource and an integral ingredient for organisational effectiveness is sound interpersonal relations. These relationships are, however, compromised by the most controversial, complex and wide-spread human resource problem, that is, sexual harassment” (Sample article 22).*

## **Unemployment**

*“Unemployment is one of the top ten traumatic life experiences... the psychological and physical symptoms ... are numerous” (Sample article 14).*

Unemployment emerged as a code during the analysis of the sample articles. Sample article 14 was the only article that focused purely on the experiences of the unemployed individual and not on what unemployment means for management. Out of all the sample articles, this was the only article not tainted by a managerial orientation.

With the exception of sample article 14, all the research areas that emerged from the sample articles are ultimately concerned with organisational effectiveness. Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore (1989:225) argue that “studying organisations with a view to enhancing their effectiveness culminates in ideologies of work and domination”. The goals of such studies (as conducted by Industrial Psychologists) merely serve to justify authority relations and become an instrument for control (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989:225). They further argue that the improving of organisational effectiveness leads to oppression and serves to legitimise the status quo (Hayagreeva-Rao and Pasmore, 1989).

## **Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### ***6.1. Summary***

Both the manifest and the latent content of the sample articles was explored. The manifest content analysis revealed that the majority of the sample articles' researchers are affiliated to departments at universities which are based within the realm of management sciences. They therefore would adopt a managerial perspective within their research. The manifest content analysis also revealed that the researchers primarily adopted a positivist and quantitative methodology when conducting their research. Quantitative positivist research focuses on validating theories, rather than questioning them. By adopting this methodology Industrial Psychologists are actively participating in preserving the status quo (which favours management).

The latent content analysis revealed a focus on managerial concerns ranging from managerial competencies, employees, leadership, motivation, organisational change, trust, stress, job satisfaction to burnout and career-oriented women, sexual harassment, coaching, personality and unemployment. The research articles dealing with managerial competencies, employees, leadership, motivation, organisational change, coaching, personality and trust are all based on a philosophy of individualism and are focused on giving management the necessary tools to effectively manage their employees. Although some of the issues researched by the Industrial Psychologists in the sample articles might seem employee-oriented with the best interests of the employee at heart, closer examination of such research revealed the opposite. The research areas of job satisfaction, stress, burnout, career-oriented women and sexual harassment are examples of research topics that appear employee-oriented on the surface. Further inspection of these articles revealed a preoccupation with the negative effects of stress, burn-out, sexual harassment, job dissatisfaction, as well as the role overload experienced by career-oriented women on organisational effectiveness and productivity. The aim of these research articles was to facilitate management's understanding of the signs and symptoms thereof, thus arming management with the essential knowledge needed to prevent problems such as absenteeism, turnover and unproductive employees.

The content analysis of the sample articles revealed a definite managerial bias within Industrial Psychological research, focusing on managerial concerns as opposed to the concerns

of employees and is considerably influenced by non-epistemic (such as ideology, power and discourses) factors in the knowledge-production process.

### ***6.2. Recommendations for Future Research***

The study and the findings are limited to research published within the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology from the year 2000. Further comparative research must be conducted involving other international journals.

It is recommended that future research following a similar methodology and agenda should focus on the quantitative/qualitative divide and explore whether the more traditional methods of research (quantitative methodology) encompass managerial bias because of its traditional and positivist roots.

A further research gap that has been identified during the course of this research project is the focus on South African Industrial Psychological research tainted by apartheid ideology. Future researchers could focus on the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology journal articles which were excluded for the purposes of this research, namely those published before 1994 as well as those published after 1994 up until the year 2000. The focus of such research would be on the apartheid ideology which tainted the Industrial Psychology research of the day, as well as the transition and changes in ideologies post-apartheid Industrial Psychological research embodied.

### ***6.3. Conclusion***

The aim of the research was to establish whether or not Industrial Psychologists are serving the needs and interests of management/ employers or those of employees. The principal intent of the research was to stimulate other Industrial Psychologists and researchers to be reflexive about the discipline and to question who they should serve with their knowledge products. It is only through reflexivity that we can achieve real social change.

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