

THE EFFECTS OF RACE AND ASSERTIVENESS ON ACTIVE AND PASSIVE INFLUENCING – A FOUR YEAR FOLLOW-UP



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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any university for a degree.

9 February 2000

Varenka van der Westhuizen

Date

**The article format of this thesis is in
accordance with the requirements of
the Department of Psychology**

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ABSTRACT

According to Expectation States Theory the status information of race will have an effect on the evaluation of an individual's performance, the interaction initiated, and on the acceptance or exertion of influence (passive and active influencing). Recommendations from the study done by Dornig (1995) motivated the replication of the previous investigation four years later, in order to investigate the effects of race and assertiveness on the acceptance and exertion of influence (passive and active influencing). Two hundred and eighty eight white students studying at a Historically White University in South-Africa took part as subjects conducting a computer based task with a presumed but simulated partner. The variable race was operationalised by means of a photograph of the presumed partner being presented to the subject on a computer screen, and the variable assertiveness by means of items from the Personal Assertion Analysis as self-descriptions of the simulated partner. A 3x3 experimental design was employed and variance results (ANOVA) were analysed. The findings constituted that race had a significant effect on influence acceptance (passive influencing) but not on influence exertion (active influencing). The variable, assertiveness, did not significantly effect influence acceptance or exertion (passive and active influencing). The white subjects accepted significantly more influence from black partners in 1998 than in 1994. This might indicate a change in the status value of what was in the 1994 results still considered to be a low status characteristic.

OPSOMMING

Volgens die "Expectation States Theory" sal 'n persoon se ras 'n invloed hê op die evaluering van die individu se prestasie, die interaksie wat geïnisieer word en op die aanvaarding of uitoefening van invloed (passiewe en aktiewe beïnvloeding). Aanbevelings in Dornig (1995) se studie het die herhaling van die aanvanklike ondersoek vier jaar later gemotiveer, om sodoende die effek te bepaal wat ras en assertiwiteit het op die aanvaarding of uitoefening van invloed (passiewe en aktiewe beïnvloeding). Twee honderd agt en tagtig wit studente van 'n Historiese Wit Universiteit het deelgeneem as die subjekte wat 'n rekenaartaak gedoen het met 'n veronderstelde maar gesimuleerde medewerker. Die ras veranderlike is geoperasionaliseer deur middel van 'n foto van die veronderstelde medewerker wat op die skerm verskyn het, en die assertiwiteit veranderlike deur middel van items uit die "Personal Assertion Analysis" as selfbeskrywings van die gesimuleerde rekenaar medewerker. 'n 3x3 Eksperimentele ontwerp is gebruik en variansie ontledings (ANOVA) is gemaak. Daar is bevind dat ras 'n beduidende effek op invloed-aanvaarding (passiewe beïnvloeding) gehad het, maar nie op invloed-uitoefening (aktiewe beïnvloeding) nie. Die veranderlike, assertiwiteit, het geen beduidende effek op invloed-aanvaarding of -uitoefening (passiewe en aktiewe beïnvloeding) gehad nie. Die wit subjekte het in 1998 beduidend meer beïnvloeding aanvaar van swart medewerkers as in 1994. Dit kan moontlik dui op 'n verandering in die status-waarde van wat in 1994 nog beskou is as 'n lae status kenmerk.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

According to Expectation States Theory (Berger, Conner & Fisek, 1974) any individual functioning within a group makes evaluations of the other members' behaviour. These evaluations about the behaviour of others, for example about their competence, are based on a number of characteristics on which individuals can differ. The characteristics may be related to the task at hand, for example previous training, occupation or experience. People will also base their evaluations of the possible contribution of other group members on characteristics that the members bring into the group and that are seemingly unrelated to the task at hand, for example age, gender, race and self-confidence. In this manner gender, ethnic and racial groups are often victims of stereotyping. The study by Dorning (1995) investigated the effects of two of the latter characteristics, namely race and assertiveness on the performance in a co-operative task.

South Africa is in a process of social transformation from a past where racial stereotypes and prejudice were well documented (Duckitt & Foster, 1991). According to Expectation States Theory being White in a White dominant community, could be considered to be a higher status characteristic than being Black. Similarly, amongst generally assertive people, assertiveness could be considered to be a higher status characteristic than non-assertiveness or submissiveness (Rosenholtz & Cohen, 1985). This hypothesis was partly supported by the results of the study by Dorning (1995), using a sample of 144 assertive white male students in South Africa. She found that these students accepted more influence from a simulated White partner, than from a simulated Black partner in a cooperative task.

The experimental work by Dorning (1995) was done in 1994, just prior to the first fully democratic elections in South Africa that heralded a period of major social transformation.

1.2 Description of the problem

The years 1994 to 1998 accounted for an important transition in terms of the status of Blacks in South Africa. In the post-Apartheid era it could be anticipated that changes in terms of social stereotyping of Blacks might have been taking place amongst Whites, meaning that more equal status will be ascribed to Blacks and Whites.

In terms of Expectation States Theory, the problem could be formulated in the following questions:

Will assertive Whites respond differently to other assertive Whites than to assertive Blacks?

Will assertive Whites respond similarly to non-assertive Whites than to non-assertive Blacks?

Will the answer to the above questions in 1998 be different from the results recorded in 1994?

In the study by Dornig (1995) 144 subjects were used, but the current study used 288 subjects. The rationale behind increasing the number of subjects was to have more subjects in each cell of the experimental design.

2. EXPECTATION STATES THEORY

According to Expectation States Theory individuals form underlying expectations on how they and other persons will perform in task-oriented situations. These performance expectations are generalised expectations of the own or other's ability to contribute to the task at hand (Berger, Fisek & Norman, 1995; De Gilder, 1991). The higher the performance expectations for one person relative to another, the more likely the person is to receive opportunities to participate; offer contributions; receive positive evaluations about the contributions and be influential. Meeker (1990) and Balkwell (1995) stated that these expectations become the basis of power and prestige differences between people, and determine their subsequent behaviours in the interaction.

Berger, Rosenholtz and Zelditch (1980) and Berger and Wagner (1993) ascribed the following principles to Expectation States Theory, namely: (1) The mechanism that produces the status organising effects is part of the process itself. The process however must be activated by specific information from the social interaction. (2) Expectation states are properties of interpersonal relations, which are relative, because it arises from the relational context. These expectations depend on the relationships that they evolve from. (3) The basis of Expectation States is the socially constructed realities of people. (4) The properties of status organising processes are quite general. They include not only obvious examples like gender and race, but also less obvious ones like physical attractiveness.

Berger, Webster, Ridgeway and Rosenholtz (1986) stated that interactions among group members are based on status characteristics. In many status situations various social cues or status characteristics, many of which are nonverbal, are available to help the person to form expectations. These status characteristics may be patterns of speech, posture, background references, personal experience and styles of dress. Status characteristics operate through a generalisation principle, for example when the relevance of a specific external status characteristic of person A is challenged, person B will infer expectations on the basis of any status characteristic that person A possesses. Therefore, regardless of the actual relevance to the task at hand, inferences about status characteristics are made (Berger & Wagner, 1993). Expectation states not only arise out of interaction between people but are also created by prior beliefs about and evaluations of the characteristics possessed by members of a group (Berger, et al., 1995).

Conclusion: When individuals participate in a task, they make evaluations about their own as well as other persons' performance in the task. These evaluations are based on a variety of status characteristics which are either possessed or inferred by each of the participants. Consequently, expectations about another persons' performance influence and determine the participants' behaviour. Berger and his associates (Balkwell, 1991a; Berger, Fisek et al. 1977; Berger & Zelditch, 1985) therefore provided a formal theory to explain how participants in groups use status information to form expectations for relative task competence for self and for other, and how these beliefs in turn determine the subsequent patterns of interaction, evaluation, and influence in groups (Foddy & Smithson, 1996).

3. STATUS CHARACTERISTICS

A status characteristic is defined by Cohen and Lotan (1995) as socially evaluated attributes of individuals for which it is generally believed that it is better to be in the high state than the low state. In other words, it is a dimension on which persons may be ranked or discriminated against and for which it is considered to be more desirable to have the high state (Meeker, 1990).

A status characteristic can be specific or diffuse. When a status characteristic is specific (such as, occupation, assertiveness, skill and training), knowledge of the characteristic provides specific performance expectations for individuals who are in the high and low states of the characteristic. When a status characteristic is diffuse (such as, race, gender, or ethnicity), general expectations for competence and incompetence will be activated by collective tasks. These expectations operate in the same way as expectations based on specific status characteristics (Cohen & Lotan, 1995).

Balkwell (1995) stated that according to Expectation States Theory all characteristics, evaluations and expectations are not absolute values, but relative to the situation in which they occur. A status characteristic interpretation determines the simultaneous belief about future behaviour. A person is expected to act in a certain way and if he does, it gives support to and ensures that the initial beliefs are sustained.

The following conclusions according to Webster and Driskell (cited in Dorning, 1995, p.5-6) and Biernat (1997) were widely accepted by most investigators in the field of status generalisation.

- (1) Status characteristics such as race, age, gender and occupation act as cues for individuals. According to these cues individuals structure their interactions. These cues largely determine the interactions of an individual.
- (2) Significant features of status characteristics are culturally determined. For example, what is accepted as attractive in one culture might not be accepted as attractive in another.
- (3) The significant features affected by status characteristics all involve dominance and subordination in their interaction. A person who has a higher position would be in the dominant position in the group and has more influence as a result of a specific status characteristic.

- (4) A high status outside the group is converted to a high status in the group. For example, according to the research on status generalisation (Berger & Wagner, 1993), being male and white puts a person in a higher position outside a group and will ensure having a higher status in a group.
- (5) The status characteristic need not be relevant to the task or group interaction to structure the group. Although someone might, for example, be female it may have nothing to do with a reading task, it could still be used as an indication of reading ability.
- (6) Status generalisation is often a subconscious process, used by individuals to structure unfamiliar social situations.

In this study equating characteristics were used in conjunction with unequal characteristics. Subjects were confronted with partners who were equal in status as well as partners who were lower in status. The subjects used in the experiment were from the high status conditions, namely White assertive males.

4. RACE AND ASSERTIVENESS

4.1 Race as a Status Characteristic

According to Ridgeway (1991) race is a nominal status characteristic, meaning it is a socially recognised attribute on which people are perceived to differ in a categorical rather than graduated or ordinal way. Race can be distinguished from graduated characteristics such as wealth or education on which people are perceived to vary in the degree to which they possess the characteristic.

Ridgeway (1991) further explained that a characteristic, whether nominal or graduated, has status value when consensual cultural beliefs indicate that persons who have one state of the characteristic (e.g., Whites) are more influential in the society than those with another state of the characteristic (Blacks). Race is a nominal characteristic that has clearly established status value in our society. For example, people widely hold assumptions and it has been demonstrated that Black group members have less influence in groups than Whites, that they initiate less behaviour, and that they are less often elected as the group's leader. The research on race as a status characteristic showed that external status distinctions determine the distribution of power and prestige in task groups whether or not these distinctions are explicitly related to the group task (Wagner & Berger, 1993).

Race is also an example of what Expectation States Theory describes as a diffuse status characteristic, a socially defined personal attribute carrying both a trans-situational evaluation of competence and a set of task-specific evaluations of competence. This theory further connects actors with potential task outcomes (Balkwell & Berger, 1996).

In further research (cited in Dornig, 1995, p.19) by Hartsough and Fontana (1979), Sigall and Page (1971), Lerner and Karson (1973) and Zimet (1978), the subjects' attributional judgement of traits and personality characteristics also displayed an unfavourable view of Blacks and a positive view of Whites, thus proving race to be a status characteristic.

More recent studies such as the work of Cohen and Lotan (1995) investigated the status differences in terms of race within heterogeneous classrooms. They found that expectations for competence could be treated in such a way as to raise the participation of low-status students (Blacks) without depressing the participation of high-status students (Whites). Biernat and Kobrynowicz (1997) found that it would be more difficult for Blacks

than Whites, to document their ability in a competence-related domain. They further found that participants required Blacks, relative to Whites, to take more effort to prove that they had the ability to fill a position. Assuming that perceivers expect Blacks to be less competent in employment settings, relative to Whites, they will set lower performance standards for these individuals.

According to Rosenholtz and Cohen (cited in Dornig, 1995, p.19) Expectation States Theory constitutes that in a White dominant community, Whites have a higher status than Blacks. They are then given and take more opportunities to perform, are evaluated as performing better and have more influence than Blacks. These results indicated that race can be regarded as a status characteristic.

In the present study, as was done previously by Dornig (1995), race was operationalised in the experimental setting by means of an image on a computer screen based on a photograph of a White or Black person. In this way it was made as clear as possible that subjects did perceive the race of the partner they were interacting with.

4.2 Assertiveness as a Status Characteristic

Assertiveness describes interpersonal behaviour by which a person act in his or her own best interest, express own opinions and emotions comfortably and exercise own personal rights without denying the rights of others (Alberti & Emmons, 1982).

Hersen and Bellack (cited in Dornig, 1995, p.23) were of opinion that there is a definite relationship between an assertive response and the social context in which the response appears. The reason being that it might be seen as positive to be assertive in one culture, but not in another. This could have important consequences for the present study as it means that assertiveness cannot be removed from the social context it was presented in. Law, Wilson and Crassini (1979) also described assertiveness not as a generalised or uni-dimensional personality trait that is manifested consistently in a person's behavior, but rather as a feature of behavior dependent on certain behavioral contexts.

The debate of demeanour versus status characteristics becomes relevant when discussing assertiveness as a possible status characteristic. According to Lee and Ofshe (1981), demeanour can be defined as "bearing, outward behaviour" and has a significant effect on interpersonal influence. Therefore, if someone is assessed as being outwardly assertive he or she may be more able to cause social change. Ridgeway,

Berger, and Smith (1985) considered demeanour as just another status indicator for which predictions are made that are identical to those made for other status characteristics.

The present study attempted to move away from any ambiguities as far as demeanour was concerned and presented the variable assertiveness by means of self-statements from a questionnaire about the perceived level of own assertiveness. Consequently, nothing could be inferred relating to demeanour and the many components of assertiveness. Assertiveness was only referred to, but not actually observed.

5. PROCESSING OF MULTIPLE STATUS CHARACTERISTICS

5.1 Multiple status Characteristics

The question may be asked, what will happen when two or more status characteristics are salient in an interactive situation? How are these multiple items of status information processed? A further aim of the present study was to discover the nature of the interaction between race and assertiveness in the field of influence acceptance and influence exertion. Although the results of Doming (1995) provided some direction in this regard, it was inconclusive.

5.2 Race and Assertiveness as Multiple Status Characteristics

Many studies have been done on the interaction of race and assertiveness (Furnham, 1979; Garrison & Jenkins, 1986; Hrop & Rakos, 1985). Black writers, mostly in America, have questioned the appropriateness of applying general behavioural techniques to increase assertiveness without a thorough understanding of the cultural perspectives (Mitchell-Jackson, cited in Rakos, 1987). The interpersonal behaviour of Blacks has largely been stereotyped by discriminatory practices. Blacks historically were prevented from expressing honest opinion and engaging in equal conversations with Whites (assertive behaviour). The suppression of wants and desires ultimately can result in aggressive or passive-aggressive behaviour (Hedlund & Lindquist, 1984). Whites normally responded to Black assertive behavior by stereotyping or with apprehension. The discomfort of Whites and the Black cultural value system all contributed to questioning the appropriateness of assertiveness training for Blacks. This was further reinforced by findings that demonstrated that the assessment, content, and perception of assertion are influenced by racial variables. The objective assessment of assertion may be compromised by racial bias (Turner, Beidel, Hersen & Bellack, 1984).

Donnan, Jenkins and Ness (cited in Doming, 1995, p.24) investigated assertive behaviour among Black male psychiatric patients with White versus Black partner conditions. Whites were seen as more assertive than Blacks, and Blacks were more likely to comply to assertiveness. According to Se'ver (1989) both race and confidence level will lead to differential perception and evaluation of targets. White and confident targets will be seen as more competent, will be liked better and will receive higher status attributions than black or unconfident targets.

In summary, race and assertiveness as status characteristics were discussed within the theoretical framework of Expectation States Theory. It was stressed that the operationalisation of race needs to be clear and direct. Assertiveness needs to be operationalised as a status characteristic without too strong emphasis on the different components of assertive demeanour.

Expectation States Theory explained the process of inconsistent multiple status characteristics as a combining or balancing effect (Berger, et al., 1980).

5.3 The Combining Effect

Given that there are multiple status characteristics connected to the task, Status Expectations theory claims that actors combine the information from multiple independent statuses to form expectations that are in some sense an "average" of the inconsistent status definitions (Martin & Sell, 1985; Wagner & Berger, 1993). For example, if a male labourer interacts with a female professional on a task not related to gender or occupational differences, their behaviour will nevertheless be based on expectations formed by combining gender and occupational status information (Berger, et al., 1980). Thus all status information will be considered and both status characteristics will enforce each other and have an effect on the participant.

5.4 The Balancing Effect

Another possibility is that individuals will engage in status "balancing" and simplifying inconsistent multiple status situations in an effort to maximise their individual status positions. Thus, they place themselves positively by only taking the status characteristics into account of which they have the highest position (Berger, et al., 1980; Martin & Sell, 1985). Schneider and Cook (1995) confirmed this, by stating that actors eliminate one status characteristic in the influence assessment process. They renamed this "balancing" effect the "selection" hypothesis. In the example given above (Berger et al., 1980), the male will define his status situation in terms of the gender differences alone, while the female will define her situation solely in terms of the occupational differences (cited in Doming, 1995, p. 27).

5.5 Situations of No Information

It is also of importance to investigate the kind of attributions or expectations that are made under conditions of total ambiguity, where there is no status information available, as was the case in the present study. One explanation could be that individuals attribute average abilities to themselves and to others under such

conditions. Then a condition of no information operates as a baseline with which other conditions might be compared (Knottnerus, 1988).

Greenstein and Knottnerus (cited in Dornig, 1995, p.29) investigated the effects of differential evaluations on status generalisation. They suspected that the only possible source for forming attributions was the individuals own set of self-conceptions. Their findings were not conclusive. In a condition of no information the subjects did not form similar performance expectations for themselves or their partners. This was supported by the results of De Gilder and Wilke (1990).

6. PASSIVE AND ACTIVE INFLUENCING

6.1 Passive Influencing (Influence Acceptance)

Passive influencing is the degree to which people are influenced, or allow themselves to be influenced by others (De Gilder & Wilke, 1992). According to Foddy and Smithson (1996) people involved in task-oriented groups, accept influence more from others whom they believe, on the basis of diffuse and specific status characteristics, as well as prior performances, to have greater ability at the task at hand.

Expectation States Theory explained that members of co-operative task groups pay more attention to the contributions of competent group members than to less competent people in their group, and that the more competent members have more influence on the group's interactions and on its decisions (Nemeth, 1983).

In Expectation States Theory influence differentials are usually expressed in terms of the dependent variable "influence acceptance". It was predicted that people who have a positively evaluated or relatively high status position will accept less influence than people who have a status position that is equal to that of other persons, whereas people who have a relatively low or less positively evaluated status position will accept most influence (Wagner & Zelditch, cited in Dorning, 1995, p.32).

6.2 Active Influencing (Influence Exertion)

Active Influencing, being the proportion of times a subject attempts to influence the behavior of other members in a group, is based on the findings that higher status subjects (for example Whites and Males) exerted more influence than lower status subjects (Blacks and Females) (Fisek, Berger & Norman, 1995).

Studies involving influence exertion were also concerned with gender and non-verbal behaviour. Gaze and loudness change (Ridgeway, Berger & Smith, 1985), body space and laughter (Leffler, Gillespie & Conaty, 1982) were investigated. The results demonstrated that there were gender differences in non-verbal behaviour, which could indicate different levels of influence exertion. However, it remained unclear as to what degree the displayed behaviour reflected the wish to exert influence or only the general differences in behaviour displayed by the genders (De Gilder, 1991). The results of Dorning (1995) were also insignificant and further investigation about influence exertion seems to be necessary.

Expectation States Theory is primarily concerned with situations involving co-operative interdependence. It assumes that people are task-orientated in these situations, and people are motivated to attain favourable group outcomes. It seems to be logical for an individual in this situation to accept or reject influence on the basis of the available status information, because such behaviour is likely to result in the highest group outcome (Krottnerus, 1988).

7. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This study investigated the responses of White males that considered themselves not to be submissive, in a co-operative task with other White or Black males. The literature on Expectation States Theory predicted certain responses by Whites and presented a theoretical framework within which such responses could be explained. In support of this broad objective the following more specific objectives could be formulated.

7.1 Objectives

- * To assess whether race and assertiveness had an effect on active and passive influencing.
- * To investigate whether either a balancing or combining effect occurred between race and assertiveness.
- * To compare the results of Dornig (1995) to the results of the present study (1999) and to determine whether changes have occurred in terms of the social stereotyping of Blacks by Whites in South Africa during the period from 1994 to 1998.
- * Recommendations from Dornig (1995) motivated the replication of the previous investigation four years later. In the study by Dornig (1995) only 144 subjects were used, where as the current study used 288 subjects. The rationale behind this increased number of subjects was to have more subjects in each cell of the experimental design.

7.2 Hypotheses

The following specific hypotheses were formulated in accordance with Expectation States Theory. The first set of hypothesis refers to the Influence Acceptance task.

7.2.1 Hypothesis 1

Subjects will accept more influence from white partners than from black partners.

7.2.2 Hypothesis 2

Subjects will accept more influence from assertive partners than from non-assertive partners.

7.2.3 Hypothesis 3

Subjects will accept more influence from partners who are white and assertive than from partners who are white and non-assertive or black and assertive

7.2.4 Hypothesis 4

Subjects will accept more influence from partners who are white and non-assertive or black and assertive than from partners who are black and non-assertive.

7.2.5 Hypothesis 5

Subjects will accept more influence from black partners 1998 than in 1994.

7.2.6 Hypothesis 6

Subjects will accept more influence from responses that differ more from their own responses than from responses that differ less from their own responses.

The second set of hypotheses refers to the Influence Exertion task.

7.2.7 Hypothesis 7

Subjects will exert more influence on black partners than on white partners.

7.2.8 Hypothesis 8

Subjects will exert more influence on non-assertive partners than on assertive partners.

7.2.9 Hypothesis 9

Subjects will exert more influence on partners who are black and non-assertive than on partners who are black and assertive or white and non-assertive.

7.2.10 Hypothesis 10

Subjects will exert more influence on partners who are black and non-assertive or who are either black or non-assertive than on partners who are white and assertive or who are white or assertive.

7.2.11 Hypothesis 11

Subjects will exert more influence on black partners in 1994 than in 1998.

8. METHOD

8.1 Overview

The same method used by Doring (1995) was used in the present study. Subjects performed two tasks measuring the two dependant variables, active and passive influencing. In the one task, subjects had to decide whether to change their initial answer after obtaining information from their simulated partner. This "partner" had been described by different conditions of race and assertiveness. This constituted the passive influencing or influence acceptance task. In the other task the participants were given a chance to answer before a simulated partner, also described by different conditions of race and assertiveness. This task demonstrated influence exertion. These two tasks were presented in two sequences, the acceptance task first and the exertion task second, or the exertion task first and the acceptance task second.

8.2 Experimental Design

In both parts of the experiment a 3x3 factorial design was implemented with assertiveness (high versus low versus no information) and race (Black versus White versus no information) as the two factors. Statistical tests were done to measure the significance of the difference between the different cells within the design. An analysis of variance was done to investigate the main effects.

8.3 Race Presentation

As in the study by Doring (1995), race was presented by means of a photograph. A photograph of a Black person or a White person was presented to the subject before he started both parts of the experiment. The photographs were 20cm x 15cm in size and only of the breast upwards. These were scanned into the computer program used for the simulated task. Both Black and White partners were wearing the same clothes and were photographed behind the same background. A third of the subjects were presented with a photograph of a Black person, another third were presented with a photo of a White person and the last third were not presented with any information about the race of their partner.

8.4 Assertiveness Presentation

The Personal Assertion Analysis is divided into statements reflecting aggressive, assertive and passive responses (Hedlund & Lindquist, 1984). As in Doring (1995) these statements were grouped collectively

and presented such that one group represented answers of high assertive responses and another as representations of passive or low assertive responses. A third of the subjects were presented with descriptions of the high assertiveness, another third with passive responses and the remaining third with no information at all. The subjects were familiar with the questions of the Personal Assertion Analysis as they had completed the questionnaire before starting the experiment.

8.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study was performed by Dorning (1995) to test whether the different photographs and sets of self-statements presented in the study could be discriminated from each other and therefore it was not replicated in the current study.

8.6 Subjects

Two hundred and eighty eight White male undergraduate students, from the ages of 18 to 28 years old, were selected on a voluntary basis. The subjects all completed the Personal Assertion Analysis and scored high on the assertive part of the questionnaire. The average score of all the subjects on the Personal Assertion Analysis was 16,66. According to Corcoran and Fisher (1984), norms for undergraduate students are 18.

8.7 Procedure

The standard experimental setting of studies of Expectation States Theory was used as far as possible (Berger et al., 1977). As in the case of Dorning (1995) each subject completed the experiment on an individual basis. No contact was allowed between the participants other than the simulated contact. It was explained to the participants that they would be working with a partner. The subjects were or were not presented with information of their partner's race by means of a photograph. They also were or were not informed of their partner's level of assertiveness by means of the individual descriptions.

The subjects were confronted with a task, which they were told would assess an ability, namely "contrast-sensitivity". The ability was actually fictitious but seemingly significant. The actual task is highly ambiguous and consisted of a number of trials. At each trial a picture containing blue and yellow squares was presented. This picture was shown for a six-second period where upon the subject were to guess the exact number of blue squares. The subjects were told that the response possibilities of the number of blue squares were

between 70 and 110. This was done in order to increase the credibility of the feedback of the partner (De Gilder, 1991). Two versions of this task were presented.

8.7.1 *The Influence Acceptance Task (Passive Influence Task)*

At each trial the subject and the partner gave a preliminary answer. The preliminary answer of the partner was communicated by feedback to the subject. At a third of these trials the discrepancy was low (three), at a third the discrepancy was medium (seven) and at a third it was high (eleven). After seeing the preliminary answer of the partner the subject was asked to give a definite answer. The subject was also told that their pair's answer would be compared to that of other pairs participating in the experiment. The difference between the subject's first and final answers was analysed in order to assess whether he accepted influence from his simulated partner.

8.7.2 *The Influence Exertion Task (Active Influence Task)*

On each of the trials subjects were informed that they would be working with their partners once again. The subjects and their partners would have to provide answers in pairs, as quickly as possible. The first answer given by the subject or partner would be the group answer. It was communicated that when subjects wanted to give the group answer, they had to react faster than their partners. The subject would only be notified that the group answer was given without knowing what his partner's answer was. A four-second-latency period was used. If the subject did not respond within the four seconds he was told that his partner had given the group answer. The average time taken for a subject to respond was analysed. The shorter the time taken, the more influence a subject was exerting on his partner.

8.7.3 *Checks on the Manipulation*

As was done in Doring (1995), the manipulation was checked by means of questions that the subject had to answer at the end of the experiment. These included questions about the partner's race and assertiveness as perceived by the subject. The answers to these questions would be an indication of the effectiveness of the presentation of the independent variables, and also give an indication of the subject's experience of and level of insight in the design of the experiment. The series of questions included the following:

1. Is your partner black or white?
2. Is your partner according to the questionnaire domineering or passive?
3. Did you experience your partner as more domineering, the same as you, or more passive than you?

8.8 Statistical Analysis

With regard to task 1, relating to Influence Acceptance, a 4-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was undertaken to investigate the interaction between Influence Acceptance (as the dependent variable) and the following independent variables: Race, Assertiveness, Response Differentiation (the discrepancy between the response of the partner and the first answer of the subject was either low at a third of the trials, medium at a third of the trials or high at a third of the trials) and Time (whether the data was collected in 1994 or 1998).

With regard to task 2, relating to Influence Exertion, a 3-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was undertaken to investigate the interaction between Influence Exertion (as the dependent variable) and the following independent variables: Race, Assertiveness and Time.

The 1995 and 1998 data were analysed together, in an attempt to demonstrated an overall effect, as well as separately to compare the 1995 and 1998 data.

9. RESULTS

9.1 Results of Checks on the Manipulation

It is important to note that only the 1998 data (288 subjects) have been analysed in the following discussion of the checks on the manipulation. The 1995 data (144 subjects) had already been analysed and recorded in Doming (1995).

9.1.1 The Status Manipulation of Race

Only three partners were identified as black when they should have been identified as white. This is 1,0% of the sample. However, fifteen partners were identified as white when they should have been identified as black. This is 5,2% of the sample. In the situation of no information 82,3% said their partners were white and 17,7% said their partners were black.

9.1.2 The Status Manipulation of Assertiveness

A total of 43,4% partners were identified as domineering and 56,6% as passive. Furthermore, 77 (80,2%) of the assertive partners were identified as domineering, but only 10 (8,0%) of the non-assertive partners were identified as domineering.

9.1.3 The Experience of Assertiveness

59 (20,5%) of the responses were out of range (i.e.=0). The analysis was performed on the 229 remaining cases. Of these, 48 (21%) reported that their partners were more domineering, 147 (64,2%) similar to themselves, and 34 (14,9%) more passive than themselves.

9.2 Influence Acceptance

In the Influence Acceptance task, the dependant variable (Influence Acceptance) is measured on an interval scale. Firstly, an investigation was undertaken to assess whether the assumptions of (i) normality of the dependent variable, and (ii) homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices have been met. A test of normality revealed that the dependant variable (Influence Acceptance) is not normally distributed ($X^2 = 381.96$, $df = 10$, $p = 0.000$). The data appeared to be positively skewed. The F test is fairly robust so this deviation from normality is probably not too serious (Lindman, 1974).

Bartlett's X^2 test for homogeneity of variances was undertaken. This indicated that the variance-covariance

matrices were not homogeneous ($X^2 = 448.60$, $df = 53$, $p = 0.000$). The same finding was noted using Levene's Test ($F = 4.388$, $df = 53.1245$, $p = 0.000$). Lindman (1974) however states that only under the most severe violations does one need to be concerned about the validity of the F statistic under conditions of non-homogeneity of variances-covariance matrices.

From the 4-way ANOVA that was undertaken to investigate the interaction between Influence Acceptance (as dependant variable) and the independent variables Race, Assertiveness, Response Differentiation and Time, neither the 4-way or any of the 3-way interactions were significant.

The following 2-way interactions were significant: Race X Assertiveness ($F=3.064$; $df = 4.1245$; $p = 0.016$); Race X Time ($F = 5.733$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.003$); Assertiveness X Time ($F = 5.022$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.007$).

Also statistically significant were the main effects for Race ($F = 6.3511$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.001802$); Assertiveness ($F = 6.1166$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.002273$); Response differentiation ($F = 178.027$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.000$) and Time ($F = 24.3804$; $df = 2.1245$; $p = 0.000001$).

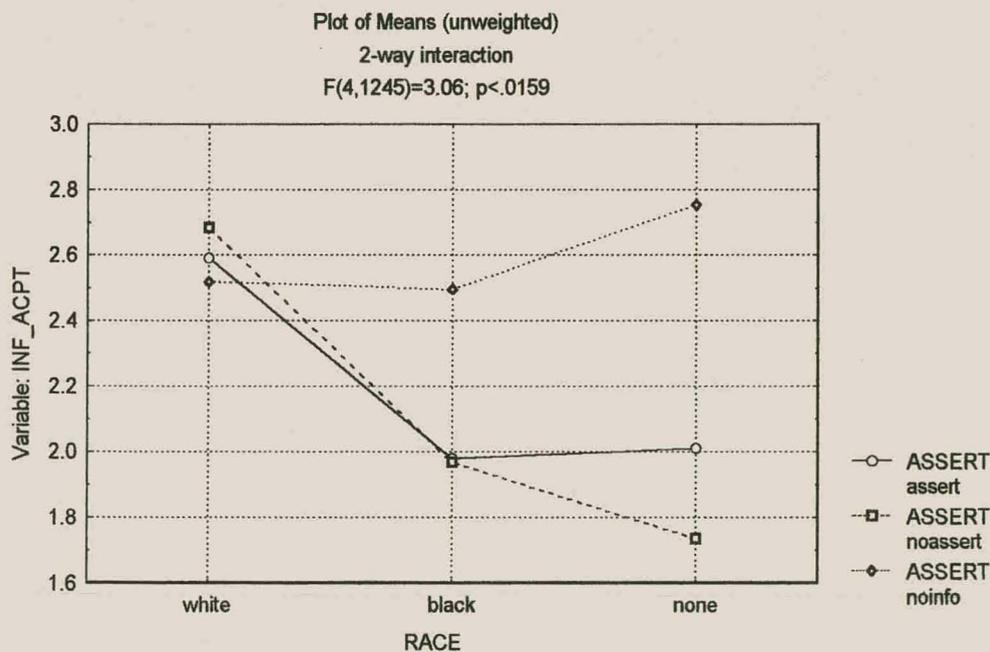


Figure 1. Means of influence acceptance for the race/ assertiveness interaction

Table 1.**Means of Influence Acceptance for Race and Assertiveness**

RACE	ASSERT	INFL ACPT
White	2.598602
Black	2.148652
No info	2.166632
.....	Assert	2.193967
.....	Non-assert	2.129959
.....	No info	2.589960
White	Assert	2.592477
White	Non-assert	2.684695
White	No info	2.518632
Black	Assert	1.979167
Black	Non-assert	1.969779
Black	No info	2.497009
No info	Assert	2.010256
No info	Non-assert	1.735402
No info	No info	2.754237

Contrast analyses were undertaken to investigate Hypotheses 1 to the 6.

Subjects accepted more influence from white partners than from black partners. The results of the univariate F test show that subjects with white and black partners accepted a differential influence ($F = 9.937$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.002$). From Table 1 it is clear that subjects accepted more influence from white partners than from black partners. Hypothesis 1 is therefore accepted.

From the univariate F test no difference was found between the subjects' acceptance of influence from assertive and non-assertive partners ($F = 0.209$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.648$). Hypothesis 2 that subjects will

accept more influence from assertive partners than from non-assertive partners is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that subjects will accept more influence from partners who are white and assertive than from partners who are white and non-assertive or black and assertive. From the univariate F test there were no difference between the influence accepted from partners who were white and assertive and those that were white and non-assertive ($F = 0.139$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.709$). From Table 1 it is clear that more influence was accepted from partners who were white and assertive than from partners who were black and assertive. This was confirmed by the F test ($F = 6.634$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.010$). The combining hypothesis when processing multiple status characteristics, predicting that more influence will be accepted from partners with high status on both status characteristics than from partners with high status on one characteristic was therefore only partly supported.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that subjects will accept more influence from partners who are white and non-assertive or black and assertive than from partners who are black and non-assertive. From the univariate F test a significant difference was found between the influenced accepted from partners that were white and non-assertive and partners that were black and non-assertive ($F = 8.430$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.004$). From Table 1 it is clear that more influence was accepted from partners who were white and non-assertive than from partners who were black and non-assertive. However, from Table 1 it is clear there were no difference between the influence accepted from partners that were black and assertive than from those that were black and non-assertive. Therefore, the balancing hypothesis was also only partly supported.

There was no significant Race X Assertiveness X Time interaction; therefore the Race X Assertiveness interaction was not influenced by whether the data was collected in 1994 or 1998. However, there were significant Race X Time and Assertiveness X Time interactions.

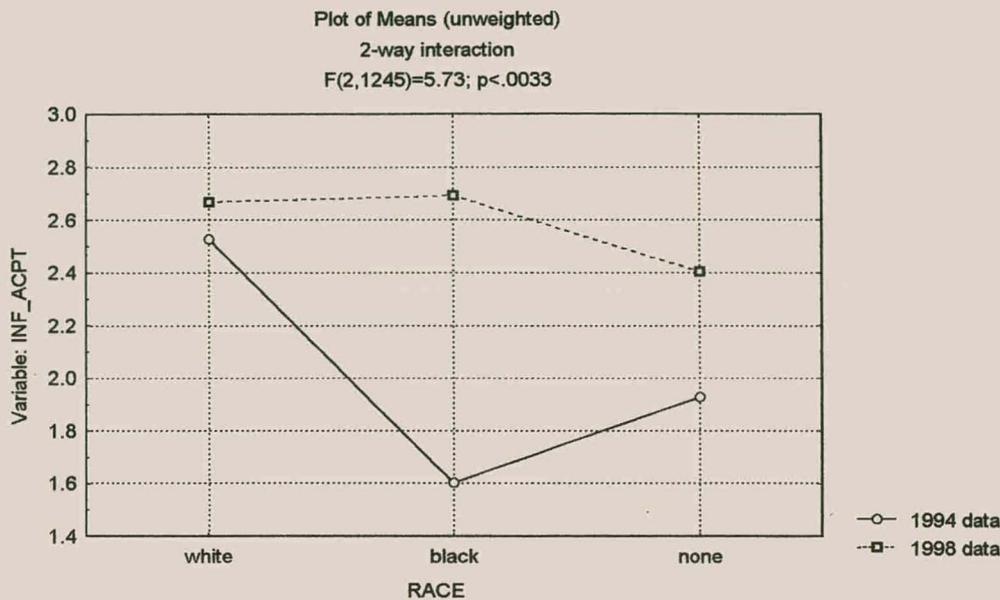


Figure 2. Means of influence acceptance for the race/ time interaction

Table 2.

Means of Influence Acceptance for Race and Time

RACE	TIME	INFL ACPT
White	1994	2.529041
White	1998	2.668162
Black	1994	1.603972
Black	1998	2.693331
None	1994	1.927747
None	1998	2.405517

With regard to the data collected in 1994, it appears that there was a significant difference between the acceptance of influence from white and black partners ($F = 16.095$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.000$). However, the difference was not significant in the data collected in 1998 ($F = 0.022$; $df = 1.1245$; $p = 0.881$). Therefore Hypothesis 5 was supported.

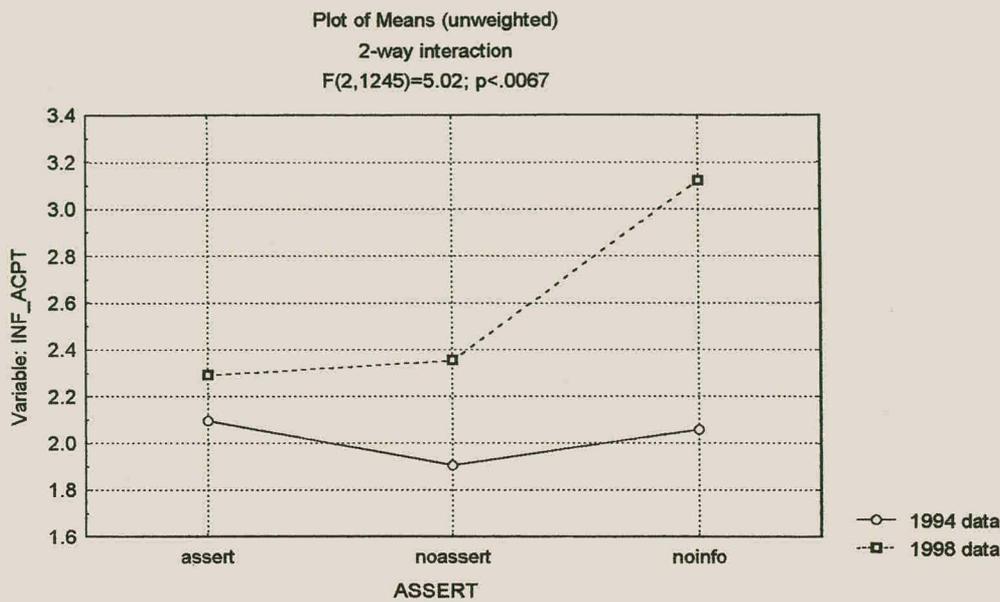


Figure 3. Means of influence acceptance for the assertiveness/ time interaction

With regard to the 1994 data it appears that there was no difference between the influence accepted from assertive and non-assertive partners ($F = 0.709; df = 1.1245; p = 0.400$). The same was true for the data collected in 1998 ($F = 0.709; df = 1.1245; p = 0.400$). It is likely that the significant interaction was caused by the no information category.

Table 3.

Means of Influence Acceptance for Assertiveness and Time

ASSERT	TIME	INFL ACPT
Assert	1994	2.096759
Assert	1998	2.291174
Non-assert	1994	1.905389
Non-assert	1998	2.354529
No info	1994	2.058611
No info	1998	3.121308

The acceptance of influence from simulated partners under the condition of no information regarding assertiveness was significantly higher in 1998 than 1994. It is difficult to explain this phenomenon and it needs further investigation in future research.

Subjects accepted more influence from responses that were more different from their own response than from responses that were less different from their own responses (Table 4; Figure 2).

Table 4.

Means on Influence Acceptance for the Three Levels of Response Differentiation

RESPONSE DIFFERENCE	INFL ACPT
3	1.000962
7	2.251690
11	3.661234

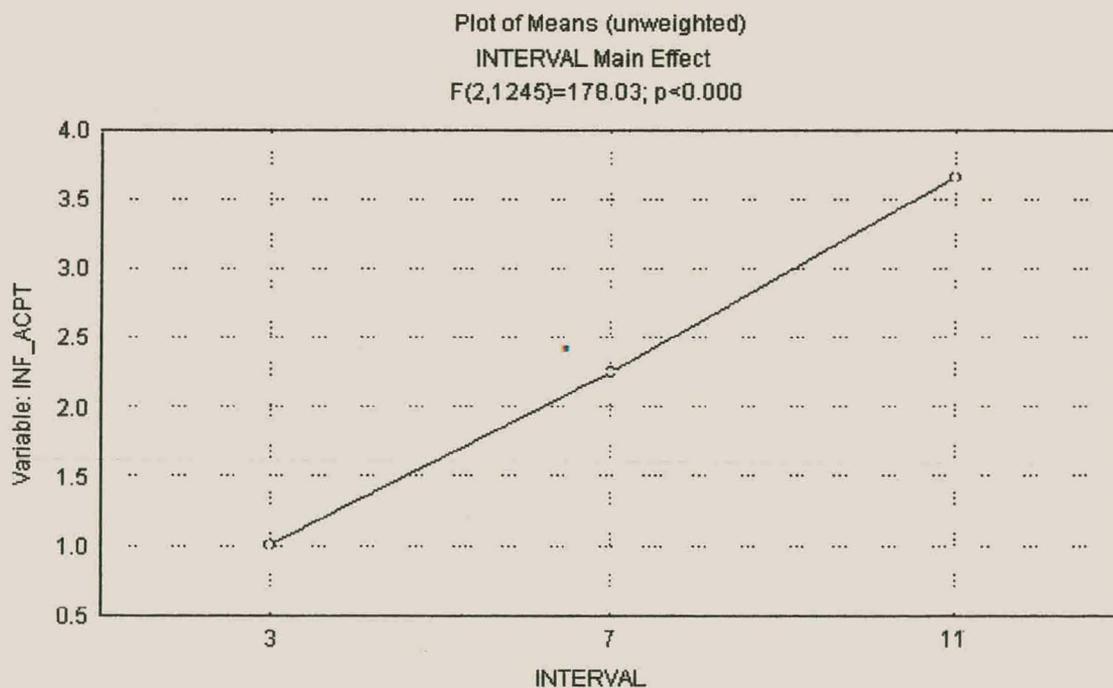


Figure 4. Means of influence acceptance for the three levels of Response Differentiation

Sheffe's test indicated that all three means were statistically different from each other, that is changes were the greatest when the interval was 11 (the largest), followed by 7 and the least influence was accepted when the interval was 3 (the smallest). This is as expected and Hypothesis 6 was therefore supported.

9.3 Influence Exertion

The purpose of the second set of analyses was to investigate the interaction between Influence Exertion as the dependant variable and Race, Assertiveness and Time as independent variables. In order to test the relevant hypotheses, it was decided to use the Analysis of Variance statistical procedure. First an investigation was undertaken to assess whether the assumptions of (i) normality of the dependent variable and (ii) homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices have been met. The dependant variable, Influence Exertion, was measured on an interval scale.

A test of normality revealed that the dependant variable is not normally distributed ($X^2 = 98.425$; $df = 25$; $p = 0.000$). The F test is fairly robust so this deviation from normality is probably not too serious (Lindman, 1974). Bartlett's X^2 test for homogeneity of variances was undertaken. This indicated that the variance-covariance matrices were homogeneous ($X^2 = 10.594$; $df = 17$; $p = 0.877$). The same finding was noted using Levene's test ($F = 0.701$; $df = 17.415$; $p = 0.802$).

A three way ANOVA was undertaken to investigate the interaction between Influence Exertion (the dependant variable) and the following independent variables: Race, Assertiveness and Time. The only significant interaction was the two way Race X Time interaction ($F = 3.541$; $df = 2.415$; $p = 0.0298$).

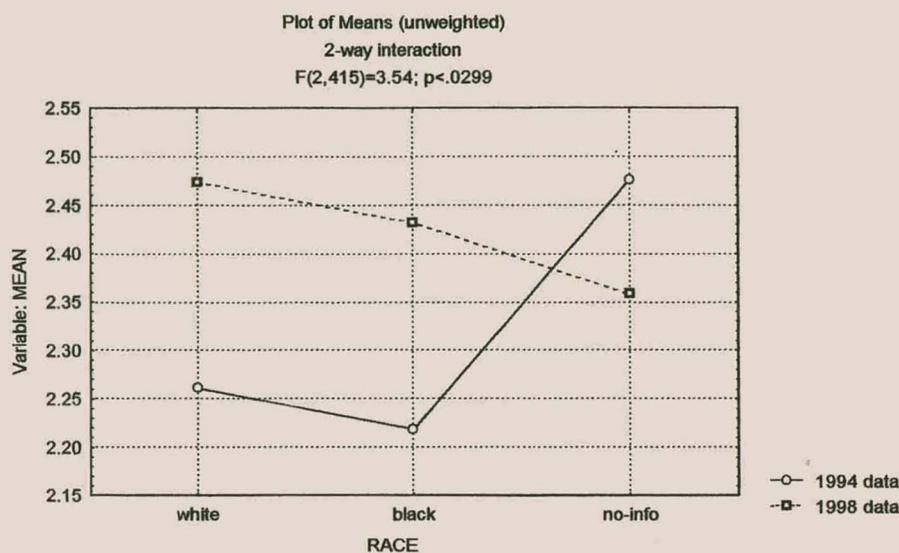


Figure 5. Means of influence exertion for the race and time interaction

The means on Influence Exertion for the Race and Time interaction are presented in Figure 5 for further investigation.

Table 5.

Means on Influence Exertion for Race and Time Interaction

RACE	TIME	INFL EXERT
White	1994	2.261216
White	1998	2.473422
Black	1994	2.218631
Black	1998	2.431944
No info	1994	2.475926
No info	1998	2.358333

The time taken to respond in the influence exertion task was influenced by the combination of the race of the partner and the time when the data was collected. This interaction was strongly influenced by the strong effect of the no information on race condition in the 1994 data. It is difficult to explain the interaction from the available theoretical framework.

The fact that the Race and Assertiveness interaction was not significant ($F = 0.453$; $df = 4.415$; $p = 0.770$) indicates that the time taken to respond was not influenced by the race and assertiveness of the partner.

A contrast analysis was undertaken to investigate hypothesis 7 that subjects will exert more influence on black partners than on white partners. From the univariate F test no difference was found between the influence exerted on black or white partners ($F = 0.339$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.561$). This is not surprising given the non-significant Race main effect in the ANOVA analysis. Therefore hypothesis 7 could be rejected. As was indicated, there was a significant Race and Time interaction.

Influence exertion was also not influenced by the perceived assertiveness of the partner ($F = 0.146$; $df = 2.415$; $p = 0.864$). Hypothesis 8 that subjects will exert more influence on non-assertive partners than on assertive partners, could therefore also be rejected. There was also no support for hypotheses 9 to 10 referring to the combining or balancing hypotheses when processing multiple status characteristics.

With regard to Hypothesis 12 that subjects will exert more influence on black partners in 1994 than in 1998, the significant Race and Time interaction was already mentioned.

With regard to the 1994 data it appears that there was no significant difference between the influence exertion for situations involving white and black partners ($F = 0.130$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.719$). A difference was however noted if no information on race was available ($F = 5.429$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.020$). Subjects took significantly longer to respond when no information about race was provided. With regard to the 1998 data it appears that there was also no significant difference between influence exertion for situations involving white and black partners ($F = 0.250$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.617$). There was also no difference between the influence exertion in cases where the race was known against when it was not known ($F = 1.727$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.189$) or when the race of the partner was white compared to when it was black or the race was unknown ($F = 1.195$; $df = 1.415$; $p = 0.275$).

Although there were significant differences between the data collected in 1994 and 1998, the differences were not as predicted by hypothesis 12, and it could not be supported.

10. DISCUSSION

The significant results that supported certain hypotheses will be discussed under specific headings. As in Dornig (1995), the subjects in this study were from two high status groups (high on ethnicity and assertiveness). It could thus be expected that the weakest effect on acceptance of influence, and the strongest on exertion of influence would emerge from this group.

10.1 Race and Passive influencing (Influence acceptance)

In many Western orientated societies, and as suggested by Expectation States Theory, Whites have a higher status than Blacks. They are then given and take more opportunities to perform, are evaluated as performing better and have more influence than Blacks (Rosenholts & Cohen, 1985). In this study race was found to have a significant effect on passive influencing or the acceptance of influence (Table 1; Figure 1). Subjects accepted more influence from white partners than from black partners. This result supports the available literature on Expectation States Theory that considers race to be a definite status characteristic.

10.2 Assertiveness and Passive influencing (Influence acceptance)

There was no significance found between assertiveness and influence acceptance, thus rejecting the hypothesis stating that subjects will accept more influence from assertive partners than from non-assertive partners (Table 1; Figure 1). Dornig (1995) was of opinion that the operationalisation of assertiveness that was used in this study should be investigated. Coetzee (1999) at the University of Stellenbosch is currently doing this investigation, but the results are not available yet. The results of the checks on the manipulation demonstrate that the operationalisation was reasonably successful. It could therefore also be argued that the subjects did not consider assertiveness to be relevant to the performance in the task at hand. The subjects also considered themselves to be quite assertive.

10.3 Active influencing (Influence exertion)

Both hypothesis concerning active influencing or influence exertion were not statistically significant, thus rejecting the hypothesis stating subjects will exert more influence on low status ethnicity and assertiveness partners than on high status ethnicity and assertive partners. It might be argued that the experimental task was not a sensitive measure of the variable influence exertion.

10.4 The Processing of Multiple Status Characteristics

Both the combining and the balancing hypotheses received partial support. Neither of the two explanations was clearly superior to the other. Partial evidence was found for the existence of a combining effect occurring, meaning that more influence was accepted from partners with high status on both ethnicity and assertiveness (white and assertive), than from partners with high status on either ethnicity or assertiveness (black and assertive). (Table 1; Figure 1). However, no difference in terms of a combining effect was found between influence provided by partners who were white and assertive and those who were white and non-assertive (Table 1; Figure 1). The experimental design was dominated by the race variable in comparison to the assertiveness variable. This makes it very difficult to demonstrated clear combining or balancing effects.

10.5 Demeanor as an Expectation State

Subjects accepted more influence from responses that were more different from their own response than from responses that were less different from their own responses (Table 4; Figure 4).

According to Dorning (1995), a greater difference in the response of a partner can be regarded as a demeanour stimulus, more than just a status characteristic. The subjects in the present study were significantly influenced by different levels or strength in the behaviour of their partners. It seemed very likely that demeanour forms an integral part of social influence and change.

10.6 Comparison of 1994 and 1998 results

Findings suggested that more influence were accepted from white partners than from black partners in 1994, thus supporting the hypothesis that subjects will accept less influence from high status ethnicity partners (white) in 1998 than in 1994 (Table 2; Figure 2). It is quite possible that the results obtained in this experimental study reflect a broad societal change in the status of black persons relative to white persons in South Africa. This societal change can be attributed to the democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, which heralded a period of major social transformation, after which the perceptions of whites toward blacks have gradually become less stereotyped. With regard to the 1994 data it appears that there was no difference between influence acceptance (passive influencing) for situations involving assertive and non-assertive partners. However, in instances where no information was given regarding race or assertiveness, more influence was accepted in 1998 than in 1994 (Table 3; Figure 3; Figure 5). This finding is difficult to

explain and could be researched further in future. Further investigations might demonstrate that the cognitive strategies that become activated when a person interacts with a definite partner, are more complex than simply accepting and exerting influence.

11. CONCLUSION

In this study the effects of race and assertiveness on active and passive influencing were investigated within the framework of Expectation States Theory. The present study was done four years after a similar study by Dornig (1995). Recommendations from her study motivated the present study.

As in Dornig (1995), race was operationalised by means of photographs of their presumed partners that were presented to subjects on a computer screen during the course of the experiment. The variable assertiveness was operationalised by means of self-statements from the Personal Assertion Analysis. These statements were familiar to the subjects as they completed the questionnaire before they participated in the experiment. Two hundred and eighty eight subjects - double the number of subjects used in Dornig (1995) were used in this experiment. The subjects were all White male students between the ages of 18 and 28, who had all scored assertive on the questionnaire presented to them. Subjects participated in two tasks in the experiment. Part one represented the acceptance of influence task or passive influencing. Part two represented the exertion of influence task or active influencing. All the subjects worked with a partner. The subjects obtained information about their partners' race and assertiveness according to the different experimental conditions. Through this fictitious person the subjects response to race and assertiveness of their partner could be assessed (Dornig, 1995).

The acceptance of influence task included the following sequence of events: Once a subject had obtained (or had not obtained) information about his partner's race and assertiveness, the partner was informed that the experiment would be performed to assess a new task called "contrast-sensitivity". In this task the subject would have to estimate the number of blocks on a screen. The subject would then give his estimate and his partner would also give his answer. The subject was then given the opportunity to change his answer and give a final answer. The partner's response always randomly differed from the subjects by three, seven or eleven. The degree of influence-acceptance could be derived from the difference between the subject's first and final answer (Dornig, 1995).

In the exertion of influence task subjects were once again presented with the different conditions of race and assertiveness of their partner. Once again the subject had to estimate the number of blocks on a screen. In this task, however, the subject was told that in order to give the team answer the subject had to answer as

fast as possible. The average time taken by the subject indicated the amount of influence he was willing to exert on his partner. This constituted the active influencing task (Dorning, 1995).

The following results were obtained in the study:

- a) Race had a significant effect on passive influencing.
- b) Assertiveness did not have a significant effect on passive influencing.
- c) Race and assertiveness did not have a significant effect on active influencing or influence exertion.
- d) Evidence was found for the existence of a balancing effect occurring and partial evidence was found for the existence of a combining effect occurring when processing multiple status characteristics.
- e) Subjects in the experiment allowed themselves to be influenced significantly more by responses that differed more from their own.
- f) Subjects accepted more influence from black partners in 1998 than in 1994.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) In the exertion of influence task a more sophisticated technique could be used to measure time. The four-second latency period needs revision to provide for more variance in the responses of the subjects. This would allow for split seconds to be measured.
- b) In the acceptance of influence task a significant difference with respect to the greater response difference was found. This suggests that the differences of three, seven and eleven could be reevaluated.
- c) Between ten and 20% of the subjects did not identify the status manipulation of assertiveness correctly. It would be worthwhile to omit these subjects from the statistical analysis for the main effects..

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APPENDIX A Checks on the Manipulation

1. Is your partner black or white?

RACE	WHITE	BLACK	ROW TOTALS
White	94	3	97
Column %	50.00%	3.00%	
Row %	96.91%	3.09%	
Total %	32.64%	1.04%	33.68%
Black	15	80	95
Column %	7.98%	80.00%	
Row %	15.79%	84.21%	
Total %	5.21%	27.78%	32.99%
No-info	79	17	96
Column %	42.02%	17.00%	
Row %	82.29%	17.71%	
Total %	27.43%	5.90%	33.33%
All Groups	188	100	288
Total %	65.28%	34.72%	

2. Is your partner domineering or passive?

ASSERTIVE	DOMINEERING	PASSIVE	ROW TOTALS
Assertive	77	19	96
Column %	61.60%	11.66%	
Row %	80.21%	19.79%	
Total %	26.74%	6.60%	33.33%
Non-assertive	10	86	96
Column %	8.00%	52.76%	
Row %	10.42%	89.58%	
Total %	3.47%	29.86%	33.33%
No-info	38	58	96
Column %	30.40%	35.58%	
Row %	39.58%	60.42%	
Total %	13.19%	20.14%	33.33%
All Groups	125	163	288
Total %	43.40%	56.60%	