

THE SA
RECONCILIATION BAROMETER
-TRACKING SOCIO-POLITICAL TRENDS-



The State of Reconciliation: Report of the Third Round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey

December 2004

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1. Introduction

Questions about how the reconciliation process is doing are frequently asked by South Africans and those interested in the South Africans situation.

These questions include: Has South Africa developed an enduring human right's culture? Is sufficient dialogue transpiring? Are South Africans still imprisoned by their past? What are the essential obstacles and opportunities for reconciliation? Are South Africans learning to live together?

The *SA Reconciliation Barometer*, which completed its third consecutive national public opinion survey in May this year, provides one of the few systematic and comprehensive empirical platforms from which to draw some answers to these questions.

Whilst some national records can provide some insight into the state of reconciliation, whether it be through indicators of the relative distribution of economic gains, the form of the political system or election outcomes, reconciliation cannot be monitored without understanding people's perceptions, views and values in relation to changes in their environment. Speaking about the factors that can affect the reconciliation process, Bloomfield argues that "this does not only relate to what happened in the past (the history); equally important are people's perceptions of what happened in the past (the mythology)".¹

This report, which gives a longitudinal overview of all three rounds of the bi-annual national survey, describes how South Africans at all levels of society react towards one another and the changing political and economic landscape. The Barometer monitors the social mood of the nation as it evaluates the intensifying impact of realities such as poverty, HIV/Aids and unemployment on South Africa's fragile democracy.

2. Approach

When embarking on the task of 'measuring' a process that is as subjective and contested as reconciliation, certain inherent shortcomings have to be accepted. These range from the need to oversimplify certain dimensions of the reconciliation process for the sake of measurability, to having to focus on only a select few facets of this complex and multi-dimensional concept.

The need to conduct rigorous empirical research on the progression of the national reconciliation process exists and, in fact, is greater than the inherent difficulties in embarking this task. But, as is the case with all exploratory research (whether of a quantitative or qualitative nature), a cautionary approach should be employed. The obvious danger of excessive reductionism in translating such a complex process in relation to a handful of critical indicators is recognized. This research by no means asserts that reconciliation is solely composed of these critical dimensions and is no bigger than the sum of its parts. On the contrary, this research recognizes the definitional and contextual ambiguity of the process. It is a first attempt at some necessary comparable quantification of the national reconciliation process.

Additionally it is important to bear in mind that a difference in results between three consecutive public opinion surveys does not necessarily represent a trend. Even in cases where change has

¹ Bloomfield, D (2003) "The Context of Reconciliation" in Bloomfield, D, Barnes, T and L. Huyse (eds) (2003) *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: Sweden. Pp. 40.

been tremendous, three measurements – particularly across quite a short time period - do not provide sufficient evidence to assume the presence of a trend. Such changes should be treated as fluctuations; the absence or presence of trends will be confirmed by data emanating from consequent rounds of the survey.

3. Survey Design

The analysis that follows is based on the results from three national surveys conducted in March-April 2003, October-November 2003 and April-May 2004. In all three the exact same sampling methodology, questionnaires and interviewing techniques were used, allowing for maximum comparability.

Markinor undertook the fieldwork for the surveys and the information was obtained by adding a substantial set of questions to Markinor's M-Bus (an omnibus survey conducted on a nationally representative sample of South Africans aimed at measuring socio-political trends). Face-to-face interviews were done with socially and racially representative samples of 3 498, 3 499, 3 498 South Africans respectively. The sample for all three was representative of the entire South African population, 16 years and older, within a 2.3% margin of error.

The survey instrument was first prepared in English and then translated into Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, North Sotho, South Sotho and Setswana. As a result, respondents were interviewed in the language of their choice. No respondent was interviewed by an interviewer belonging to a different racial group than the one they belonged to.

A formal pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted on a convenient sample of seventy-five South Africans. Soft quotas were utilised to create a sample that closely resembles the probable proportions of these characteristics in the population as a whole. Thirty-five of the interviews were conducted in the Western Cape, whilst forty occurred in Gauteng, with at least 10 interviews conducted in each of the 7 official survey languages. In light of the pre-test outcome and interviewer feedback, a number of questions were re-worded, others were completely omitted and the order of some questions was changed.

To allow for statistical analysis of interracial differences, four distinct sub-samples, (one for each race group), were drawn by applying multistage stratification procedures. The numbers of completed interviews for Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians were always approximately 2000, 938, 391, and 170 respectively. The samples covered both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, and respondents included people residing in informal settlements, deep rural areas, and those living in multi-member households.

The black sample was created through a geographical area-probability sampling procedure. The coloured, white and indian samples were created through area-stratified sampling procedures according to region, town, suburb and community size, with randomly selected sampling points. The smaller size of the white, coloured and indian samples demanded that the samples at each sampling point be quota controlled for gender, age and working status.

The accuracy of approximately 10% of all interviews was verified through a personal backcheck, whilst about 20% of the remainder of completed interviews was checked telephonically during each of the rounds of the survey.

Some population groups were over-sampled to provide a large enough number of cases to allow for statistically significant results. Due to the fact that some population sub-samples are not selected proportional to their size in the greater South African population, it is necessary to weight the data after data entry to render it more representative of the population as a whole. The South African Advertising Research Foundations (SAARF) All Media Product Survey data was used to do this.

It should be noted that in making reference to South African racial sub-groups as black, white, indian and coloured, no approval of the apartheid-era classification system or its underlying theory of race is intended. The nature of present day South African society still bears the scars of its apartheid past, and, as such, substantial differences between the conditions and orientations of the four main racial groups often persist and need to be rigorously analysed.

When reading the analysed data outputs one should bear in mind that each of the data sets have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.3%. To ensure that all changes noted in this report are significant and not the result of some form of measurement error, a difference of 8% or greater has been identified as the cut-off point. Many social scientists only deem changes greater than 10% significant. This longitudinal survey has, however, been designed to reflect both short-term fluctuations and long-term trends and successive rounds of the surveys have a very short lapse time of only approximately six months, rendering the 8% cut-off acceptable.

4. Conceptual Clarity of Reconciliation

4.1. Meanings of Reconciliation

Reconciliation as a concept has no neat explication, no clearly defined definition and no undisputed meanings. One of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's primary architects, MP Johnny De Lange, once proclaimed that he had never met "two people with the same definition of reconciliation".²

The literature and academic debate on reconciliation in the South African context offers multiple definitions or paradigms of reconciliation, and many of these paradigms are not mutually exclusive. The following offers a brief description of the most commonly used meanings of the concept in South Africa.

The two most prominent meanings of reconciliation promoted in post-apartheid South Africa are those ascribing to the non-racial and multi-cultural schools of thought. The multicultural model is based on the notion that South Africa is composed of a conglomeration of different cultures and histories. As such, the reconciliation process seeks to bridge the past, whilst simultaneously bridging the divisions between different communities. The aim is to create a society where citizens and communities live together in a peaceful and tolerant manner, whilst respecting and even celebrating diversity.

The vision of the non-racial ideology entails "dissolving the racial identities arising from the policies of the past and implores the TRC [*and other such efforts*] to convert people...into non-racial citizens within a harmoniously integrated social setting".³ Theoretically this model of reconciliation speaks to disbanding pre-apartheid identities and re-constructing new, non-racial ones.

² Reported in Doxtader, E. (2002) "Is it 'Reconciliation' if we say it is? Discerning the Rhetorical Problem in the South African Transition." An unpublished paper. Pp. 2

³ Hamber, B. (2002) "Ere their story die: truth, justice and reconciliation in South Africa" in *Race & Class*. Vol. 44, Iss. 1, Pp. 66.

An additional model is the Human Rights model, which sets the bar far lower. Gerwel, a prominent proponent of this paradigm, argues that reconciliation requires “the institutionalisation of consensus seeking”.⁴ This model suggests that social interaction needs to be governed by the rule of law, largely to prevent the atrocities of the past from being repeated. It involves the creation of the so-called ‘minimally decent society’, where normative and legal boundaries control interaction and create the space for peaceful coexistence.

Whilst the path of the reconciliation process for the human rights paradigm moves from the macro to the micro, another model, the religious model, focuses on an approach that speaks about concentric circles of reconciliation, working from the individual to the societal level. Notions of truth and forgiveness are undeniably central to this model.

Another paradigm is that of *ubuntu*, which asserts that all community members share a common humanity, and by denying the common humanity of others, the community and its members are dehumanised.⁵ While there is some overlap between the religious and *ubuntu* paradigms, a great deal of emphasis in *ubuntu*, is placed on the inter-connectedness of individuals. The re-integration of perpetrators into the community is seen as an act that restores the entire community to peace.

In some ways the developmental paradigm of transformation is diametrically opposed to the more subjective approach to reconciliation promoted by the *ubuntu* and religious models for reconciliation. The developmental paradigm advocates the remedying of historically induced inequalities, whilst simultaneously advocating a strategy of cooperation for the social and economic development of the nation. This model sees the subjective restoration or reconciliation of relationships as following naturally (or, at minimum, more easily) from a restitution process. This model requires an acknowledgment of past injustice and the willingness to redress the broad-scale injustices that continue to skew advantages in present day South Africa.

The developmental paradigm is quite distinct from the transformation model and is potentially the most ambitious and far-reaching of all the paradigms. Advocates of this interpretation assert that reconciliation requires structural and systemic adjustments, which include institutionalising a new post-apartheid value system, structure and political culture, as well as wide-ranging reparations. This model advocates that reconciliation cannot “develop in a sustainable way if structural injustice in the political, legal and economic domains remain”.⁶ As such, this model prescribes that it is impossible to change the relationships in a post-conflict society if the material, structural and valuative conditions under which these relationships were created remain unchanged.⁷

4.2. Individual or Political Reconciliation?

Another critical distinction is important. Amongst others,⁸ Borer cautions about the lack of conceptual clarity between differing levels of reconciliation, encouraging a conceptual separation

⁴ Gerwel, J (2000) “Anticipating a Different Kind of Future” in Villa-Vicencio (ed)(2000) *Transcending a Century of Injustice*. The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation: Cape Town. Pp. 122.

⁵ Tutu, D. M. (1999) *No Future without Forgiveness*. Random House: New York.

⁶ Huyse, L. (2003) “The Process of Reconciliation” in Bloomfield, D, Barnes, T and Huyse, L. (eds) (2003) *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: Sweden. Pp. 21.

⁷ Esterhuysen, W (2000) “Truth as a trigger for transformation: from apartheid injustice to transformational justice” in Villa-Vicencio, C and Verwoerd, W. (eds) (2000) *Looking Back Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa*. University of Cape Town Press: Cape Town.

⁸ Hayner, P. B (2001) *Unspeakable Truths: Confronting State Terror and Atrocity*. Routledge: New York.. Pp. 155; Villa-Vicencio, C. (2003) “The Politics of Reconciliation.” Unpublished paper. Pp. 3.

between *interpersonal* reconciliation – between victims and perpetrators, for example- and *national* or *societal* reconciliation.⁹

According to Villa-Vicencio the critical distinction between political and individual reconciliation revolves around the fact that “political reconciliation can forego the psychological and moral challenges that many aggrieved individuals face, but often choose never to deal with in a thoroughgoing manner”.¹⁰ Political reconciliation provides the process through which to address and confront the issues that continue to impede sustainable peace. Bloomfield places this form of reconciliation at the heart of democratic politics.¹¹ Ultimately political reconciliation demands a more socio-economically just and equitable society, characterized by an enduring human rights culture, respect for the rule of law and trust in political institutions.

5. Unpacking Reconciliation

There is no way of directly measuring reconciliation. As a result the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* research works at two levels, the theoretical and empirical. The theoretical question of how the reconciliation process is unfolding will be inferred on the basis of the empirical evidence contained in the data gathered from the questionnaires. In order to measure South Africa’s progress along the path of reconciliation, this intangible concept was unpacked in relation to a number of critical indicators, each of which will be monitored and its progression regularly benchmarked.

Figure 1 depicts a tabular conceptual overview of the critical indicators. It is hypothesized that when the indicators strengthen or improve, reconciliation is likely to be advanced. The process of distilling a number of key indicators for reconciliation is a tricky undertaking. In this instance the decisions were made by means of a consultative process, and included an analysis of the results of an exploratory national survey conducted in late 2002; numerous critical discussions with academics, researchers, social theorists and practitioners working in the field and an extensive literature review. Some elements of each of the definitions discussed previously were included. The conceptual logic of the inclusion of each of the individual indicators will be expanded on in the relevant sections of the report.

Figure 1: Conceptual Overview of Reconciliation Indicators

| Hypotheses | Indicators |
|--|---|
| Human Security: If citizens do not feel threatened, they are more likely to be reconciled with each other and the larger system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Physical Security ➤ Expanded Economic Security¹² ➤ Cultural Security |
| Political Culture: If citizens view the Institutions, Structures and Values of the new system as legitimate and accountable, reconciliation is more likely to progress. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifiability of Extra-legal Action ➤ Legitimacy of Leadership ➤ Legitimacy of Parliament ➤ Respect for the Rule of Law |
| Cross-cutting Political Relationships: If | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commitment to National Unity |

⁹ Borer, T.A. (2001) “Reconciliation in South Africa. Defining Success.” *Kroc Institute Occasional Paper* 20:OP:1. March 2001.Pp. 9.

¹⁰ Villa-Vicencio, C. (2003) “The Politics of Reconciliation.” Unpublished paper. Pp. 3.

¹¹ Bloomfield, D (2003) “Reconciliation: An Introduction” in Bloomfield, D, Barnes, T and Huyse, L. (eds) (2003) *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: Sweden. Pp. 11.

¹² The April/May 2004 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey included a new dimension intended to provide more in-depth data on South African’s views of their economic circumstances.

| | |
|--|---|
| citizens are able to form working political relationships that cross divisions, reconciliation is more likely to advance. | ➤ Commitment to multi-racial Political Parties |
| Dialogue: If citizens are committed to deep dialogue, reconciliation is more likely to be advanced. | ➤ Commitment to more dialogue |
| Historical Confrontation: If citizens are able to confront and address issues from the past, they are more likely to be able to move forward and be reconciled. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acknowledgement of Injustice of Apartheid ➤ Forgiveness ➤ Reduced levels of Vengeance |
| Race Relations: If citizens of different races hold fewer negative perceptions of each other, they are more likely to form workable relationships that will advance reconciliation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cross-racial Contact ➤ Cross-racial Perceptions ➤ Cross-racial Social Distance |

The April/May 2004 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey included a new dimension of research that will become a standard feature of all consequent rounds of the survey. Although still quite recent and not yet very expansive, there has been an increase in economic research focusing more on people's subjective evaluations of their economic circumstances. This element has been touched upon briefly, but inadequately, in previous rounds of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey by the questions asking respondents whether they expected their economic situation in the future to have improved, deteriorated or to have remained the same as now.

This new addition to the survey instrument is intended to provide more in-depth data on South African's views of their economic circumstances, and includes questions of whether South Africans feel economically threatened, whether they think their welfare is better than that of their parents and whether they believe the government has improved their lot in life?

Both the quantitative and more qualitative research of the Institute have served to once again emphasise the salience of the material side of reconciliation, and in particular there is a need to understand whether South Africa's poor and unemployed think that things will get better, whether they believe that the government will deliver some salvation from poverty or whether they have given up hope all together. From now on the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* can capture some of these views, beliefs and expectations of South Africans of their past, present and future economic circumstances.

6. Human Security

The past decade has witnessed the expansion of the concept of security to encompass the notion of human security. According to the Commission on Human Security *Human Security Now* Report, it involves "creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity".¹³ The exact nature of the link between human security and reconciliation still requires a great deal of research, whilst the chain of causality is yet to be empirically proven. There is, however, a great deal of anecdotal hypothesising that a threat to human security is counterproductive for reconciliation in that it retards the capacity of societies to re-integrate in a sustainable manner.

¹³ Ogata, S. and Sen, A. (2003) *Human Security Now*. Report of the Commission on Human Security. New York.

Following this chain of argument, a perceived absence of sufficient human security can be destructive for reconciliation at a number of levels. People who perceive their short- or long- term survival, dignity or livelihood to be threatened, are more likely to be distrustful or suspicious of others. Furthermore, they are more likely to develop hostility towards other groups suspected of being the cause of this threat.

Some conflict mediators, most notably Kraybill, also argue that post-conflict societies need a socially and physically safe environment for people, whether they are a beneficiary, victim, perpetrator or otherwise, to redefine themselves and their future path, before they are ready to attempt to reconcile with others.¹⁴ Thus although no hard empirical proof exists, anecdotal analysis suggests that a perceived threat to human security creates a setting in which reconciliation is less likely to progress.

The *SA Reconciliation Barometer* instrument included a number of items to test this hypothesis. Three specific threats to human security have been selected, the first two respectively representing concerns for economic survival (in light of increasing poverty and unemployment) and personal safety (particularly in light of high levels of crime and a traumatic history of extensive political violence). The third dimension concerns perceptions of increasing threats to minority groups' cultural, linguistic and religious survival.

These concerns are presumably only important to specific groups of South Africans, but the recent alleged actions of the *Boeremag* (and their alleged reasons for perpetrating these crimes) are just some examples that demonstrate how important this threat is to specific groups of South Africans. This builds a strong case to monitor such trends on the grounds that these extremist groups appear to have the capacity to cause considerable damage to the national reconciliation process.¹⁵

6.1. Physical Threat

Alongside the threat of a new groundswell of old violent conflicts, transitional and young post-transitional societies are also at risk of falling prey to new forms of violence that also undermine and weaken efforts to stabilize society. The fact that reconciliation can only occur when 'the shooting stops' is obvious, but less obvious and more complicated are the host of other threats and challenges to citizen's security that also have a bearing on reconciliation.

Even a casual inspection of any national Newspaper will reveal that South Africans feel threatened, some by high crime levels, others by escalating levels of domestic violence. A recent Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University national poll reveals that more than four in ten South Africans (43%) say crime is one of the most important problems for the government to address. Additionally, a massive 81% of South Africans thought crime is a serious threat to democracy.¹⁶

According to the Institute's manual entitled *Learning to Live Together*, there are at least five ways in which crime obstructs reconciliation. It "undermines public trust in nation-building, it creates more victims and more trauma, it reinforces apartheid segregation and socio-economic inequality, it

¹⁴ Krog, A (1998) "South Africa: On the Tortured Road to Reconciliation" in the *Cape Argus*, 22 July 2003.

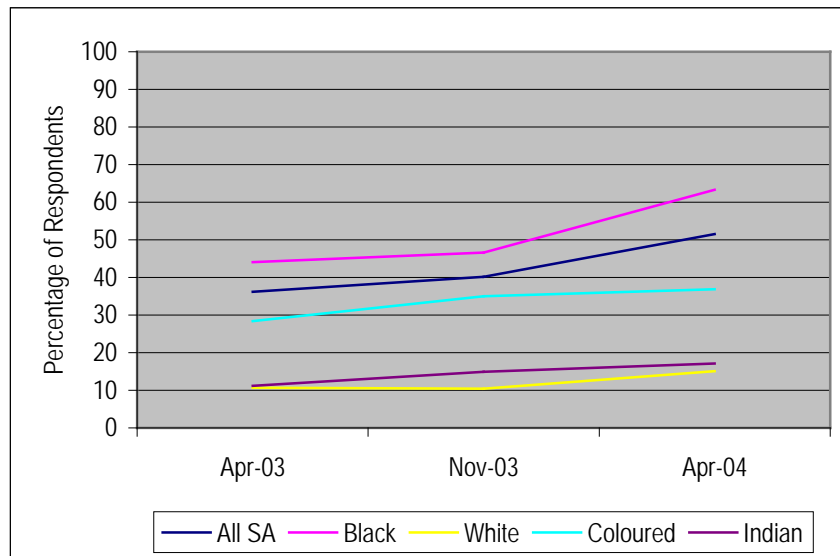
¹⁵ Schoenteich, M. and Boshoff, H. (2003) "Volk, Faith and Fatherland". Institute for Security Studies Monograph No. 81. March 2003. Pp. 56.

¹⁶ *Survey of South Africans at Ten Years of Democracy*. (2004) Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University. March 2004.

entrenches racial prejudice and it undermines social stability and tolerance".¹⁷ Simpson speaks of the new patterns of violent crime in South Africa as "new vehicles for re-racialising and physically and emotionally re-dividing the 'new' South Africa". According to him crime can also serve as a vehicle for popular outrage, which also hinders social stability and the reconciliation process.¹⁸

The general perception that current levels of physical threat are high is likely to be detrimental to reconciliation. But people may be willing to bear temporary hardship if they expect future improvements. Therefore it is pivotal to monitor whether South Africans expect a deterioration or improvement in their personal and general levels of safety and security.

Figure 2: Expectations of Improvements in General Levels of Safety (by race).



Question asked: *How do you think the general level of safety of South Africans will change during the next twelve months?* (Percentage who thought it would get better)

In the case of both questions there was a significant change for South Africans as a whole between April 2003 and April 2004. For both questions there was a slight, but statistically insignificant, increase in the portion who thought things were going to get better during the course of last year, but the period between November 2003 and April 2004 revealed a significant upswing in optimism about safety levels in the country.

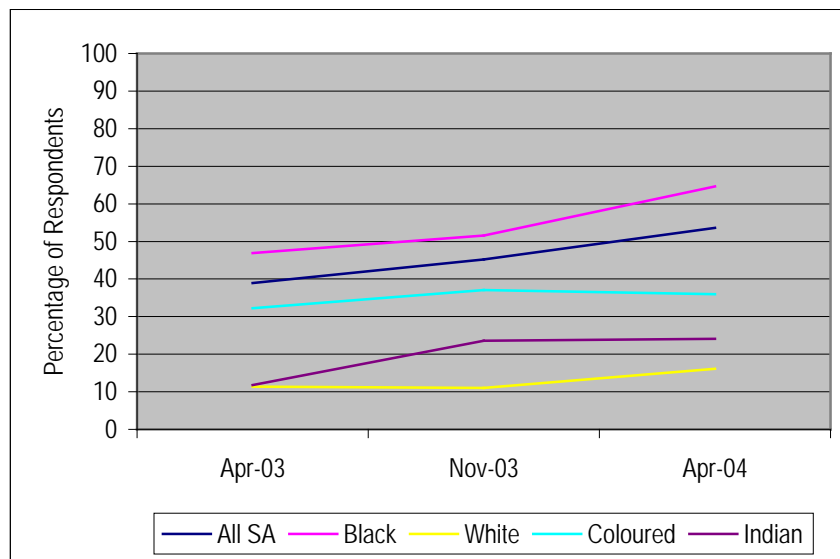
There was no statistically significant difference between views on the general levels of safety, and the specific levels of safety of 'people like you', with 52% of South Africans expecting an improvement in general levels of safety and 54% expecting an improvement in the level of safety of people like themselves.

Whilst the differences between the race groups continue to remain large, this upswing in optimism is visible amongst all racial groups, albeit to varying degrees and the shifts are not statistically significant in all cases.

¹⁷ Du Toit, F (ed) (2003) *Learning to Live Together: Practices of Social Reconciliation*. Rondebosch: The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Pp. 119.

¹⁸ Simpson, G (2002) "Uncivil Society": Challenges for reconciliation and justice in South Africa" Paper presented at the Stockholm International Forum Conference on Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in Stockholm, Sweden, 23 – 24 April 2002.

Figure 3: Expectations of Improvements in Personal Safety (by race)



Question asked: *How do you think the personal safety of people like you will change during the next two years?*
 (Percentage who thought it would get better)

The disaggregated data reveals that over and above whites being the only group not reflecting a statistically significant upswing,¹⁹ they also have the smallest proportion of optimists. Indian South Africans, on the other hand, started at a similar level in April 2003, but showed a significant increase of more than 12% in the percentage expecting some improvement in the safety of people like themselves. The data on general levels of safety did not reveal any such significant change.

The far greater extent of pessimism amongst whites does not bode well for reconciliation. Possible repercussions of this include increasing isolation and withdrawal from the larger society, often through the building of higher walls, electric fences and lately even the booming-off of whole suburbs. Another frequent response is emigration. It is possible that predominantly white residents of the suburbs may react to crime by “seeking to insulate themselves physically from the mainly black poor who are seen as its perpetrators. That would entrench a form of social distance which will impede attempts to create a common South African loyalty”.²⁰

Amongst coloured South Africans there was a significant increase of 9% in the portion who thought general safety levels were going to improve, whilst the portion of optimists about the safety levels of ‘people like you’ ended up at more or less the high levels of optimism as in April 2003. Black South Africans, on the other hand, showed a marked increase in the portion expecting an improvement in both instances. There was a 17% increase in the portion thinking the personal level of safety of people like themselves was going to improve, and a 19% increase in those who thought general levels of safety were set to improve.

On the whole, the data fortunately do not point to any significant national increase in fear for future personal security. In fact, if the thus far positive fluctuation concretises into a positive trend, this improvement may have a range of positive spin offs for the levels of confidence in the criminal justice system and, by association, the government and the order it creates. This, in turn, could

¹⁹ For safety levels of ‘people like you’ there was a 5% increase in optimists and for general levels of safety a 4% increase.

²⁰ Shaw, M, (1997) “South Africa; Crime in Transition”. Institute for Security Studies Occasional Paper No 17. March 1997

have a positive influence on levels of public participation, emigration rates, as well as discouraging increased capital flight and the brain drain.

6.2. Economic Threat

The changes in South Africa's economic policies over the past decade have brought with it a number of improvements in the performance of the national economy. The relative stability of the country's economy amidst global volatility, together with the strengthening of South Africa's *Rand* have featured positively, whilst South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown steadily since 1999. The government's synthesis report on the implementation of its programmes *Towards a Ten Year Review* cites an increase in expenditure on social grants to the tune of 24.8 billion between 1994 and 2003, with the number of beneficiaries having grown from 2.6 million to 6.8 million.²¹ Overall it would appear that macro-economic stability and some economic growth has been attained, whilst the state-sponsored welfare net has expanded substantially.

However, a comparison of the 1996 and 2001 censuses in the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation's Transformation Audit 2004, aptly titled *Taking Power in the Economy*, reveals that although access to basic services has improved, income poverty and income inequality increased for the population as a whole over this period. This research, based on a comparative analysis of the recently released 10% micro-samples of the 1996 and 2001 censuses by Economists Murray Leibbrandt, Laura Poswell and others, suggests that despite the positive impact on well-being of changes in the economy and in service delivery, the financial benefits of the past decade's economic reform have been limited for many of the country's poor.

At the same time, the Transformation Audit shows that despite a return to economic growth, there is evidence that formal sector employment continued its decrease from its 1995 level in the last years of the 20th century. Fortunately it seemed to have reached its low-point in 2000, with the number of formal sector workers rising again in 2001. Since the last census both formal and informal sector employment levels have risen, which may bode well for poverty alleviation, but so has unemployment, driven by a rapid growth in the labour force.

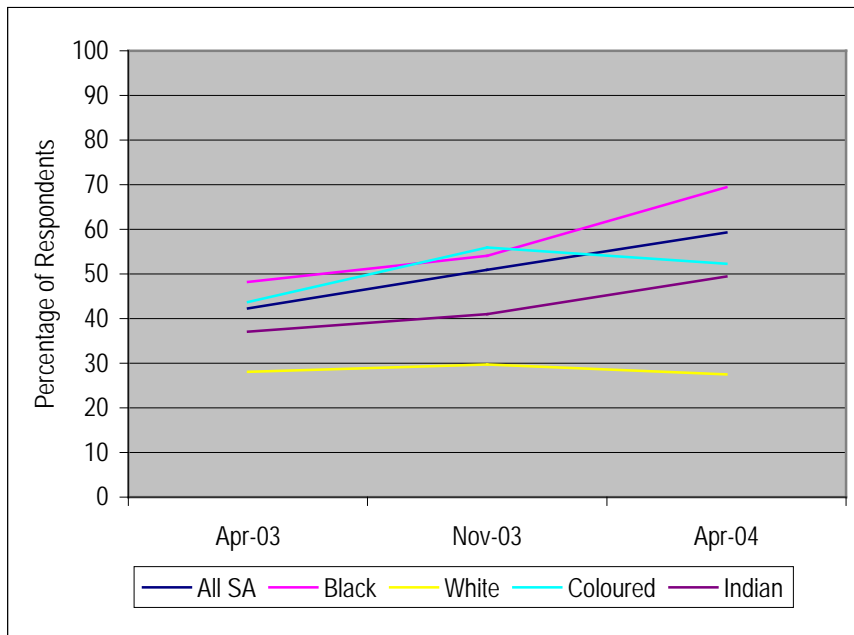
Increasingly South Africans must be feeling the effect of rising unemployment levels. Despite this trend of rising unemployment and poverty levels, South Africans appear more confident about their economic security than about their physical security.

6.2.1 Economic Expectations

Sixty percent of the South African population thought the economic situation in the country was going to improve, - up from 42% in April of 2003. This increase in South Africans expecting the country's general economic circumstances to get better is clearly visible amongst black South Africans, 69% of whom expect an improvement. This represents a 19% increase since April 2003. Indian South Africans also showed an upswing of 12%, with 49% expecting an improvement in April 2004.

²¹ *Towards a Ten Year review: Synthesis Report on Implementation of Government Programmes.*(2003) Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services (PCAS), The Presidency. October 2003.

Figure 4: Expectation of Improvements in general economic situation (by race).

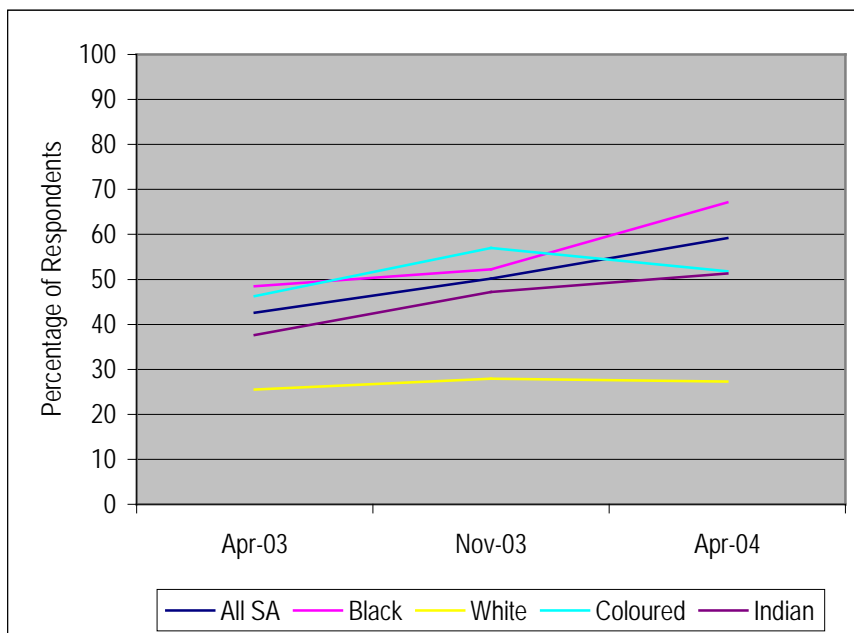


Question asked: *How do you think the economic situation in South Africa will change during the next twelve months?*
(Percentage who thought it would get better)

Whites do not show any significant increase in optimism, and remain the least optimistic of all four groups, with only about 30% believing the economy's prospects have improved.

Coloured South Africans reveal an interesting pattern in that there was a statistically significant upswing in optimism during the course of last year, but between November of 2003 and April of 2004 there was no change. All the other groups showed an incremental increase in optimism between the three consecutive rounds of surveys.

Figure 5: Expectation of Improvement in personal economic situation (by race).



Question asked: *How do you think the economic situation of people like you will change during the next two years?*
(Percentage who thought it would get better)

In terms of their expectations for their personal economic and financial security, levels of optimism are the same as for those about the general economy, with 59% of the South African population expecting an improvement. This optimism amongst financially comfortable South Africans was potentially influenced by a changed view of the South African *Rand*. Amidst global economic volatility even 'stable' foreign currencies and foreign economies under performed and it became evident that the *Rand* can become a solid repository of value. Expectations of even more improvements were probably also linked to tax cuts and the numerous drops in interest rates that occurred during the course of 2003 and 2004.

Amongst middle-class and poorer South Africans this view may have been the result of a levelling out of inflation, which would have had a big effect on food prices in particular. It is also likely that an increase in the government's capacity to deliver its social grants, as well as the incremental increase in the age of children qualifying for the Child Grant, may have had a positive effect.

But, whether this optimism is pinned on desperate hope for a situation that 'can only get better', or whether this represents a realistic assessment of the economy is unclear. Be that as it may, the majority of South Africans are certainly not expecting an economic meltdown.

Once again, great differences in general levels of confidence between the racial groups exist. Again there are far fewer whites who expect things to improve, and the black sub-group has the largest number of optimists. As was the case with regard to the question on expectations about the general state of the economy, whites showed no significant change, and blacks showed the biggest change.

Some of this cynicism amongst white could be the result of whites, on average, evaluating their future economic welfare from a relatively high level of financial prosperity, and in the face of a policy direction that may appear to directly threaten their well-being. The fear of the potential impact of policies such as Affirmative Action, Employment Equity, Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Preferential Procurement, could explain some of this pessimism. A potential consequence of this threat for the country as a whole is the fact that white South Africans, many of whom still control a great deal of financial and human capital, emigrate for fear of their future economic well-being, taking with them the skills and resources needed for economic growth and development in the country.

The slightly higher pessimism amongst coloureds and indians compared to blacks (although still more than 20% lower than amongst whites), could speak to a by now often uttered mantra that during apartheid they were 'too black' and in the new South Africa they are 'too white', and are therefore always going to be economically disadvantaged.

Interestingly, indian South Africans end up having virtually the same proportion of optimists as coloured South Africans in April 2004, although in April 2003 the proportion amongst coloureds was 10% higher. This is the result of a number of divergent fluctuations in the coloured community over the past year and a half. During the course of 2003 there was a positive upswing in opinion, but between November 2003 and April 2004 there was a distinct, yet not statistically significant decrease in optimists of 5%. These fluctuations within the coloured community require further investigation, with particular focus on the perceived impact of various government policies designed to promote the well-being of historically disadvantaged individuals amongst coloureds.

Interesting racial differences aside, the data suggests a slight upward fluctuation in economic optimism, which can only bode well for reconciliation. Some social commentators argue that a

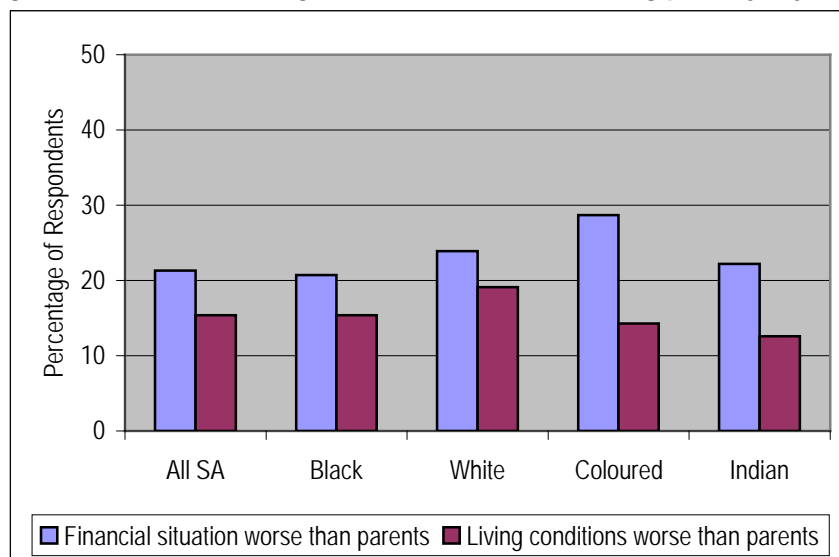
democratic, reconciling society, even in the modest sense of attaining sufficient consensus to allow for open decision-making, is a state which some suggest cannot survive in a grossly unequal society. Disillusionment with the fruits of democracy and reconciliation would certainly be detrimental to the reconciliation process, but a sense of optimism for future economic prosperity suggests citizens are still optimistic about reconciliation bringing long-term economic benefits

As mentioned previously, the April/May 2004 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey contains additional elements designed to provide more in-depth data on South African's views of their economic circumstances.

6.2.2. Income and Well-being Poverty

Taken as a whole, most South Africans believe both their financial and living conditions were better than those of their parents. Importantly though, just over one fifth of the sample asserted that they were financially worse off than their parents, and 15% thought their living conditions were inferior to those of the previous generation.

Figure 6: Perceived changes in income and well-being poverty (by race)

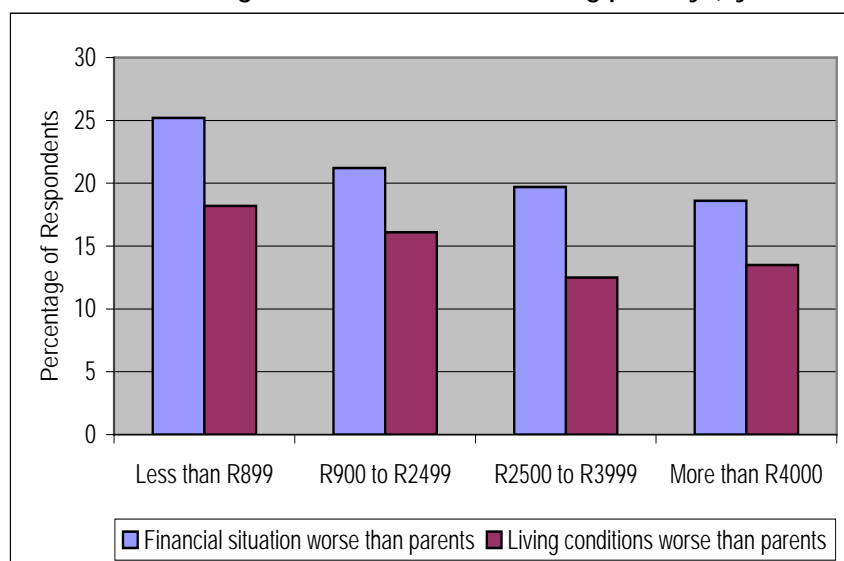


Questions asked: *How does your financial situation compare to that of your parents?* (Percentage who thought it was worse) and *How do your living conditions compare to those of your parents?* (Percentage who thought they were worse).

This holds true across all race groups. A comparison of the portions thinking their financial situations are worse than that of the previous generation reveals that this perception is most widely held amongst coloured South Africans, with the other three race groups on similar levels of about 20%. There are more white South Africans than any other group that perceive to have experienced an inter-generational deterioration in living standards.

Once broken down by actual income categories, the data show that the perception that financial and living conditions have worsened is disproportionately prominent amongst the poorest groups. Twenty five percent of respondents who have a total monthly household income of less than R899 feel they are financially worse off than their parents, whilst just over a fifth of those having a monthly household income of between R900 and R2499 also think so.

Figure 7: Perceived changes in income and well-being poverty (by income group)



Questions asked: *How does your financial situation compare to that of your parents?* (Percentage who thought it was worse) and *How do your living conditions compare to those of your parents?* (Percentage who thought they were worse).

This is a politically significant finding as it reveals that a quarter of poor South Africans think they are even worse off than their parents. Already, the past ten years of democracy have demanded exceptional patience from South Africa's poor, as for many of them the fruits of democracy only included civil liberties and freedoms and few financial gains. This data suggests that not only are they poor, but they actually perceive themselves to be worse off than the previous generation, raising questions about how much longer they can and will be patient if their lives, both financially and in terms of standard of living, do not show some improvement. The frustration that is fertilised by these perceptions may become difficult to control.

The data also allows for some analysis of which South Africans believe their financial and living circumstances to have deteriorated in the last twelve months. Again the large majority of South Africans do not believe themselves to be in a worse situation than a year ago, but again a small but significant portion of about 17% do think they have experienced some deterioration.

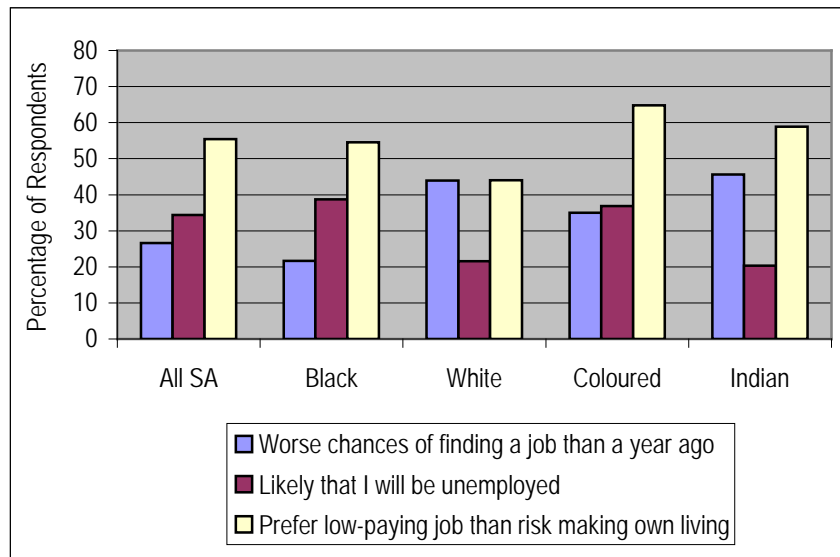
Once disaggregated by income categories, 21% of those with household earning less than R899 per month thought their financial situation had deteriorated over the last year, whilst 14% thought their standard of living had become worse. It would appear that this 14% have either not benefited from the advances in the delivery of essential services made by government, or do not feel that these are contributing to improved living conditions. The fact that 36% of this income category think their living conditions have improved, with 48% thinking it has stayed the same as a year ago, it would seem that the roll-out of services like running water, electricity, housing and refuse removal has been noticed and appears to be leading to improved living conditions. Thirty six percent of this income category also thought their financial situation had improved from a year ago, whilst 37% thought it had stayed the same.

6.2.3. Unemployment

During the Poverty Hearings that were convened by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in 1998 and attended by almost 10 000 South Africans, unemployment came out strongest as the biggest obstacle to escaping poverty. It would appear that in the minds of ordinary

South Africans little has changed – unemployment, even for those who presently find themselves with a job, is a great fear and a massive worry.

Figure 8: Views of the threat of unemployment (by race)



Questions asked: *How do the chances of you finding a job compare to what they were like 12 months ago?* (Percentage who thought their chances were worse) and *It is highly likely that I will be unemployed at some stage during the next year.* (Percentage in Agreement) and *It is better to have a low-paying full time job than it is to have to make your own living.* (Percentage in Agreement).

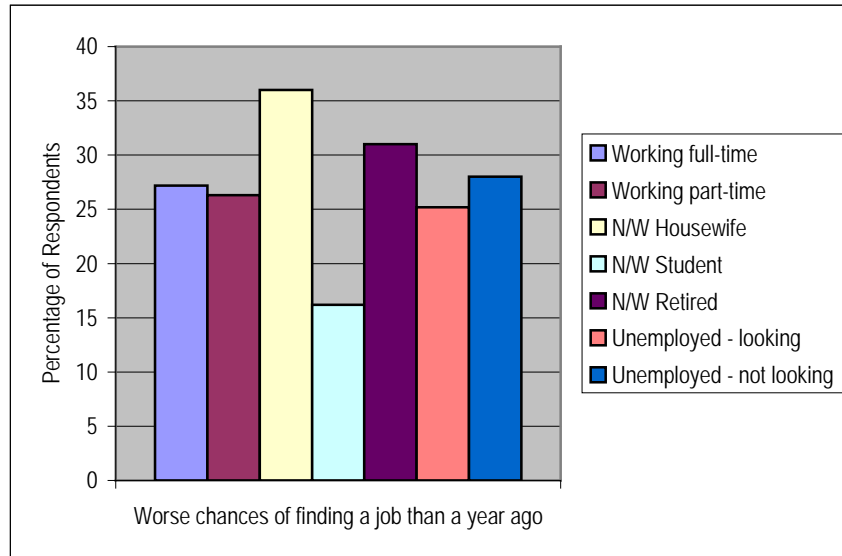
The graph reports that 27% of the population believes they have even less chance of finding a job in April 2004 than they did a year ago. This belief is especially widely held in the white and Indian communities, approximately 50% of whom fear that their chances of finding employment have reduced. Amongst whites this can probably largely be attributed to worries about the general problem of unemployment in the country, but also to worries about the impact of policies, such as Affirmative Action, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Preferential Procurement on the ability of minority groups to find employment and do business. It is unclear why so many Indian South Africans express such high levels of pessimism.

That being said, a fifth of blacks are equally concerned about finding employment, indicating that even with policies in place that are designed to promote access of black South Africans to employment opportunities, fear remains rife.

There were no real gender differences with regard to South Africans thinking they have even less chance now if finding a job than they did twelve months ago, suggesting that although Affirmative Action recognizes all women – regardless of race – as a designated groups for special attention, women do not feel more confident that they will be able to find a job or new job with ease.

There were no significant differences in the portion believing their chances of finding work had decreased amongst those who are working full-time or part-time and those who are unemployed and either actively looking for work or not. Interestingly it was housewives and retired people were the most discouraged, whilst students have the lowest portion. This finding about students is not unexpected as they would, in all likelihood, not have had any real experience with trying to find jobs a year ago (due to them still having to finish their studies) and would therefore not be able to offer a very informed opinion.

Figure 9: Views on the difficulty of finding a job compared to a year ago (by employment status)



Questions asked: *How do the chances of you finding a job compare to what they were like 12 months ago?* (Percentage who thought their chances were worse).

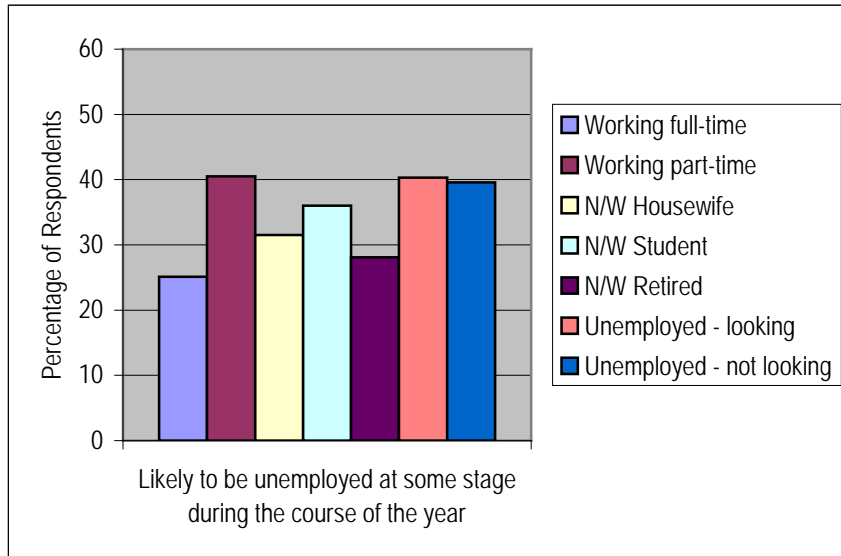
The finding about housewives and retiree's finding that jobs have become even more difficult to come by over the last year is very interesting, because research conducted by Stellenbosch Economist Rulof Burger under the auspices of the Transformation Audit 2004, showed that new entrants into the labour market were mainly drawn from the ranks of housewives, early retirees and those who previously thought they lacked the skills to enter the job market.

When the data are broken down occupational categories, it appears that there are fewer people who feel that government policy has reduced their employment opportunities in the lower skill categories and higher portions in the higher skill occupational categories.

When asked how likely it is that they will be unemployed next year, more than a third of South Africans answered that this is not an unlikely scenario. The fear of being unemployed was higher amongst black and coloureds than whites and indians. That being said, although the portion of indian and white South Africans who fear being unemployed is the smallest of the four racial categories, it still stands at approximately 20%, indicating that a fifth of each of these minority groups believe there is a good possibility of them finding themselves without a job in the next year.

Breaking down the data into those who are presently employed and those who are not, revealed some interesting findings. Whilst the probability of being without a job is highest amongst the unemployed and those working on a part-time basis, unemployment appears to be a very real threat for at least a quarter of those South Africans that are actually working full-time at present.

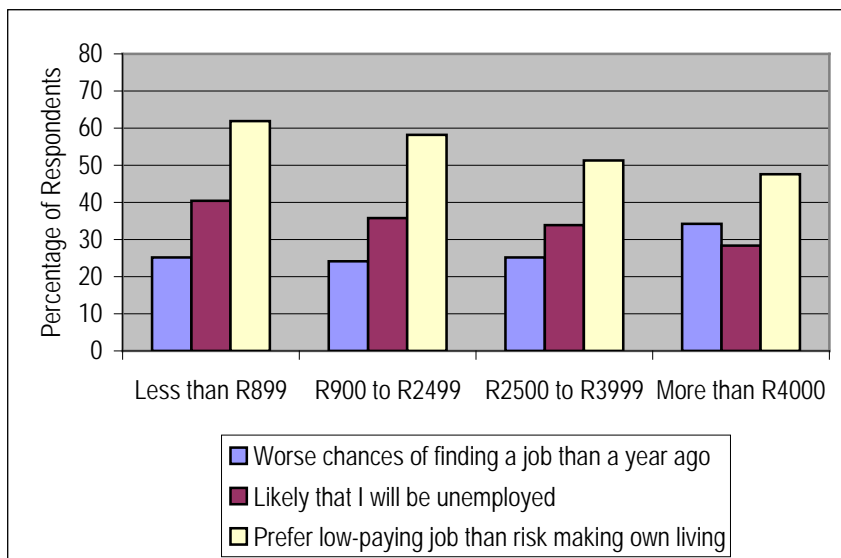
Figure 10: Views on the likelihood of being unemployed in the next year (by employment status)



Question asked: *It is highly likely that I will be unemployed at some stage during the next year.* (Percentage in Agreement).

The sense of economic insecurity that stems from such uncertainty can have a range of consequences, ranging from excessive stress levels to a lack of confidence in the economy. The degree of insecurity is also demonstrated by the fact that more than half of the population would rather have a low-paying steady job, than take the risk of starting their own business with the potential to learn lots of money or nothing at all, whilst only just under a quarter (23%) would rather risk some self-employment. Fear of income instability appears to be greater than the entrepreneurial spirit, with white South Africans slightly more receptive and coloured South Africans slightly less receptive of the idea of 'going it alone'.

Figure 11: Views of the threat of unemployment (by income group)



Questions asked: *How do the chances of you finding a job compare to what they were like 12 months ago?* (Percentage who thought their chances were worse) and *It is highly likely that I will be unemployed at some stage during the next year.* (Percentage in Agreement) and *It is better to have a low-paying full time job than it is to have to make your own living.* (Percentage in Agreement).

Some interesting patterns become evident when the data on unemployment fears is broken down by income category. There are more people in the higher income category who believe that their chances of finding a job in April 2004 were smaller than in April of the previous year. One possible explanation of this is the high proportion of white South Africans in this income category, skewing the results with their worries of being a 'victim' of policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment.

Perhaps not unexpectedly, the belief that it is better to earn a steady, albeit low income, than risk going on one's own is more widely held in the lower income categories. Having to rely on an household income of under R899 a month, it could be that these people have greater exposure to what it is like to live without an income, and are therefore not willing to risk giving up a steady income, not matter how meagre.

Alternatively, South Africans in different income brackets could have vastly different understandings of what it means to 'make ones own living'. Wealthier South Africans are more likely to conjure up images of a small, but profitable business, that if successful will eventually employ a number of people and will continue to support the entrepreneur and their family throughout a very comfortable retirement. The poorer South Africans, on the other hand, is probably more likely to think of making their own living in terms of having to survive from the meagre earnings that can be hand from selling fruit or local wares at the nearest traffic light.

It is therefore not surprising that creating employment was the economic sphere in which government got the worst reviews. Fully 70% of the population believes the government has done a bad job at reducing unemployment by creating jobs. The proportion amongst whites and indians of this view is between 10 and 13% larger than the national percentage, whilst the portion amongst blacks is 5% lower.

Whilst the data do not show that South Africans, and unemployed ones in particular, have given up hope, it does provide very compelling evidence of the degree to which unemployment remains a central threat and fear amongst South Africans. The evidence of the crippling effect that unemployment can have on a national economy are on the table. The real question is whether we have even begun to contemplate the political, social and psychological effect such massive unemployment can have on our national psyche?

6.2.4. Government Evaluations

Aside from gaining some insight into the state of dissatisfaction amongst the general South Africans public, it is important to know how these same people are evaluating government performance in seeing to the economic stability and welfare support.

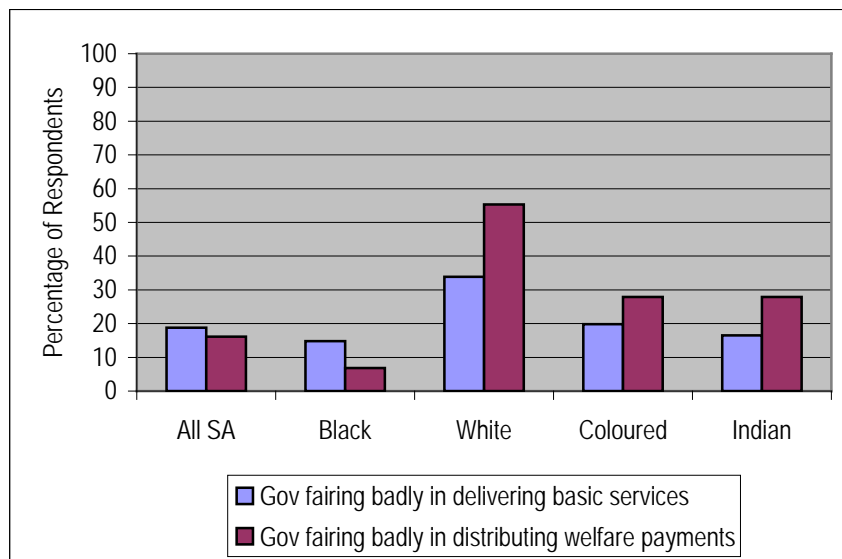
Starting with the broadest evaluations of government, 41% of South Africans believe government is not doing well at handling inflation, 34% think government has not faired well in reducing the income gap between the races and 31% assert that the government is not managing the economy well. Forty three percent thought the government did not perform well when it comes to controlling the cost of living. Disaggregated by race, the data show that overall fewer black South Africans than those of any other race rate government performance in these key areas poorly.

In terms of controlling inflation, almost three quarters of coloured respondents give government a negative evaluation, with the proportion of indians being second highest. Interestingly whites and indians are most critical of government's performance in narrowing the racially-based income gap,

with only 27% of blacks, compared to 55% and 51% of whites and indians respectively, asserting that government was faring badly. Breaking down the data according to income does not reveal as distinct patterns as the racial breakdown did.

In the eyes of the South African public, government fares far better in the delivery of basic services and welfare payments than was the case in the more general evaluations. Less than a fifth of all South Africans felt the government was not successfully delivering basic services and welfare payments. Only 7% of all blacks rated government in a negative light when it comes to welfare payments, and 15% with regard to the delivery of basic services. In this case whites showed the greatest disappointment with government performance.

Figure 12: Evaluations of government’s social delivery performance (by race)



Questions asked: *How would you say government is handling delivering basic services, such as water and electricity?* (Percentage who thought government was not handling it well) and *How would you say government is handling distributing welfare payments to those who are entitled to it, i.e. old-age pensions, disability payments, child maintenance grants?* (Percentage who thought government was not handling it well)

It would appear that the poor, and arguably the most in need of the welfare payments, are the most approving of government performance, with only 7% of all South Africans at a household income level of less than R899 a month asserting some disapproval. The proportion giving government a negative evaluation amongst those earning more than R4000 is four and a half times larger than that amongst the country’s poorest.

This is very significant, in that it shows that the work of government in this regard is certainly not going unnoticed, and for many of the people that fall into the lowest income category, welfare payments are probably a central part of their monthly household. Although welfare payments are certainly not enough to give anyone a dignified standard of living, for many of these households it does make the difference of eating or starving. It could be speculated that these payments go a certain degree to appeasing some of the frustration at the lack of change and socio-economic development amongst South Africa’s poor.

6.3. Cultural Threat

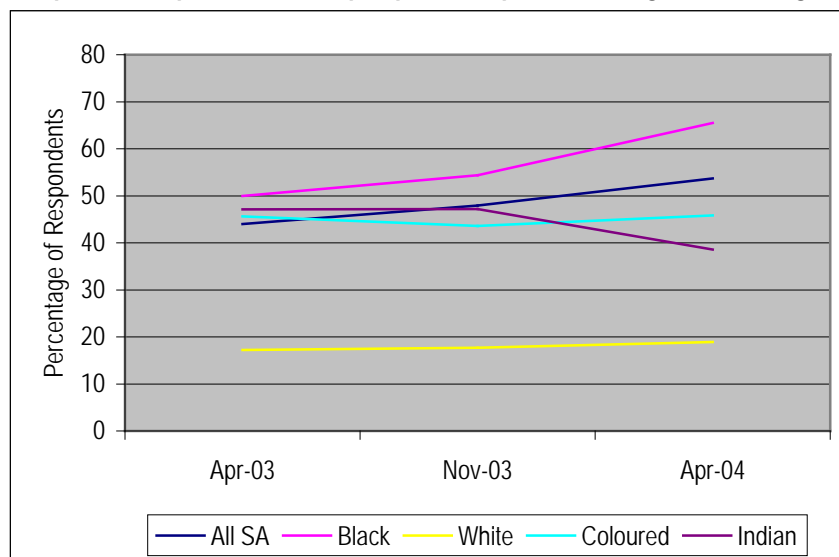
It can be argued that economic and physical threats, both of which are primary needs paramount for basic survival, cannot possibly be equated with threats to people’s culture. The Institute’s ongoing

research into the link between identity, culture and violence, however, suggests that fears of cultural alienation have become increasingly worrying for certain South Africans, most prominently for members of minority groups.²²

While the multi-cultural paradigm of reconciliation advocates the respect and celebration of diversity, and the protection of minority groups rights is emphasized in the Constitution,²³ a certain degree of fear of government or societal action to curb the freedom of specific communities to freely practice their language or religion has surfaced. This became evident during recent actions of the *Boeremag*, presently on trial for high treason. This view was strongly supported by the Group of 63 Afrikaaner think-tank, which has argued that the *Boeremag's* acts should be viewed as a “symptom of serious alienation among Afrikaners resulting from the present political dispensation”.

Judging from the data, the fear that their culture is under threat seems to be restricted to small sectors of the South African population, as just over half (54%) of all South Africans think that other people’s respect for their religious or language group will increase, and this has increased by 10% since the survey conducted a year earlier.

Figure 13: Expected Improvement in people’s respect for religious or language groups.



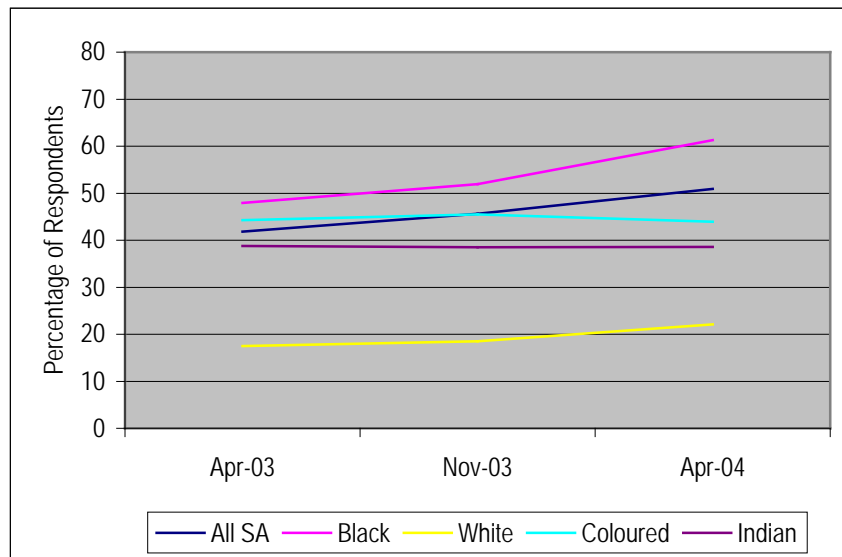
Question asked: *In the next twelve months, do you think other people’s respect for your religious or language group will... (Percentage who thought it would get better)*

There are significant differences between the four racial groups. Black South Africans seem the most optimistic about the level of respect for diverse cultural groups, with 66% expecting an improvement whilst a comparatively much smaller portion of whites (19%) expects the same. An interesting situation is visible in the data representing indian attitudes: the portion of optimists stayed constant at 47% between April and November 2003, but since then there was a statistically significant drop of 8% in the portion thinking people’s respect for their cultural group will increase.

²² See Du Toit, F. (2004) “Religion, Identity and Violence: Proceeds from a conference on religion as justification for violence and inspiration for reconciliation.” Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Monograph No 5. (2004); Bekker, S. & Leilde, A. (2004) “Faith in Cape Town: Identity, Cooperation and Conflict.” Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Monograph No 6. (2004) and Joubert, P (2004) “For the love of God, Country and Volk – an in-depth look at Afrikaaner Extremism”. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Monograph No 4. (2004).

²³ Section 6 recognizes eleven official languages.

Figure 14: Expected Improvement in ability to practice religion or language without interference (by race).



Question asked: *In the next twelve months, do you think the situation of these many different language and religious groups being able to practice their religion or language without interference will...* (Percentage who thought it would get better)

On the question of religious and language groups being able to maintain their independence without any interference, the data presents similar findings. Just over a half (51%) think things are going to improve, blacks have the highest portion of optimists and whites have the smallest. In this case there was not, however, a decrease in those expecting some improvement amongst the Indian South African population. Similar findings also emerged on the question whether government support for different language and religious groups to practice their customs, except that in this instance there was also a statistically significant increase in optimists amongst Indians.

On the whole, cultural threats appear consequential to some whites, and possibly to some members of minority language or religious groups of other races. The fear of this threat, compared to that of others, seems far smaller and is therefore less likely to impact significantly on the reconciliation process. If, however, the alleged actions of the *Boeremag* are indeed actions of a group of people fighting for cultural survival, it is clear that these threats have the capacity to result in isolated instances of high-profile social destabilization.

7. Political Culture

Almond and Verba define political culture as “the specifically political orientations – attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes towards the role of the self in the system”.²⁴ The United Nations (UN) has recently undergone a significant definitional shift that takes greater account of this notion of political culture, in that democratic states are no longer simply identified by regular free elections, but by the presence of a “democratic culture”. In a similar manner, the presence of ‘certain orientations’ can be constructive or destructive for the reconciliation process. The political culture of any nation is a complex and intricate thing. The *SA Reconciliation Barometer* has singled out some values on the assumption that these elements of the national political culture can have the biggest effect on inhibiting or promoting the reconciliation process.

²⁴ Almond, GA & Verba, S. (1963) *The Civic Culture*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Pp. 13.

The creation of a human rights culture and the general acceptance that a democracy is the optimal system to mediate conflict are anecdotally assumed to be central to the reconciliation process. Creating new political institutions, transformed systems of government and a reformed legislative framework will not automatically result in a democratic and reconciling society, characterised by an entrenched respect for human rights and civil liberties. Without real commitment to and trust and confidence in the systems and structures designed to facilitate democratic consolidation and reconciliation, and without deep-rooted respect for the rule of law, progress will remain negligible.

A legitimacy crisis within the new political system may prove destructive for reconciliation. Such a crisis could emerge if the citizenry were unwilling to extend their confidence, trust and unconditional support to the new dispensation, extrapolated for the purposes of this research to its institutions (Parliament). Alternatively such a situation can arise as a result of a lack of respect for the rule of law, a cornerstone of a culture of human rights.

Central to the new dispensation earning a sense of legitimacy is the forging of what has sometimes been termed 'public trust'. This refers to the perception amongst the general public that the state and its agents are committed to the well-being and interests of its people. The Institute's manual emphasizes the fact that during apartheid a great deal of trust and confidence in the state, its institutions, its agents and the values and norms it espoused was destroyed. The first democratic election in 1994 marked the imposition of a new and just political system, complete with a new constitution, laws, institutions, leaders and civil servants. However, "the *subjective process* of restoring trust in government, the police and other agencies had only begun".²⁵

At the same time, the illegitimacy of the oppressive and discriminatory legislative framework, as well as the wide-ranging human rights abuses perpetrated by the state and occasionally by the liberation forces under apartheid, have in various ways contributed towards a culture in which violence, the violation of human rights and a general disrespect for the law is not simply tolerated, but often even considered necessary. As emphasized in the Human Rights paradigm of reconciliation, post-apartheid South Africa is challenged with the task of creating a new legislative and normative environment in which a culture that reveres the protection of human rights, respect for the rule of law and the legitimacy of its institutions prevails.

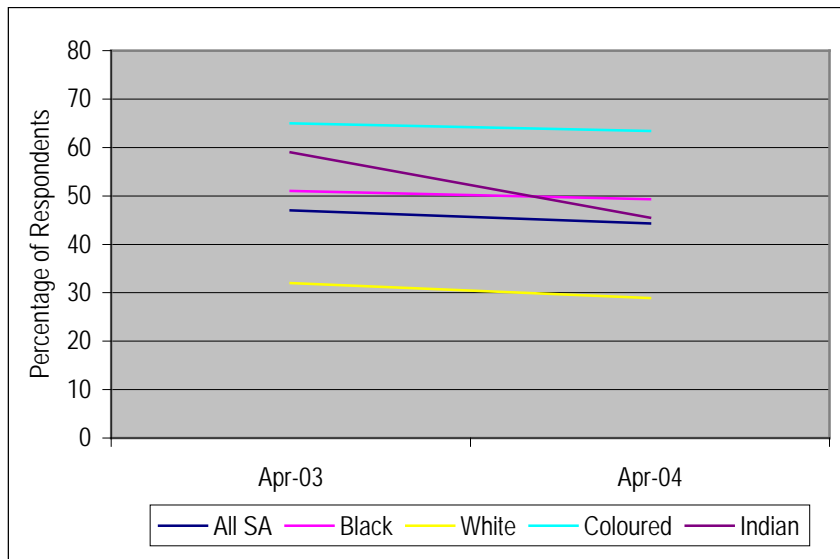
7.1. Justified Forms of Actions.

It can be hypothesized that one of the ways in which the perceived legitimacy of the present South African state can be measured is by determining whether the general public deem it justified and acceptable to resort to extra-legal means to protect their human rights. The theory follows that if the state is perceived as being legitimate, citizens are unlikely to resort to violence or other illegal actions, even if they believe the state is not meeting the expectations and needs of its citizens. The survey therefore included a number of questions designed to determine the perceived justifiability of various methods by which people can engage the state.

The data report that almost half of all South Africans (44%) believe that joining a demonstration in response to government inadequately protecting or directly violating human rights is justified. There was a slight, but as yet still statistically insignificant, decrease in this portion.

²⁵ Du Toit, F (ed) (2003) Learning to Live Together: Practices of Social Reconciliation. Rondebosch: The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Pp. 120.

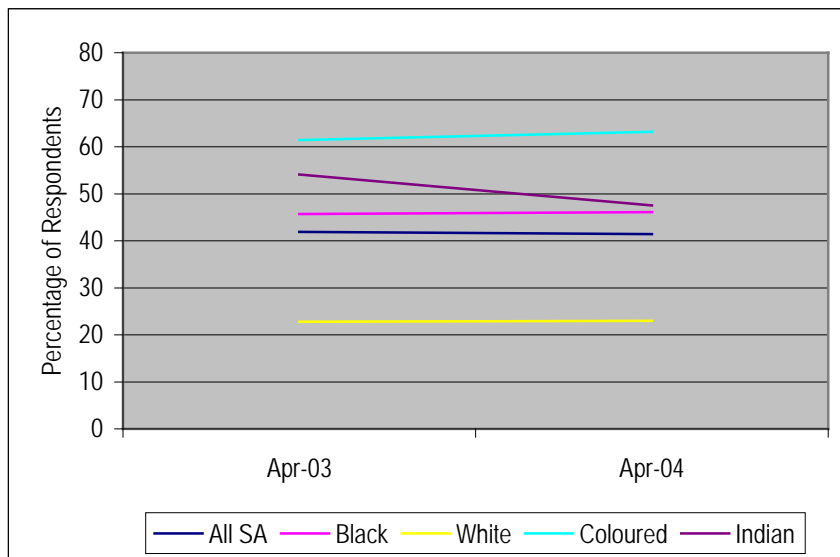
Figure 15: Perceptions of Demonstrations as Justified Actions (by race) ²⁶



Question asked: *Here are some different actions people could take if government was disregarding or violating or going against their human rights. I would like you to tell me if it would be justified if some people joined in demonstrations* (Percentage deeming it justified)

Disaggregation of the data by race reveals some asymmetry, with high levels of support amongst coloureds (63%) and moderate levels of support amongst blacks and indians at 49% and 46% respectively. Support is comparatively lower amongst whites, where the proportion who think demonstrations are justifiable means of protest is only 29%.

Figure 16: Perceptions of Strikes as Justified Actions (by race)²⁷



Question asked: *Here are some different actions people could take if government was disregarding or violating or going against their human rights. I would like you to tell me if it would be justified if some people joined strikes.* (percentage deeming it justified)

Considering the racially discriminatory actions and policies of the government under apartheid, it is no surprise that protest action in the form of a demonstration against the state is more readily

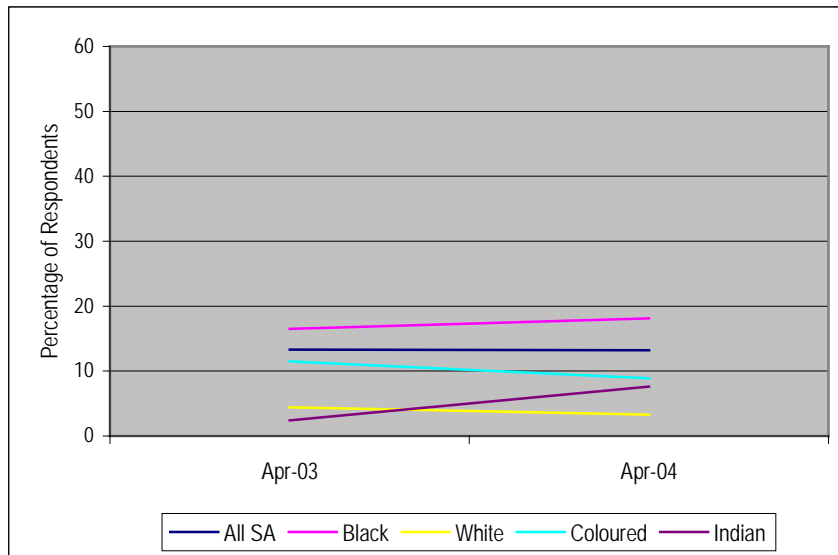
²⁶ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

²⁷ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

acceptable to coloureds, indians and blacks than it is to whites. One interesting finding has been quite a substantial drop of 13% in the portion of indian South Africans who deem demonstrations justifiable. This is certainly something worth investigating further.

A similar disjuncture is visible on the question whether people are justified in joining strikes when their rights have been violated in any way. Just over 60% of coloured South Africans felt it was justified, compared to 46% of blacks, 48% of indians and only 23% of whites. These figures have remained completely stable over the period under review.

Figure 17: Perceptions of Using Violence or Force as Justified Actions²⁸



Question asked: *Here are some different actions people could take if government was disregarding or violating or going against their human rights. If these actions did not work, would it be justified if they used force or violent methods, such as damaging public property or taking hostages. (Percentage deeming it justified)*

Whereas the previous data reveal that between 40 and 50% of South Africans believe demonstrations and strikes are acceptable channels by which to challenge a governmental infringement on human rights, only 13% feel using violence or force is justified, and this has remained stable over the period between the surveys. The empirical fact that 13% of the South African public feel it justified to resort to violence to protest against government inaction, deliberate or otherwise, in protecting their human rights, and a further 19% are uncertain whether it is justified or not, may prove problematic for reconciliation, but it is a positive finding that the portion who believe this is not on the increase.

The Human Rights paradigm of reconciliation contends that in post-apartheid South Africa, as in all transitional societies, social interaction needs to be moderated by a legislative and normative framework. Such an environment would be strongly influenced by respect for the rule of law, a general cultural of reverence of human rights and an accountable and responsive leadership. If people find violence justified, it may be indicative of a situation whereby the government is not seen as being capable or willing to protect and guarantee people's rights and freedoms, and may therefore lead to a legitimacy crisis. It would appear that the advocates of the *Boeremag* case have taken to instituting this argument in defence of their clients²⁹. It may also, however, point to a

²⁸ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.

²⁹ *Reuters*, 23 June 2003

general disrespect for the rule of law, within a milieu in which the foundations of a human rights culture have not been securely established.

7.2. Leader Legitimacy

Another possible indicator of the perceived legitimacy of the state is the extent to which its leadership draws the trust and confidence of the general public. This is crucial because reconciliation very rarely happens without the overt efforts of change agents. Some refer to them as 'the champions of reconciliation', whilst Peter Storey calls them "prime movers"³⁰. Each level of reconciliation, whether in a community, organisational or national context, requires the direction and encouragement of some form of leadership, be it political, social, religious or economic. In terms of the broad national political reconciliation process, Political Analyst Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert recently asserted that there is no "magic formula" for becoming a reconciled nation, but that there are indeed certain clear milestones on the way there that are within reach, a crucial one being "political leaders who are accessible and speak clearly and unambiguously about policies and projects"³¹.

Without undermining the importance of other types of leaders, the salience of a visionary political leadership, generally trusted and respected by its electorate, should not be underestimated. Besides possessing the legislative and executive power to create a legal and normative environment in which reconciliation can take root, political leaders have the rare opportunity to access and mobilize the social momentum that the reconciliation process requires. Some may even argue that it is their moral obligation to fill this role.

But, corrupt or biased national leaders will not hold the confidence of the people. Leaders who appear unable to engage each other in respectful dialogue, resorting instead to attacking the personal integrity of other leaders do not set a good example. Potentially even more importantly: leaders who appear to forget the people who elected them to power and whose interest they are meant to represent, also do not inspire citizens with a vision to become a reconciled nation. A lack of confidence in- and a sense of alienation from- political leaders will have serious ramifications for popular support for the very leaders instituting the kind of reforms needed to take a society through the transition to a post-conflict society in which democracy will eventually be consolidated.

The survey instrument included two items designed to measure the perceived trustworthiness and attentiveness of political leaders. The data reveals that between the April 2003 and the April 2004 rounds of the survey, there was a 13% drop (from 57% to 44%) in the percentage of South Africans who thought that the leaders were not particularly concerned about their electorate's life circumstances. As these interviews were conducted around the time of the national elections, it is possible that politicians were spending more time canvassing for support, which may have influenced this improved evaluation of their attentiveness.

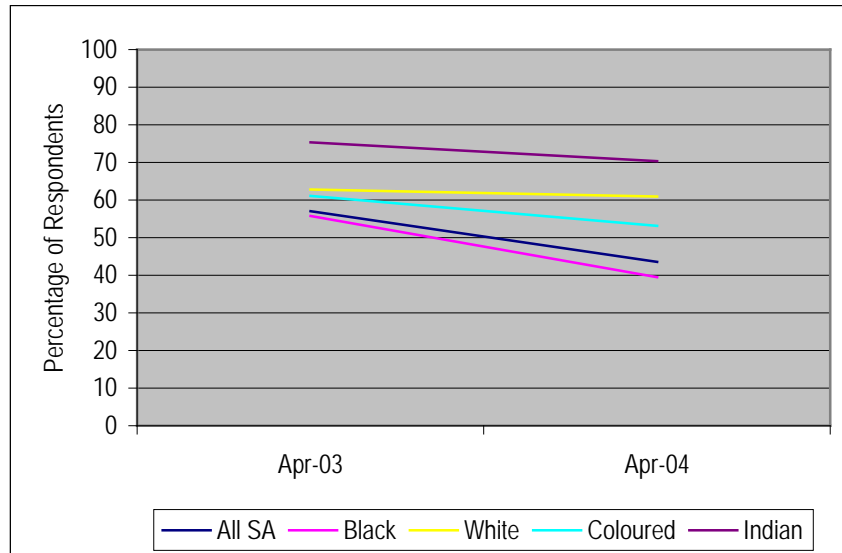
Although clear racially-defined differences in opinion already existed in 2003, perceptions of whether the country's leaders are concerned about the state of their people seem to have diverged even further along racial lines. In April 2003, similar portions of whites and coloureds felt the nation's leaders were not concerned. Since then the portion amongst coloureds has dropped by 10%, whereas the portion amongst whites has stayed constant. The portion amongst Indian South Africans has stayed relatively stable, and this group continues to have the highest percentage of

³⁰ Storey, P. (1994) "Reconciliation and Civil Society". Paper presented at the *Making Ends Meet: Reconciliation and Reconstruction in South Africa Conference*. World Trade Centre: Johannesburg. 18 August 1994.

³¹ *Financial Mail*, 8 September 2000.

people believing the country's leaders are uncaring and unsympathetic with the plight of their people. The biggest change in attitudes is evident amongst blacks, where the portion asserting the country's leaders are uncaring has decreased by 17%.

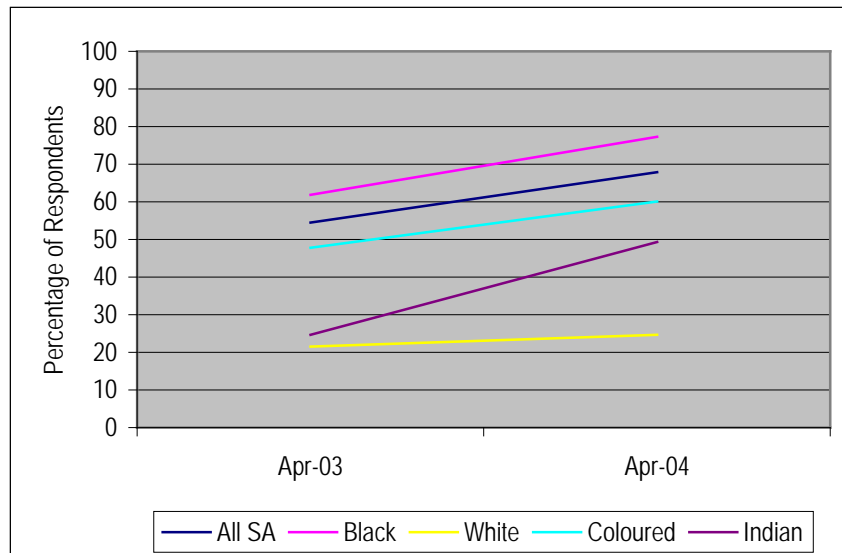
Figure 18: Perceived level of concern of Leaders with their electorate (by race) ³²



Question asked: *The people who run the country are not really concerned with what happens to people like me* (Percentage in Agreement)

In a similar vein, evaluations of leader's trustworthiness also improved, with a growing portion of South Africans (55% in April 2003 to 68% in April 2004) asserting that they could trust the country's leaders to do what is right most of the time.

Figure 19: Trust in National Leaders (by race)³³



Question asked: *Most of the time I can trust the country's national leaders to do what is right.* (Percentage in Agreement)

³² This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

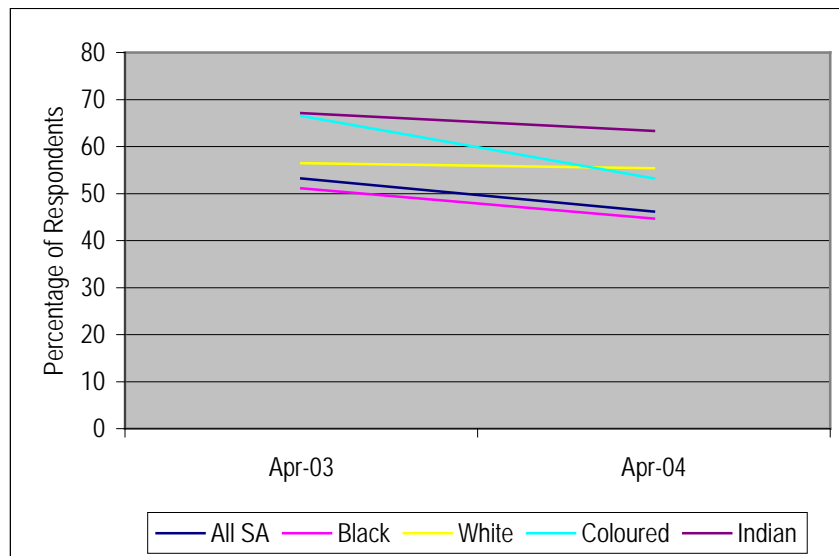
³³ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

It is highly unlikely that the general public in any country in the world unconditionally trust all its leaders. Some even argue that a certain degree of distrust of national leaders is necessary, as a viable democracy requires citizens that keep a watchful eye over leaders. Viewed in this light, the high and apparently growing portion of citizens that trust their leaders can only advance the reconciliation process.

Not only did this question elicit remarkable racial differences in opinion, but three out of the four racial groups actually underwent relatively dramatic fluctuations in attitudes towards the nation's leaders. The portion of blacks deeming the country's leaders trustworthy increased by 15% to more than three quarters being in agreement, whilst the increase amongst coloured South Africans was 12%, leaving the final portion of citizens who trust their leaders at 60%. Approximately a quarter of all South Africans in the white and indian community felt they could trust the nation's leaders in April 2004, and the views of whites underwent no change, with the group remaining the most untrusting out of all South Africa's racial sub-groups. Indians, on the other hand, underwent relatively dramatic change, with an increase of 25% in the portion trusting the nation's leaders.

Although South Africans as a whole are more confident that leaders are trustworthy than that they are interested in attending to the needs and interests of the ordinary citizens, the data suggests that a substantial portion of the South African public feels a sense of alienation from leaders. Additional data indicates that this sense of alienation may even extend beyond national leaders to public officials.

Figure 20: Perceived capacity to Influence Public Officials (by race)³⁴



Question asked: *If public officials are not interested in hearing what people like me think, there is really no way to make them listen (Percentage in Agreement)*

About half of all respondents reported a sense of helplessness or powerlessness to enforce some kind of accountability from public officials. The graph reveals that 46% of South Africans felt that there was no way to make leaders listen, although – on a more positive note – this portion has decreased by a small but not yet statistically significant amount. The reconciliation process will certainly be aided by a significant decrease in the number of South Africans who feel they are unable to force the country's civil servants to listen to their views, opinions and interests. There are

³⁴ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

significant racial differences, with blacks the most optimistic that they can make their views heard, and indians least optimistic.

On the whole the data is suggestive of some wavering in public opinion on the country's leadership. This fluctuation points towards a temporary improvement in the views ordinary South Africans hold of the country's leaders, deeming them more trustworthy and concerned with the needs and interests of the country's citizens. This fluctuation appears particularly prominent within the indian community, but does require further investigation. Should this statistically significant fluctuation crystallize into a fully fledged trend of a decrease in the portion of citizens who think the country's leaders are not concerned with what happens to ordinary people and are not trustworthy, the positive impact on the reconciliation process can be great.

7.3. Institutional Legitimacy

It is paramount that people support and accept the basic structures and systems on which the state is based as fair, trustworthy and legitimate, regardless of which political party is in power. Of particular importance to the reconciliation process are those structures of the democratic system that are important for the institutionalisation and mediation of conflict, as well as those critical for establishing a culture of human rights. Certainly citizens should be vigilant in their appraisal of the state, and criticise where necessary, but a lack of intrinsic support for- and commitment to- the democratic institutions, procedures and values has ramifications for whether citizens can be considered "reconciled with the newly implemented democratic system".³⁵

Ideally, a further range of institutions should be surveyed, but limited resources restrict this particular survey instrument to one institution. Being staffed according to the portion of the various parties' electoral share, parliament is often viewed as the institution of majority rule. However, in modern democracies parliament carries the responsibility of creating laws that protect and guarantee citizen's human rights, and therefore has a critical role to play in ensuring that a legislative environment is created in which past human rights abuses can never be repeated, whilst future human rights violations are prevented. To this end the survey included items to test the extent to which the general public finds parliament trustworthy and fair.³⁶

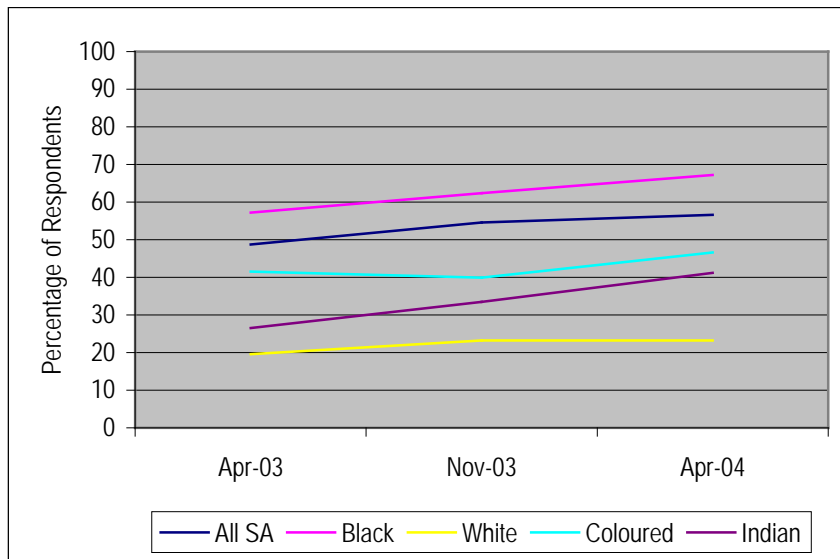
In light of the view that parliament is sometimes perceived as an instrument of majority rule, staffed by party elites, the impression that it functions in a fair and impartial manner is critical. Between April 2003 and April 2004 there was an 8% increase in South Africans of the view that parliament treats all people who come before it the same.

Once again, significant, yet not unexpected, differences occur across race groups. Almost three times as many black South Africans as white South Africans believe in the impartiality of parliament, with coloureds and Indians somewhere between. The overtly negative evaluations of the impartiality of parliament by whites, and to a lesser degree amongst coloureds and indians, may have been clouded by obvious feelings of vulnerability as a result of the loss or reduction in political power.

³⁵ Gibson, L.J. (2003) "Overcoming Apartheid: Can Truth Reconcile a Divided Nation?" Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Monograph No.2 . August 2003. Pp. 7.

³⁶ These items were developed by James L. Gibson.

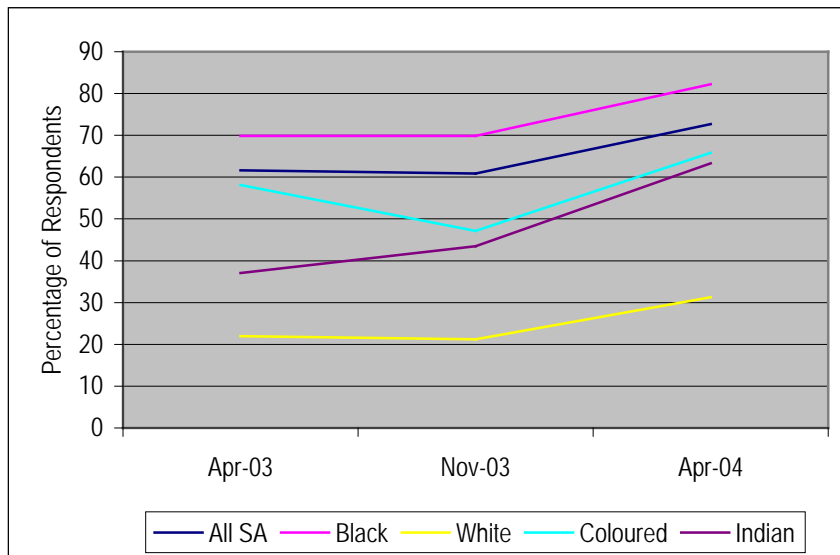
Figure 21: Perceived Fairness of Parliament (by race).



Question asked: The South African Parliament treats all people who come before it – Black, White, Coloured and Indian – the same. (Percentage in Agreement)

During the period under review there was a 10% increase in the portion of blacks who viewed parliament favourably, whilst there was no significant difference change in attitudes within the white and coloured communities. There was, however, a very clear shift in opinion amongst indian South Africans, with the portion believing that the South African parliament treats all who come before it with absolute impartiality almost doubled between April 2003 and April 2004.

Figure 22: Perceived Trustworthiness of Parliament (by race).



Question asked: The South African Parliament can usually be trusted to make decisions that are right for the country as a whole (Percentage in Agreement).

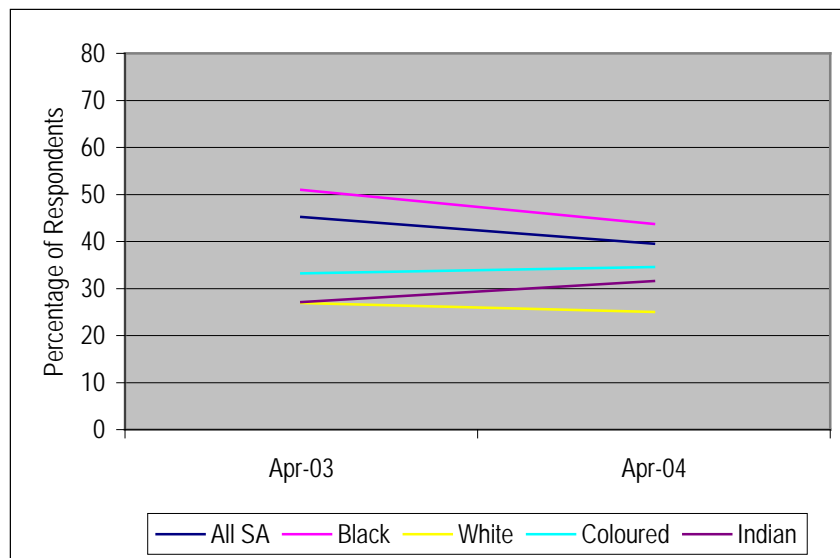
On a more positive note, almost three quarters of all South Africans think that parliament can generally be trusted to make decisions that are right for the country. Moreover, there was a statistically significant increase of 11% in the portion holding parliament in high regard.

As in the previous case whites appear to trust parliament much less than black and coloured South Africans, although there was a 9% increase in those who do perceive parliament to be trustworthy.

There was a similarly large increase in those who feel parliament can be trusted amongst black South Africans. The biggest upswing is evident in the data on indian opinions. Since the November 2003 survey there has been an increase in the portion trusting parliament of just under 20%, resulting in a total increase over the three consecutive rounds of the survey of a staggering 26%. Amongst coloured South Africans there was also a sizeable shift, with levels of trust sinking slightly during the November poll, but increasing again in the April 2004 poll to reach a level of 66%.

Perhaps the most worrying finding about the views of South African citizens regarding the national parliament during the April 2003 round of the survey was that a massive 45% believed that if parliament makes unpopular decisions it can be done away with. Since then, the portion in agreement with this view has decreased slightly, but not statistically significantly to 40%. Obviously this finding needs to be interpreted within a very particular context, and that is that in the past this country's national parliament made the very decisions that formed the legislative framework of a system that has since been declared a crime against humanity.

Figure 23: Unconditional Confidence in Parliament (by race)³⁷



Question asked: If the South African Parliament started making a lot of decisions that most people disagree with, it might be better to do away with Parliament altogether. (Percentage in Agreement)

Parliament's past record will almost certainly have had an impact on the fact that just less than half the country does not appear to intrinsically and unconditionally support parliament, even though the country has now enjoyed almost a decade of democratic rule. Despite this context which needs to be born in mind, the national reconciliation process is unlikely to benefit from this situation where the institution charged with representing majority rule is seen as being dispensable, should it make decisions citizens do not agree with.

In short, about 60% of South Africans think parliament treats all the country's citizens equally, 70% think it can be trusted and 40% think its can done away with under circumstances where the majority does not agree with its decisions. The significant increase in the numbers of South Africans who view parliament as an institutions that is trustworthy and impartial can only bode well for the reconciliation process, for if institutions are perceived to be unfair or untrustworthy, they are unlikely to be accorded legitimacy. Without legitimacy, cooperation can become an issue and dedication to the reconciliation process is likely to suffer.

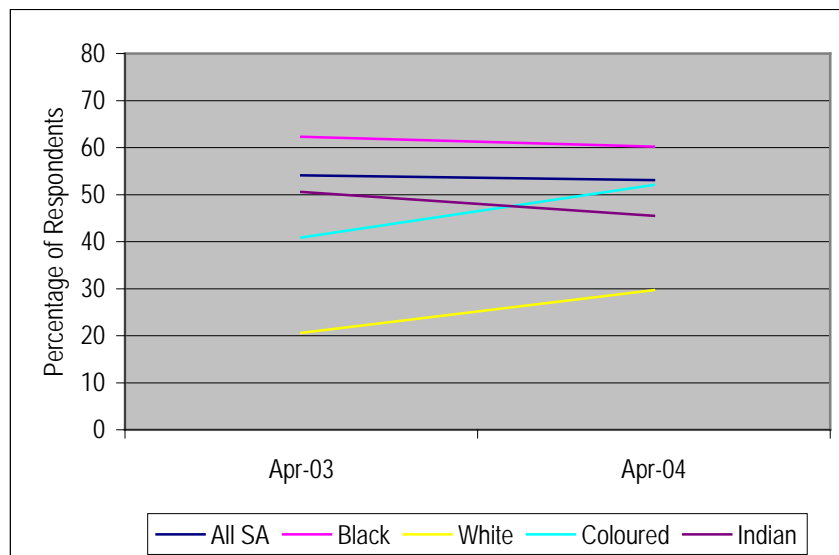
³⁷ This question was not asked in the Nov ember 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.

7.2. Respect for the Rule of Law

Whereas judgements of parliament represent an evaluation of an institution of the democratic state, the question of South Africans' respect for the rule of law probes intrinsic support for one of the central principles of democratic rule. Taking the cue from South Africa's Constitution, there is clearly a need for South Africans to create a culture in which the human rights of all individuals are protected and guaranteed. Apartheid did a great deal of damage, not simply in violating people's human rights, but also in creating an environment in which human rights could be violated with impunity.

Rectifying this situation requires far more than "a stable political, constitutional and legal framework",³⁸ it needs the unequivocal commitment and support of all South Africans that human rights will be respected, regardless of the cost or implications of doing so. James Gibson argues that the "first principal" of such an unconditional commitment to a human rights culture is respect for the rule of law, contending that a human rights culture cannot be created, nor maintained, if there is no "commitment to the universal application of law, and especially the unwillingness to set law aside to accomplish other objectives".³⁹

Figure 24: Respect for the Rule of Law (by race)



Question asked: *It is alright to get around the law, as long as you don't actually break it.* (Percentage in Agreement)

One could speculate that most South Africans would be unwilling to blatantly break the law, but more than half of all South Africans (53%) feel there is no problem in "getting around the law" as long "as they don't actually break it". Moreover, this portion has not decreased over the period between the surveys.

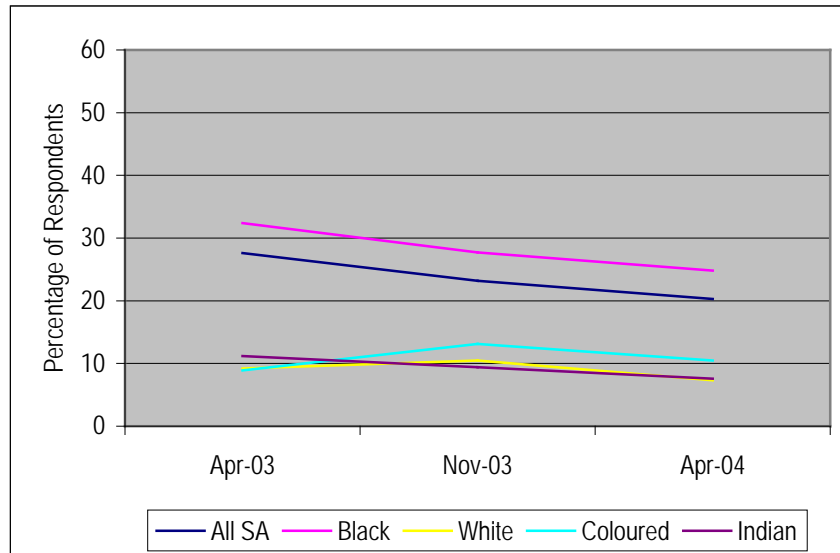
Massive racial differences in opinion exist, with six out of every ten blacks saying its find the bend the rule a little, but only three in every ten whites holding the same opinion. Forty six percent of indians and 52% of coloureds also agree. It would appear that respect for the rule of law is higher amongst white South Africans than any other groups, and this difference has remained unchanged since April 2003. It is difficult to know how to interpret this statistic. The apartheid-era history of this

³⁸ Gerwel, J (2000) "Anticipating a different kind of Future" in Villa-Vicencio, C. (eds) (2000) *Transcending a Century of Injustice*. Cape Town: The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Pp. 124.

³⁹ Gibson, J. L. (2002) "Empirical Indicators of Reconciliation". Unpublished document.

country, in terms of a minority government making discriminatory and oppressive laws to the detriment of the majority, cannot be ignored, and presumably contributes for the apparently lower levels of respect for the rule of law amongst black, and to a lesser extent coloured and Indian South Africans.

Figure 25: Respect for the Rule of Law conditional on support for political party (by race).



Questions asked: *It is not necessary to obey laws of a government that I did not vote for* (Percentage in Agreement)

Encouragingly, there has been a significant 8% decrease in the percentage of South Africans asserting they do not feel any obligation to abide by the laws of a government they did not vote for. Again larger number of blacks than whites, coloureds and Indians felt this way.

It can be speculated that the reconciliation process may benefit from this decrease in the portion of citizens who reveal conditional respect for the rule of law, and in fact, see acquiescence with national laws as largely dependent on whether the laws have been made by those representing their political interests or not.

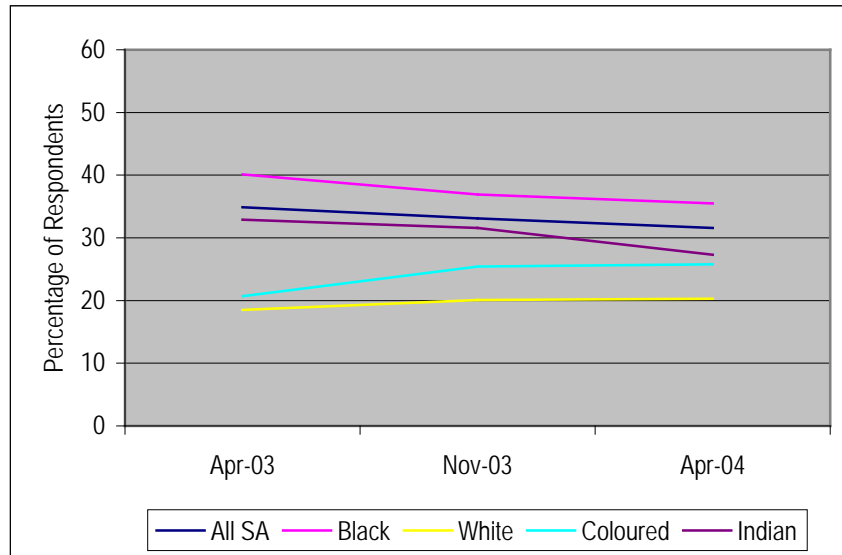
Approximately a third of respondents (32%) agreed that it is sometimes better to ignore the law and solve problems immediately, rather than waiting for a legal solution. Although this percentage may seem high, it should be interpreted within the context of a high presence of vigilante action in South Africa – a report released in 2002 cited that every three days sees the killing of another suspected criminal by vigilantes, “seeking either to avenge a violent crime against a member of their community or a bid to halt the seemingly inexorable rise in crime”⁴⁰. In a sense, it is therefore encouraging that the number of South Africans of this view has not increased, and that the majority continue to believe that no matter how inefficient and slow the legal system may be, the procedurally correct legal route to solving problems is still the correct one.

Racial differences in opinion are not as great as was the case for many of the other questions in the survey instrument. That being said, 36% of blacks, as opposed to a lower 20% of whites, are in support of taking the law ‘into their own hands’, rather than waiting for a legal solution. In this, as in the previous questions, whites respect for the rule of law is generally higher than that of the other racial groups. Once again this difference is almost certainly influenced by the very different

⁴⁰ *Financial Mail* 1 February 2002.

experiences of apartheid laws by white South Africans in comparison to the experiences of people of other races.

Figure 26: Respect for the Rule of Law conditional to efficiency (by race)



Question asked: *Sometimes it might be better to ignore the law and solve problems immediately rather than wait for a legal solution (Percentage in Agreement).*

Particularly in light of high crime rates and the apparent inability of the criminal justice system to adequately deal with this problem, it is a positive finding that respect for the rule of law conditional on the political party in power has reduced. At the same time there is no sign of any increase in the portion of South Africans believing it better to find quicker and more efficient solution than that propagated by the court of law, nor in the portion thinking its acceptable to ‘bend’ the law, as long as it is not ‘actually’ broken.

Respect for the rule of law, views of the country’s leadership, the justifiability of extra-legal actions of protest and the extension of legitimacy to parliament are simply some measures aimed at gauging the degree of support for a human rights culture, conducive for reconciliation. Huyse asserts that the reconciliation process must, by necessity, “be supported by a gradual sharing of power, an honouring of each other’s political commitments, the creation of a climate conducive to human rights and economic justice, and a willingness among the population at large to accept responsibility for the past and for the future – in other words, reconciliation must be backed by the recognition of the essential codes of democracy”.⁴¹

8. Cross-cutting Political Relationships

Speaking about South Africa’s odds for a successful consolidation of democracy, Giliomee and Schlemmer identify the need for cross-cutting cleavages.⁴² They argue that social divisions that cut across one another, rather than being superimposed on one another are more conducive to the consolidation process. Although cross-cutting divisions are also important for reconciliation, it is more that citizens are able to form political groupings that stretch across racial, religious, class and

⁴¹ Huyse, L. (2003) “The Process of Reconciliation” in Bloomfield, D, Barnes, T and L. Huyse (eds) (2003) *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: Sweden. Pp. 21.

⁴² Giliomee, H and Schlemmer, L. (1994) “Overview: Can a South African Democracy become Consolidated?” in Giliomee, H. (ed) *The Bold Experiment*. Johannesburg: Southern. Pp. 181.

linguistic boundaries.⁴³ Various referred to as political tolerance or political integration, this involves citizens seeking larger political groupings that transcend existing societal boundaries, as a basis for cooperation and collaboration in order to attain the minimal preconditions for political reconciliation. Only with this kind of willingness and commitment to form new political relationships, can key challenges to reconciliation be faced.

Of course no study of reconciliation would be complete without extensive research into the field of political tolerance. In their latest book *Overcoming Intolerance in South Africa*, Gibson and Gouws contend that political tolerance, whilst being a paramount component of a democratic political culture in many countries, may be the most decisive component of South Africa's political culture as it seeks to consolidate its democracy and reconcile its nation. They go on to describe tolerance as "the willingness to allow all groups, irrespective of their political viewpoints, to compete for political power through legal and peaceful means, and relying upon a research tradition well established within relatively democratic polities".⁴⁴

This research paper fully acknowledges the salience of political tolerance in any post-conflict society, and in particular, present-day South Africa. The wealth of public opinion research that has been conducted about political intolerance in the South African context, most notably by Gibson and Gouws,⁴⁵ compared to the relative vacuum of public opinion research on other components of reconciliation, led to the decision not to duplicate existing ongoing tolerance research, but to utilize the limited resources available to examine other facets of the reconciliation process. One such facet is the capacity of members of the population to conceive of belonging to political communities that are shared or even dominated by South Africans of other racial backgrounds.

8.1. National Unity

It can be hypothesized that, at minimum, there should be a degree of commitment by South Africans, to the creation of one nation from all the population's subgroups.

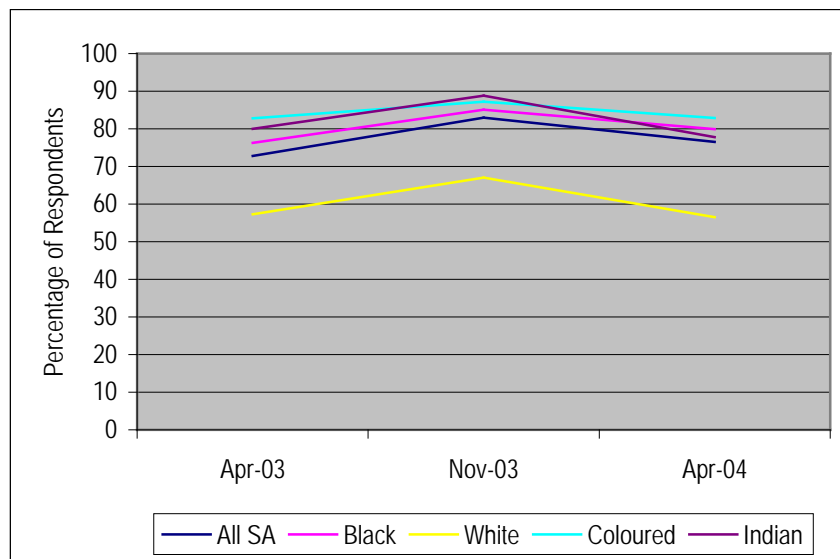
Between the April and November 2003 rounds of the survey the data revealed a positive growth in the portion of South Africans deeming it desirable to create one nation out of all the groups that live in the country. Since then, the portion has once again subsided somewhat by 7% from the November high of 83% to 77%. The circumstances that contributed to November's high support for the nation-building process require additional investigation. The period between the two 2003 surveys does not appear to be characterized by any particularly prominent symbolic events, situations or trends that could account for this surge in subjective goodwill for greater unification.

⁴³ Villa-Vicencio, C. (2003) "The Politics of Reconciliation." Unpublished paper; Chapman, A.R. (2002) "Approaches to Studying Reconciliation". Paper presented at the Conference on Empirical Approaches to Studying Truth Commissions. Stellenbosch, South Africa. November 2002. Pg. 15.

⁴⁴ Gibson, J.L and Gouws, A. (2003) *Overcoming Intolerance in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁵ For an excellent analysis see Gibson, J.L and Gouws, A. (2003) *Overcoming Intolerance in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Also see Gibson, J.L and Gouws, A. (2000) "Social Identities and Political Intolerance: Linkages within the South African Mass Public" in *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 44. No. 2. Pp 278 -292; Gouws, A (1996) "Political Tolerance and Civil Society: The Case Study of South Africa" in *Politikon*. Vol. 20. Iss. 1. Pp. 15 - 31.

Figure 27: Perceived desirability of creating one nation (by race).



Question asked: *It is desirable to create one united South African nation out of all the different groups who live in this country.* (Percentage in Agreement).

A comparison of April 2003's and April 2004's survey data reveals very similar proportions of supporters of unification in each of the racial groups, with approximately 80% of black, indian and coloured South Africans in support, compared to a lower 57% of whites.

It would appear that after the temporary rise in support for national unity in November 2003 attitudes have stabilized again to the April 2003 levels, making it unlikely that this surge marks the starting of any significant trend, but merely represents a fleeting and unexplainable blip in South African public opinion.

8.2. Racially mixed Political Parties

At a more demanding level, Chapman speaks about the need to create "new forms of social institutions and political parties with a multi-community basis".⁴⁶ A great deal of South Africa's public debate before the recent national elections focused not on the possible outcome of the election (no one seriously doubted that the ANC would win a landslide victory), but on whether the outcome would reveal an increase or decrease in racial voting patterns. This is not a new question in South African politics and has stirred considerable popular and academic debate,⁴⁷ with a growing body of literature asserting that, particularly in the 1999 elections, the outcome was certainly not simply the result of a racial or ethnic census.⁴⁸

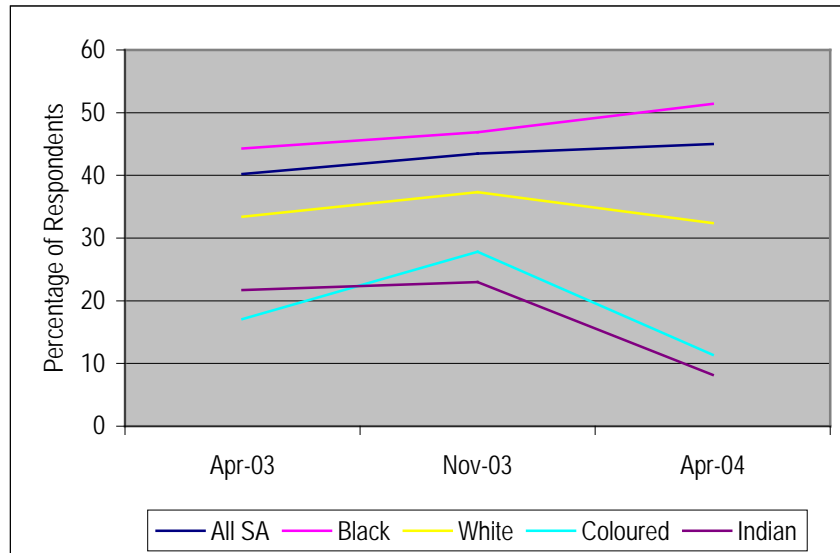
⁴⁶ Chapman, A.R. (2002) "Approaches to Studying Reconciliation". Paper presented at the Conference on Empirical Approaches to Studying Truth Commissions. Stellenbosch, South Africa. November 2002. Pg. 5.

⁴⁷ For some examples see Du Toit, P (1999) "The South Africans voter and the racial census" in *Politeia*. Vol. 18, No. 2.; Lodge, T. (1994) "The South African General Election, April 1994: results, analysis and implications" in *African Affairs*. Vol. 94.; Southall, R (1994) "The South African elections of 1994: the remaking of a dominant-party state" in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 32. Iss. 4.; Mattes, R.; Giliomee, H and James, W. (1996) "The elections in the Western Cape" in Johnston, R.W. and Schlemmer, L. (eds) (1996) *Launching Democracy in South Africa. The first Open Election, April 1994*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁴⁸ Mattes, R., Taylor, H. and Africa, C. (1999) "Judgement and Choice in the 1999 South Africans election" in *Politikon*. Vol. 26. No. 2.; Friedman, S (1999) "Who we are: voter participation, rationality and the 1999 elections" in *Politikon*. Vol. 26. No. 2.; Taylor, R and Hoeane, T.. (1999) "Interpreting the South African election of June 1999" in *Politikon*. Vol. 26. No. 2

Rather than focusing on the question of whether national election outcomes represent a racial or ethnic census, - a research question has been the source of a great deal of thoroughgoing empirical analysis, the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* seeks to determine whether South Africans find the idea of multiracial political parties undesirable.

Figure 28: Perceived inability of belonging to multiracial political parties (by race).



Question asked: *I could never imagine being part of a political party made up mainly of people of another race.*⁴⁹
(Percentage in Agreement)

The most recent round of data reported that 45% of South Africans agree that they could not even imagine belonging to a political party dominated by another race, and this percentage has remained stable since April 2003.

Two significant shifts in opinion occurred over the period under review. Amongst coloured respondents, there was an 11% increase in the proportion who found multiracial political parties unacceptable during the course of 2003. The dynamics behind this dramatic shift in opinion are not easily extrapolated. It may have been possible that the November increase in coloureds not in favour of racially mixed parties may have arisen from the view that no political parties are really seen as representing the 'coloured vote'. Despite the fact that most major political parties officially proclaim following a non-racial vision, most are seen "to be articulating the interests of particular racial or ethnic groups."⁵⁰

But by April 2004, the figure not in favour of mixed political parties had dropped by 16%. So, in April 2004 the portion of coloured respondents who could never imagine themselves belonging to a political party where most members were of a different race to themselves was at an all time low of 11%. There has obviously been some relatively dramatic change in the political landscape, which could certainly have played a part in this change in attitudes. As it imploded, the New National Party (NNP) did convey to its constituency (partly coloured) that working with black people was now no longer taboo. It is irrelevant in this context whether it did so for political expediency or as a commitment to racial tolerance.

⁴⁹ Based on the respondent's own race, the question was asked by making reference to their overall average contact with members of all three other race groups

⁵⁰ Habib, A. (2004) "Are South Africa's elections a racial census?" in *Election Synopsis*. Vol. 1. Iss. 2. Pp. 6.

The *SA Reconciliation Barometer* results show that there has been a shift and it is very likely that this could partly be attributed to the ANC/NNP pact. Ten years ago when the new democracy was born, the NNP whipped up racial fears amongst coloured people. With this fear factor now firmly removed, the idea of cross-racial cooperation in political parties appears a lot more acceptable to the coloured community. A similar shift happened in the Indian community - with a 15% drop in the portion saying they could not belong to a political party dominated by another race - rendering it likely that similar dynamics were at play.

The next round of the national survey, undertaken in November 2004, will be closely analysed to investigate whether the idea of racially diverse political parties become more acceptable to South Africans of other races in a similar style, as well as for any evidence that the attempts of political parties to "move away from the narrow style and tone of past electoral campaigns, which were often characterised by racial undertones and group references for political purposes"⁵¹ is having any effect.

9. Dialogue

Doxtader argues that reconciliation requires more than a superficial willingness to belong to a diverse political constituency, it requires dialogue, or what Kahane refers to as "deep conversations".⁵² Doxtader argues that it extends beyond discussion, beyond individuals and groups gathering and "expressing their views, and then leaving their respective claims to hang in the air like so much smoke".⁵³

Quantifying the extent to which this kind of meaningful dialogue is occurring is virtually impossible. Instead the survey instrument included two items that allowed for an evaluation of the willingness of people to speak with people of other racial, cultural, religious or language backgrounds about reconciliation or any of the range of complex and often conflicting issues involved in the larger reconciliation process. At the same time the items make reference to two important institutions or stakeholders that have the capacity to facilitate this kind of dialogue. Consequently the questions may also provide some measure of the extent to which South Africans would like these institutions to play a more active role in encouraging this kind of debate.

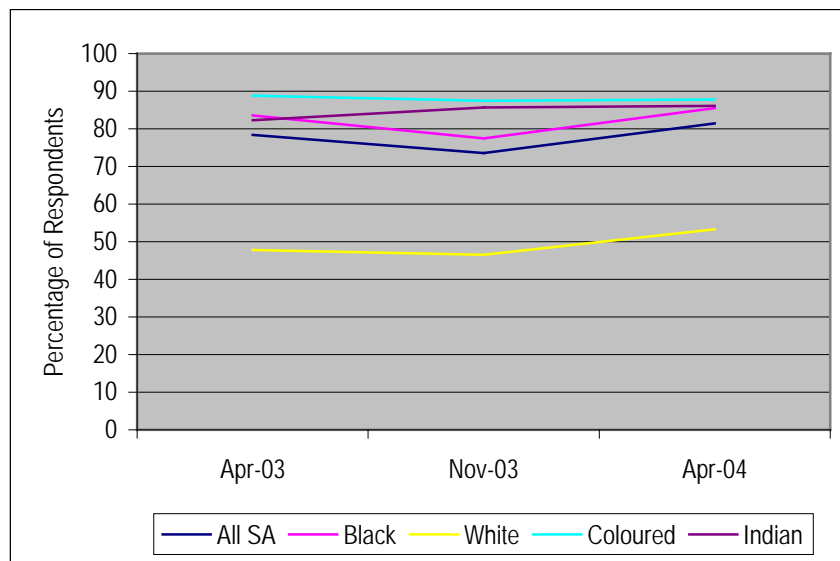
Although the function and role of the media in present day South Africa has been hotly debated, besides fulfilling its responsibility of providing mass audiences with knowledge and information, the media can feasibly also play a role in bringing South Africans into dialogue, whether it be through current affairs programmes, the letter, editorial and opinion piece pages of newspapers or the broadcasting of public debates. As a result, a question concerning greater efforts by the media to facilitate open debate about issues pertinent to the reconciliation process was included in the survey.

⁵¹ Party Support in South Africa's third democratic election (2004) Election Brief. The Political Information and Monitoring Service - South Africa. Idasa.

⁵² Kahane, A (2002) *Shaping the Future: How Small Groups of People Can Change the World for the Better*. Unpublished Manuscript.

⁵³ Doxtader, E. (2001) "Debate about Debate will Build Democracy" in *Cape Times*. 13 May 2001.

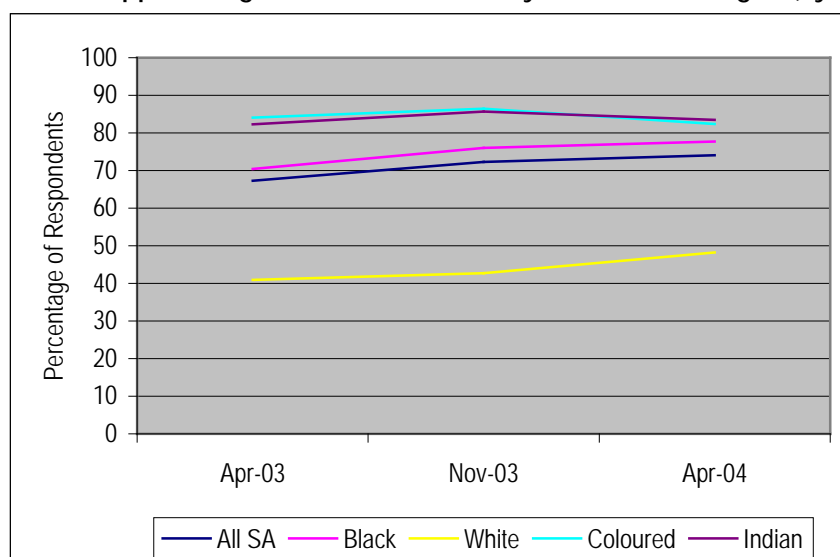
Figure 29: Support for greater media facilitated dialogue (by race).



Question asked: *The government should require Radio and TV stations to have more shows where South Africans can talk to each other about things like transformation and nation-building* (Percentage in Agreement).

Eight out of ten South Africans asserted they want the media to play a more proactive role in furthering public dialogue. Although there was a 7% increase in support for the media to play a more pro-active role in the reconciliation process, the level of support in April 2004 is not significantly different to that in April 2003. This suggests that after a temporary decrease in support in November 2003, levels of support for the media to facilitate more dialogue amongst South Africans have stabilised at a relatively high level. Obviously the nature of the dialogue largely determines the efficacy of the dialogue in advancing the reconciliation process, but, the mere fact that there is so much encouragement for the media to become more actively involved, means that more opportunities for ‘deep listening’ could be created.

Figure 30: Support for greater faith community facilitated dialogue (by race).



Question asked: *Different churches or religious organizations should start holding some services together so that different South Africans can get to know one another better* (Percentage in Agreement).

Again, white South Africans reveal lower levels of support than any of the other groups. This reluctance of whites to engage in more dialogue and get to know other South Africans better is also

visible in the data on inter-faith services, which reveals that 48% of whites, compared to almost double the portion of coloureds (82%) and indians (84%) support more religious-organisation facilitated dialogue. Blacks fall in between at 78%.

Seventy four percent of South Africans are in favour of faith organisations playing a more active role in facilitating dialogue across South Africa's various divisions. Although not yet statistically significant, there has been a gradual, but steady increase in the portion in favour, and the reconciliation process is likely to progress if this increase continues.

On the whole, South Africans reveal relatively high levels of support for both religious and media organisations to play a more proactive role in providing South Africans with the space and opportunity to get to know one another, thereby contributing towards bridging the divides between South Africans of different backgrounds.

Whilst certain sectors of the greater population are less enthusiastic about the idea, the data points to a clear opportunity for various stakeholders to become involved, and in doing so, advance reconciliation. A lack of commitment to dialogue does not appear to be an obstacle to reconciliation, while the opportunity to engage in dialogue and the knowledge of how to go about it may well be considered as such.

10. Historical Confrontation

No discussion of the reconciliation process in South Africa or any other transitional society would be complete without an investigation of the degree to which the nation has been able to confront its past. There is a saying that proclaims that 'those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it'. Whilst this certainly rings true, a nation unable to let go of its history also faces the danger of never reconciling. A thorough confrontation of the past appears to be the safest route to follow.

10.1. Acknowledgement

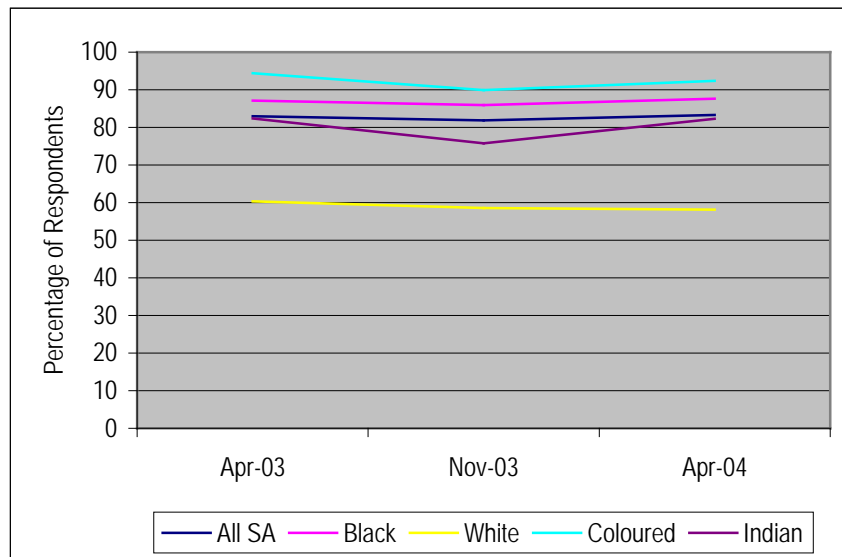
Amongst others Villa-Vicencio emphasizes acknowledgement as a critical milestone along this path.⁵⁴ In South Africa, as in most transitional societies, acknowledgment of the past, extending often to the acknowledgment of the past's continued impact on present, is critical. Many of today's social ills, be they excessive violence, high levels of inequality or advanced social dislocation, are strongly rooted in the specific historical context of the country pre-1994.⁵⁵

In response to the statement that South Africa has great income differences today because in the past blacks were not given the same educational opportunities as whites, 83% of the population deemed this true. It can be hypothesized that as time passes and more matriculants leave the primary and secondary education sector without having been subjected to Bantu education, the portion of South Africans holding this view would lessen. Over the course of the past year attitudes in this regard have not changed much.

⁵⁴ Villa-Vicencio, C (2003) *The Politics of Reconciliation*. Unpublished paper. See also Biko, N. (1998) "Amnesty and Denial" in Villa-Vicencio, C and Verwoerd, W. (eds) (2000) *Looking Back Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa*. University of Cape Town Press: Cape Town. Pp.196.

⁵⁵ Gerwel, J (2000) *Combating Racism: A nation in Dialogue*. Keynote address at the National Anti-Racism Conference. Sandton, Johannesburg. 30 August 2000.

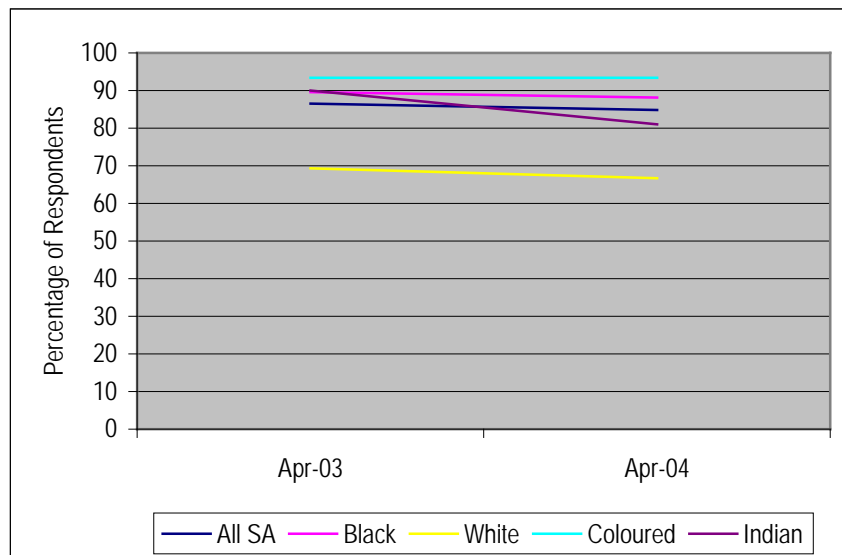
Figure 31: Acknowledgement of present income differences being rooted in past educational opportunity differences (by race).



Question asked: *South Africa has great income differences today because in the past Blacks were not given the same education opportunities as Whites.* (Percentage in Agreement)

Although none of the racial groups showed any significant change in opinions over the period under review, a racial breakdown reveals clear cross-racial differences. Whilst 88% of blacks, 92% of coloureds and 82% of indians agree, only 58% of Whites deem this to be true.

Figure 32: Acknowledgement of Apartheid as a crime against humanity (by race)⁵⁶



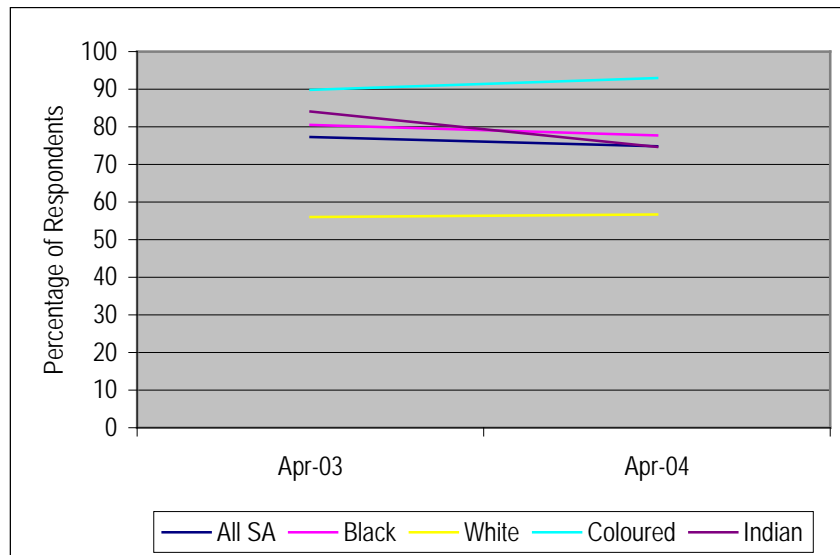
Question asked: *Apartheid was a crime against humanity* (Percentage in Agreement)

Opinion on whether it is true or not that the state committed horrific atrocities against those struggling against apartheid, has also remained stable over time. Three quarters of South Africans agreed that the state did indeed commit atrocities against anti-apartheid activists. The portion believing this to be true amongst the white community is approximately 20% lower than amongst the other three racial sub-groups in the country. The implication of only 57% of whites agreeing that

⁵⁶ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.

atrocities were committed needs further analysis, and the implications of just under half of all whites either disagreeing or not being sure that this is true, need to be considered.

Figure 33: Acknowledgment that the state committed atrocities against those who fought apartheid ⁵⁷



Question asked: *In the past the state committed horrific atrocities against those struggling against apartheid.*
(Percentage in Agreement)

When asked to comment whether they think it is true that apartheid was a crime against humanity, 85% of South Africans deemed it true. Once again there was no significant shift in attitudes between April 2003 and April 2004, but distinct racial differences are again visible, with the portion of whites believing the statement to be true being approximately 20% lower than that portion of blacks and coloureds, and 15% lower than the portion within the indian community.

This lower level of agreement for all three questions amongst whites suggests that a substantial portion of whites still need to realize and recognize that many problems today are the result of the past. This is problematic as acknowledgement is a very important step, in that it “forms a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for outcomes such as democratization and judicial reform, reconciliation, and the growth of social trust... The process of acknowledgment, if it assists in overcoming the causes of conflict, has the potential to support real and lasting change.”⁵⁸

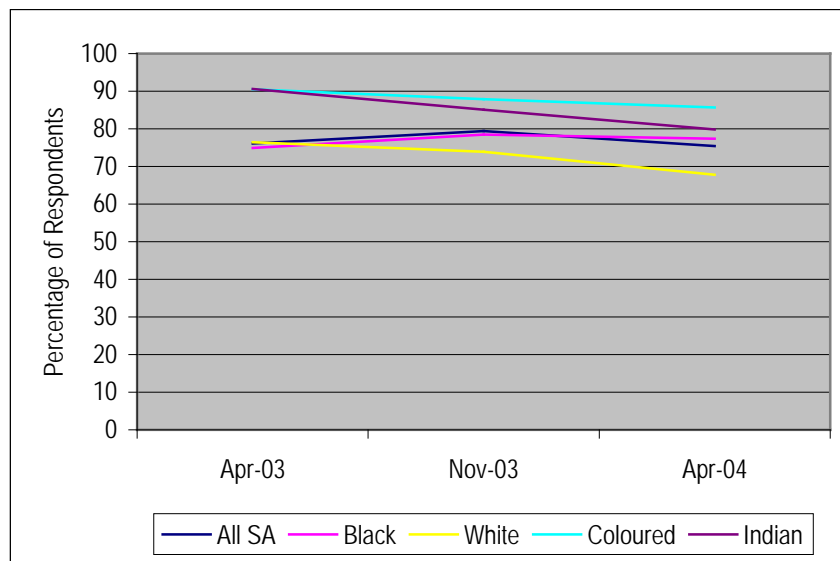
10.2 Forgetting the past

It would seem that whilst there certainly is need for acknowledgement, recognition, remembering and healing, there is certainly also a need for South Africans to channel their energies into creating a nation that is peaceful, productive and forward-looking. As Alwinus Mhlatsi, appearing before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) argued: “We have children to bring up”. It would appear that, provided people have sufficiently addressed the demons of this country’s past, a willingness to move forward and improve the country and their own place within it, can only be beneficial for the reconciliation process.

⁵⁷ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.

⁵⁸ Quinn, J (2003) *Acknowledgement: The Road to Forgiveness*. Institute on Globalization and the Human Conditions Institute Working Paper Series GHC 03/1. January 2003.

Figure 34: Perceived desirability of forgetting about the past and moving on (by race).



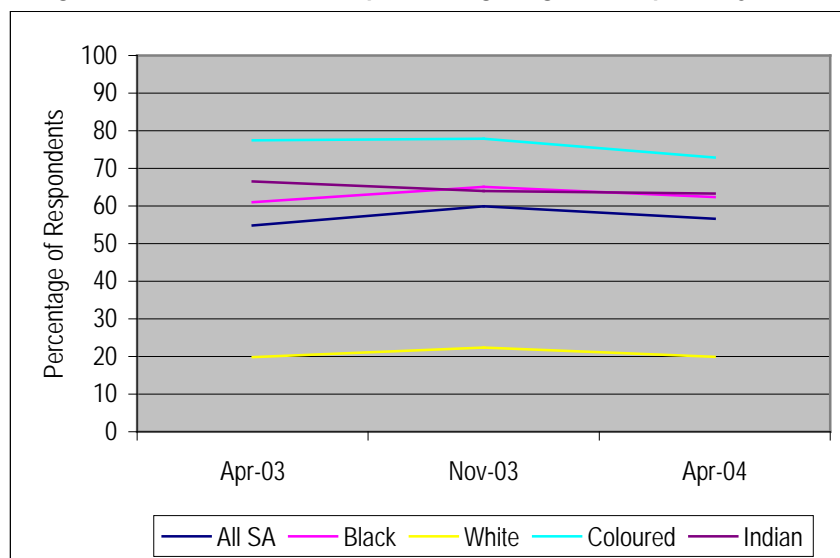
Question asked: *I want to forget about the past and just get on with my life* (Percentage in Agreement)

In November 2003 eight out of ten South Africans expressed a desire to simply move on, and since then there has been no significant change. Interestingly this is one of the only questions that once disaggregated by race reveals very little difference in views between black and white South Africans.

Substantial will to confront the future instead of remaining confined in the past does exist. The question that beckons answering is whether any sizeable portions of those willing to move on, may actually feel that they are unable to do so for a variety of reasons, ranging from unhealed memories, historically-rooted structural disadvantages or suffocating levels of poverty.

10.3 Forgiving the past

Figure 35: Perceived attempts at forgiving for the past (by race).



Question asked: *I am trying to forgive those who hurt me during apartheid* (Percentage in Agreement)

The survey instrument also included a question intended to provide some insight into the state of readiness of South Africans to forgive. As apartheid did not affect all South Africans in the same way, the option of 'not applicable' was also included. There was no significant difference in the portion of citizens claiming the question was not applicable. Overall, 57% of South Africans said that they were actively trying to forgive those who hurt them during apartheid, and this portion has remained stable over time.

10.4. Vengeance

A great deal of debate has emerged over the question of the necessity of forgiveness in post-conflict societies. Increasingly scholars are examining perpetrator-victim relations from the opposite vantage point, focusing on the necessity of reducing levels of need for vengeance. Proponents of this view argue that vengeance or revenge represents the flipside of forgiveness, and occurs as a moral response to loss or wrongs based on the impulse to retaliate.⁵⁹

O'Malley, commenting on eleven workshops conducted with Khulumani Support group members, speaks about vengeance as the 'pacts' people make as a response to excessive loss.⁶⁰ He argues "these pacts may take the form of a vow to avenge the death, or a vow that nothing else will ever replace the deceased".⁶¹ Accordingly this seeking of revenge or vengeance will manifest itself if opportunities for venting and confronting the emotions evoked by the loss are not established. Similarly Jacoby asserts "vengeful anger is at its most powerful and pervasive when there are no mechanisms for releasing it through legitimate channels".⁶²

Hartwell has expanded upon this notion of vengeance as the reverse of forgiveness by adding a third dimension, which she refers to as 'passive resentment'. She describes this as "a neutral but volatile middle ground between forgiveness and revenge", at which people feel the need for vengeance, but do not generally act upon this impulse. If any individuals act on this need for vengeance, the majority will generally not approve of these acts, as most people falling into this category are likely to wait and see whether the new system will bring them justice.⁶³

The dangers of high levels of vengeance are clear. If unchecked, the response of victims may lapse into acts of aggression and violence. Besides the blatantly illegal nature of such acts, there is also an inherent danger that the retaliatory acts will be disproportionate to the wrongs committed, or may simply be waged against innocent "others whom they identify with perpetrators".⁶⁴ Moreover, when people seek to avenge the crimes perpetrated against themselves, there is potential for a situation whereby "the fantasy of revenge simply reverses the role of the perpetrator and victim, continuing to imprison the victim in horror and degradation".⁶⁵ Even the presence of high levels of 'passive resentment', if not constantly checked, have the potential to evolve into high levels of the need for vengeance. The result of this can be self-perpetuating circles of the victor's revenge that continue the conflict indefinitely.

⁵⁹ Marcia Hartwell. Interview: Cape Town, December 2002.

⁶⁰ O'Malley, G (1999) "Respecting Revenge: The Road to Reconciliation" in *Law, Democracy and Development*. Vol. 3.

⁶¹ Quoting Hamber, B. and R. Wilson (1999) "Symbolic Closure through memory, reparation and revenge in post-conflict societies." Paper presented at the Traumatic Stress in South Africa Conference hosted by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in association with the African Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. Johannesburg: Parktonian Hotel. 27 – 29 January 1999.

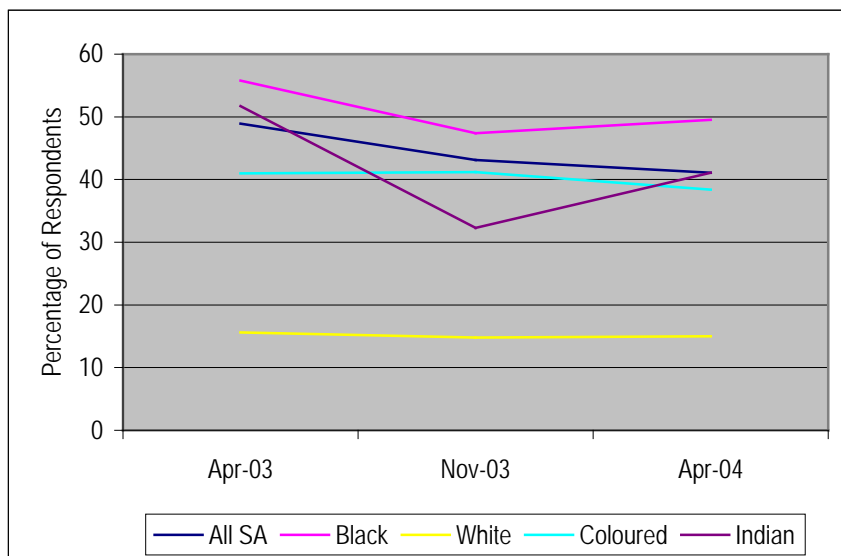
⁶² Jacoby, S (1983) *Wild Justice: The Evolution of Revenge*. New York: Harper & Row. Pp. 181.

⁶³ Interview: Cape Town, December 2002.

⁶⁴ O'Malley, G (1999) "Respecting Revenge: The Road to Reconciliation" in *Law, Democracy and Development*. Vol. 3.

⁶⁵ Minow, M (1998) *Between vengeance and forgiveness: facing history after genocide and mass violence*. Boston: Beacon Press. Pp. 13.

Figure 36: Perceived fairness of reciprocal discrimination (by race).

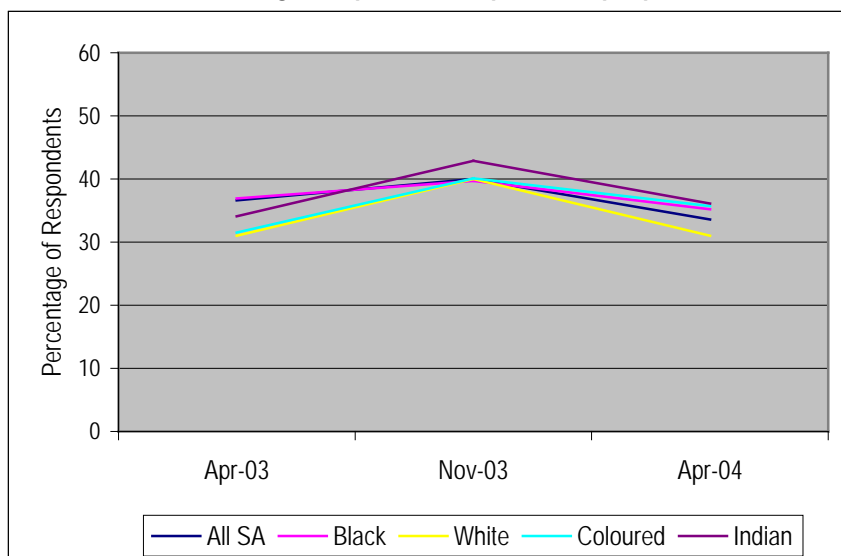


Question asked: *I think it is fair that the people who discriminated against others during apartheid feel what it is like to be discriminated against.* (Percentage in Agreement)

In response to the statement that it is fair that those who discriminated against other during apartheid are now discriminated against, 41% of South Africans agreed. It is noteworthy that during the time that lapsed between the April 2003 and April 2004 rounds of the survey, the percentage of people deeming this reverse-discrimination acceptable decreased by 9%. Although it is still too early to tell, the reconciliation process would certainly be aided by a steady trend of a decrease in the need for vengeance at this very basic level.

As may have been expected, with whites generally being beneficiaries and blacks the victims of discriminatory practices, only 15% of whites compared to a far larger portion of 50% of black South Africans agreed with the statement.

Figure 37: Perceived lack of right to publicise apartheid perpetrator names (by race).

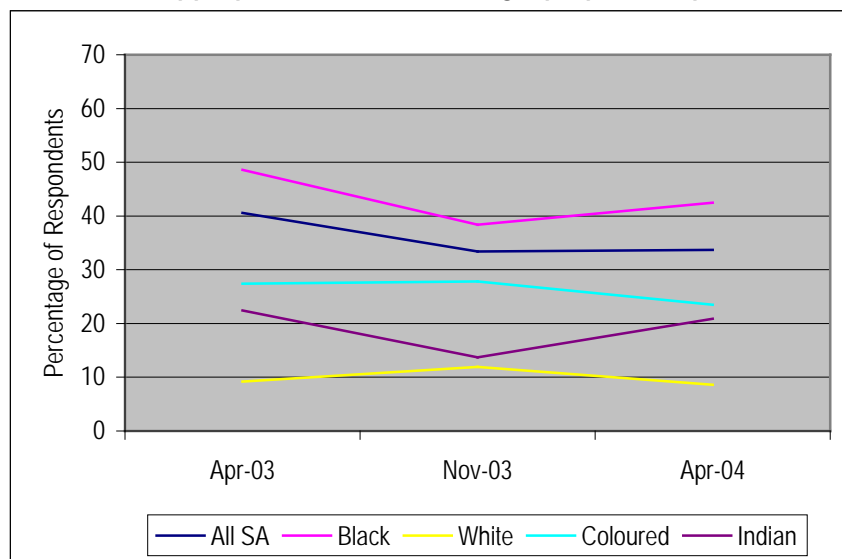


Question asked: *People who suffered during apartheid have no right to make public the names and abusive actions of those responsible.* (Percentage in Agreement).

On the question of publicly naming apartheid era perpetrators, a third of South Africans agreed that victims had no such right. Although not yet statistically significant, the portion in support of publicly naming apartheid-era perpetrators in April 2004 is lower than was the case in April or November of the previous year. This apparent decline will have to be closely monitored to see whether a trend is developing. Contrary to the previous statement, there is very little between the opinions of blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians in the responses to the question.

The third question, intended to measure more overt needs for vengeance, elicited very similar results. A third of all South Africans agreed that those responsible for apartheid should be punished, regardless of whether this decision was supported by a court of law. Although this remains at similar levels to responses in November 2003, it does represent a significant drop of 8% in the portion in support for extra legal action against perpetrators from the April 2003 levels.

Figure 38: Perceived appropriateness of extra-legal perpetrator punishment (by race).



Question asked: *People who abused others during apartheid must be punished, even if it means going against the decisions of the courts.* (Percentage in Agreement)

Over the course of last year all three questions reported a decline in public levels of passive resentment and desire to take vengeance. Should this fluctuation pan out into a fully-fledged trend of decreased need for some form of revenge, this will be beneficial to the reconciliation process. This seems to be indicative of a growing sense of allowing that part of South Africa's history to be laid to rest. This notion may have been augmented by the fact that the final outstanding chapters of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report were handed over in March 2003, and that the final decisions on the question of reparations was concluded by parliament shortly afterwards. The thus far positive finding needs to be monitored very closely.

11. Racial Reconciliation

A number of proponents of political reconciliation challenge the importance of any inter-group relations measures, asserting, for example, that "relatively negative attitudes toward members of other groups and a reluctance to engage in intimate social relationships may not have direct implications for national reconciliation"⁶⁶. They argue that the presence of adequate normative and

⁶⁶ Chapman, A.R. (2002) "Approaches to Studying Reconciliation". Paper presented at the Conference on Empirical Approaches to Studying Truth Commissions. Stellenbosch, South Africa. November 2002. Pg. 9.

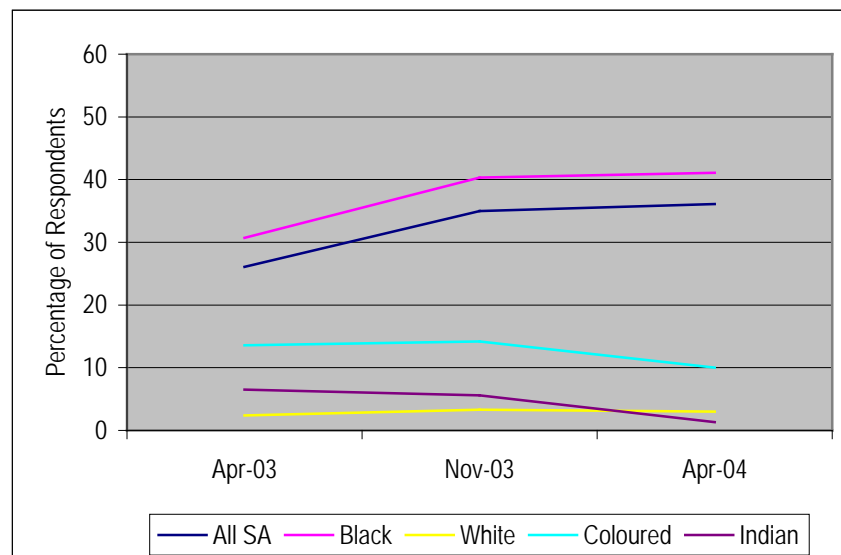
legislative parameters, together with a politically tolerant and generally respectful citizenry is sufficient for national reconciliation.

This research paper, whilst recognizing that previously divided parties do not need to “love each other” to live together, will argue that social distance, stereo-type and social contact indicators are important for national reconciliation. Low levels of social trust and understanding, based largely on stereotypical views of others, infringe drastically on people’s capacity to build workable relationships, which in turn are critical for rebuilding those structural social institutions that form the basis of a democratic society.

11.1. Cross-racial Contact

The first step to analyzing the state of race relations is to investigate how frequently, if ever, South Africans of different racial backgrounds mingle.

Figure 39: South Africans who never have cross-racial contact during their every-day interactions (by race)



Question asked: *On a typical day during the week, whether at work or otherwise, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people? (Percentage who said never).*

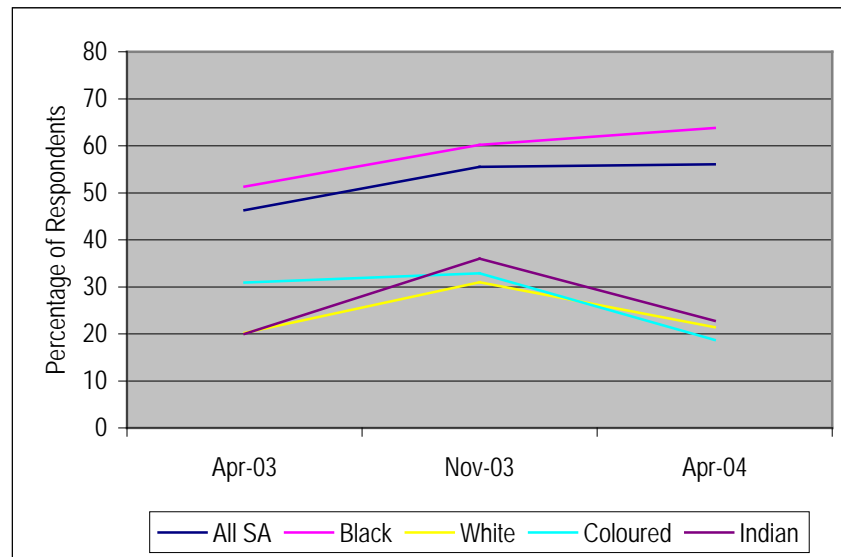
The results: more than a third of all South Africans report never having any cross-racial contact during an average day of the week, whether at work or otherwise. Although contact levels appear to have stabilized since the second half of last year, they still represent a 10% increase in the number of South African who never talk to South Africans of other races.

This increase is mostly among black South Africans, and it is likely that a small portion of this change could stem from fluctuations in employment levels. An increase in job losses could reduce overall levels of employment based inter-racial contact. It may also indicate that people are changing the places they go to - as the shopping and other facilities in townships and suburbs expand, so there may no longer be the need for people to go to the cities for such everyday activities, thereby reducing opportunities for cross-racial contact.

Alternatively, we could be witnessing a new brand of ‘group areas’ residential patterns. Although all residential areas are now legally open to all South Africans, one hears of situations where as black South Africans move into certain suburbs, the present inhabitants of these previously ‘white’,

'coloured' or 'indian' suburbs move out. But all these possibilities only present part of the answer and other factors need to be considered.

Figure 40: South Africans who never have cross-racial contact whilst socializing (by race)



Question asked: *When socialising in your own home or the homes of friends, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people? (Percentage who said never).*

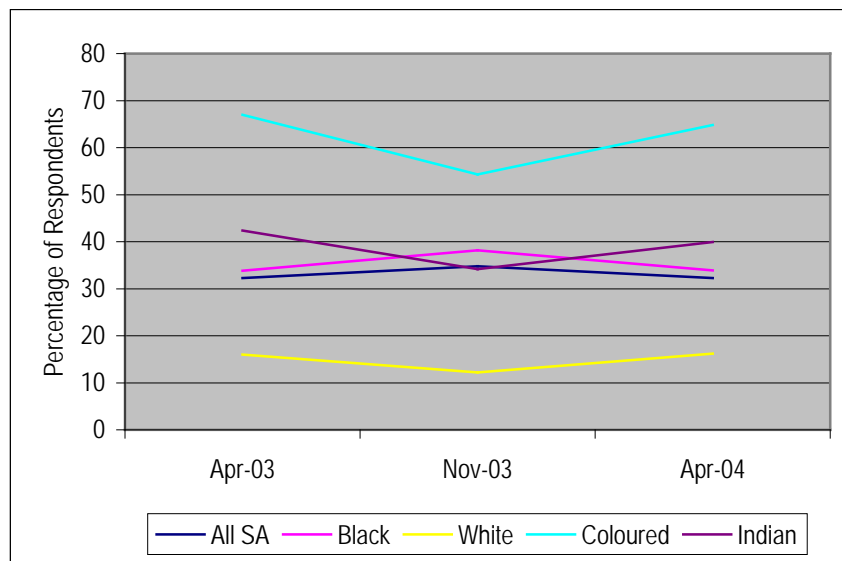
Overall there is a similar pattern with regard to more voluntary, social cross-racial contact. More than half of all South Africans, and in fact, 10% more than was the case in April last year, never socialise with people who do not belong to the same racial group as themselves.

Breaking down the data by race reveals that far fewer whites, coloureds and Indians than blacks report never interacting with members of other races on any given weekday and in social occasions. This is hardly surprising given that the great majority of the South African population is black and that it is more likely that members of the white, coloured and Indian minority groups make contact with black South Africans, than it is for the mass of black South Africans to make contact with the comparatively much smaller groups of Indians, coloureds and whites. Additionally, many black South Africans spend their days in the country's townships, which are very rarely visited by white, coloured and Indian South Africans and are therefore subject to a certain degree of involuntary racial isolation.

On the whole, despite the fact that there may be a slight increase in cross-racial contact among the minority groups, cross-racial contact levels remain at similar levels as during the latter part of last year, ruling out the possibility of an increase of interaction across racial divides.

Although about a third of respondents reveal that they would welcome more contact with people of other races – and this has remain unchanged over time, South Africans of different races also hold sharply differing views on the extent of desired social contact. Only 16% of whites, 34% of blacks and 40% of Indians, compared to 65% of coloureds want more frequent contact. However, 20% of blacks compared to 11% of whites want less frequent contact.

Figure 41: Preferred Frequency of Inter-racial Contact (by race)⁶⁷

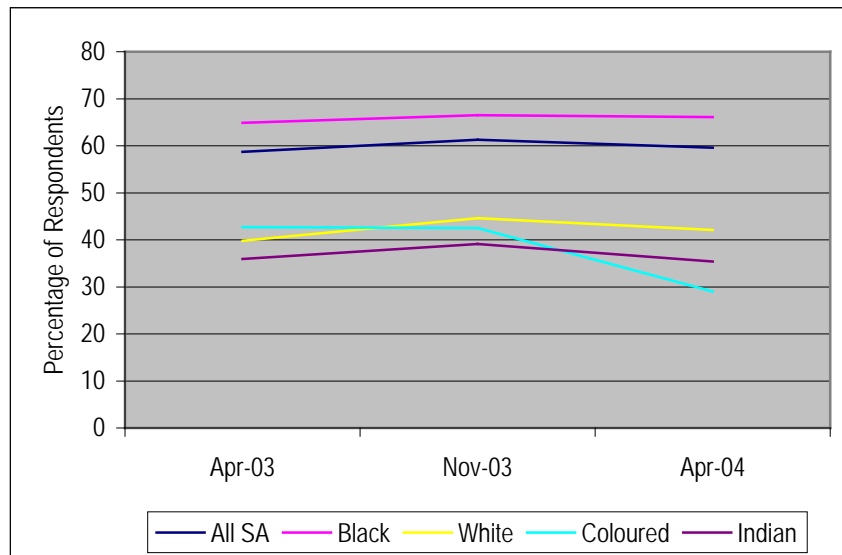


Question asked: *If you had a choice, would you want to talk to people of another race group* (Percentage who wanted more frequent contact).

11.2. Cross-racial Preconceptions

Although there is no conclusive verdict on whether cross-racial contact enhances racial harmony, it does seem likely that a lack of contact, in particular contact in a more relaxed 'social' environment, would not provide many opportunities for existing stereotypes and prejudices to be dispelled.

Figure 42: Difficulty with cross-racial Understanding (by race)



Question asked: *I find it difficult to understand the customs and ways of (GROUP) people.* (Percentage in Agreement).

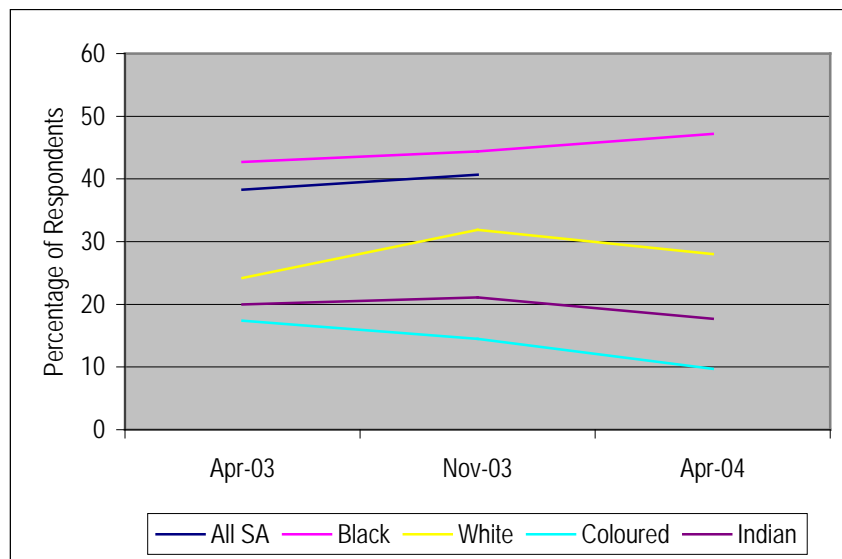
It is therefore not surprising that around 60% of South Africans continue to struggle to understand their fellow South Africans from other racial backgrounds, and this percentage has remained stable over the course of the year and a half.

⁶⁷ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

Within the different racial groups, the proportion that struggles to understand their fellow citizens from diverse racial backgrounds has also remained stable, the exception being quite a sharp decline amongst coloureds. On the whole, black South Africans are affected most by a difficulty in understanding the customs and ways of other racial groups. This could largely be attributed to the greater extent of social isolation experienced by black South Africans, though other possible reasons should be explored.

Compared to the almost two thirds of respondents claiming to have trouble understanding people of other races, substantially fewer South Africans report having trouble trusting people of other race groups.

Figure 43: Cross-racial distrust (by race)



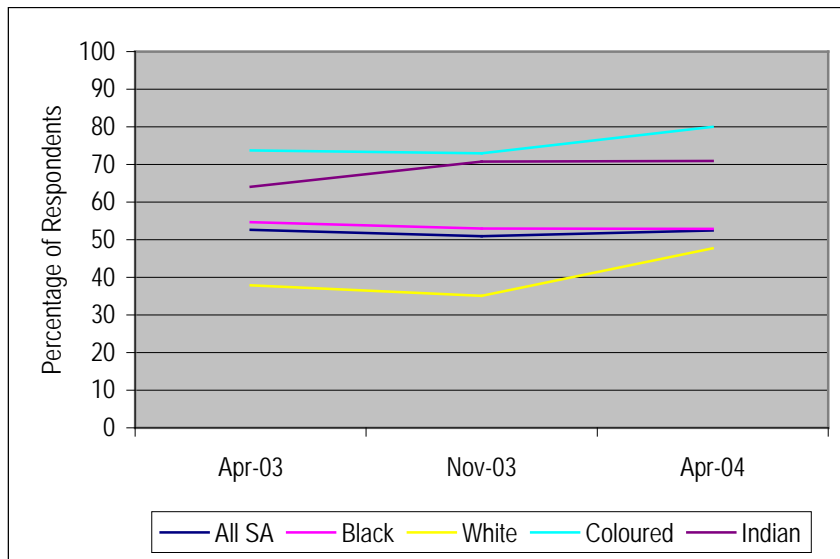
Question asked: (GROUP) people are untrustworthy. (Percentage in Agreement)

This measure of cross-racial perceptions also remains relatively static over time, with only whites revealing a significant upswing in inter-racial distrust of 8% during the course of last year, followed by a 4% downswing since then. Between November last year and April this year there was also a 7% drop in the portion of coloured South Africans claiming that people from other racial backgrounds are untrustworthy.

11.3. Cross-racial social distance

Looking at the national statistics there has also been little change with regard to people's views of living in a neighbourhood dominated by another race. Just over half of all South Africans have no problem with broadly integrated neighbourhoods. Clear racial differences exist, with whites revealing the greatest resistance to integrated neighbourhoods and coloureds the greatest enthusiasm.

Figure 44: Views of racially diverse neighbourhoods (by race)

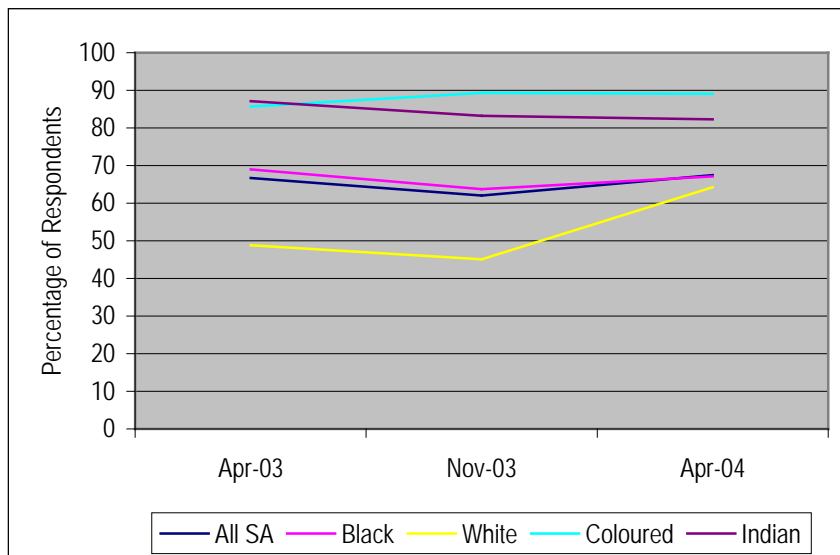


Question asked: Living in a neighbourhood where half my neighbours are (GROUP) people. (Percentage who approve).

The data also show that on a national level there has been no increase in the proportion of citizens who approve of inter-racial neighbourhoods over the past year and a half. The only possible exception would be the coloured and white communities. Between November last year and April this year the proportion of whites who approved of racially-mixed neighbourhoods has increased by 10% from 35% to 48%, whilst amongst coloureds it has increased from 73 to 80%.

Racially diverse, if not meaningfully integrated, schools are met with greater approval by South Africans. More than two-thirds of South Africans approve, and after a small dip in support levels towards the latter part of last year, the degree of approval rose again to 68% of the population being in favour of mixed schools.

Figure 45: Views of direct Inter-racial contact at Schools (by race)



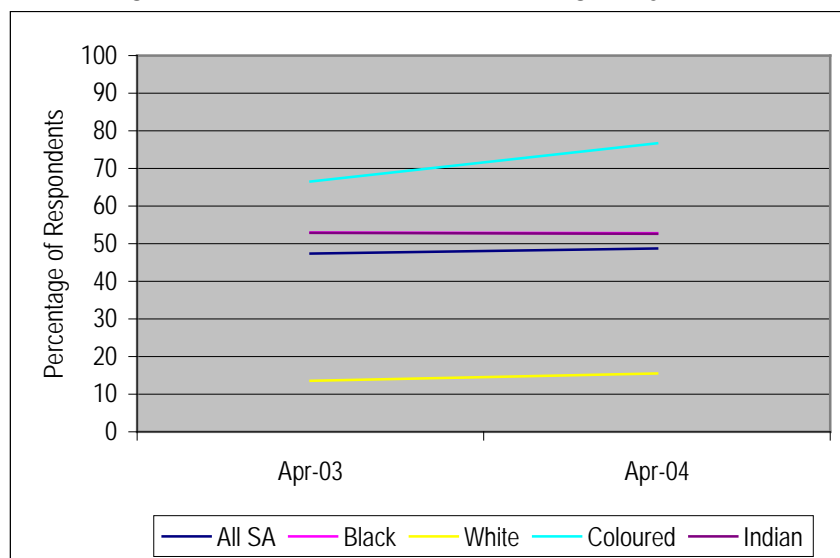
Question asked: Having a (GROUP) person sitting next to my child, or the child of my family member, at school. (Percentage who approve).

Again approval ratings are lowest amongst white South Africans, but whites have also undergone the greatest change, with almost 20% more whites in support of racially-mixed schools in April this year than in November last year.

The same can not be said about the attitudes of whites towards mixed marriages. Only 16% of whites approve of these, and there is no sign of attitudes changing. Approval amongst indian and black South Africans has remained stable at 53%. The only change occurred in the coloured community, where the acceptance of mixed marriages has risen by 10%, meaning that 77% of coloured South Africans approve of mixed marriages.

It is interesting to note that in terms of the national data, support levels for mixed marriages within the direct family are almost the same as those for living in neighbourhoods dominated by South Africans of other races.

Figure 46: Views of Inter-racial Marriages (by race)⁶⁸



Question asked: *Having a close relative marry a [GROUP] person (Percentage who approve)*

When looking at the state of racial attitudes through the lens of the past decade of phenomenal change, most obviously in the political, legislative and institutional sphere, but also in the realm of the economic and social, a lack of any overall change in perceptions over the past year and a half is somewhat disconcerting.

In fact, on a concrete, behavioural level, the data indicated a temporary increase in the portions of South African society that lived in almost complete isolation over the course of last year. Fortunately it does appear that this trend has stabilized, but levels of contact will need continued close monitoring.

The salience of cross-racial contact and interaction for amiable race relations and reconciliation is enormous. At the same time, levels of contact may, in actual fact, be the most decisive indicator of the actual state of race relations.

⁶⁸ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey.

The survey shows that South Africans do appear to still be in the grasp of a collection of generalised preconceptions and hardened stereo-types. An inability to understand the 'other' continues to loom large. Breaking down these barriers takes time.

But there is hope. There is some indication that people are willing to try. The two-thirds of the population that support integrated schools may be a good place to start. The increased support for integrated schools and neighbourhoods amongst whites is therefore a good sign. Schools can play an integral role in building understanding and trust. Although there is moderate support for racially diverse neighbourhoods and families, schools are by nature better suited to facilitate stereo-type reduction work. The success of schools in changing these somewhat disconcerting figures on cross-racial distrust and a lack of understanding will depend on how the curriculum addresses these issues, but also on the extent to which teachers create spaces for this to happen.

12. The State of Reconciliation

As the nation commemorates its first decade of democracy, there is much to celebrate. But, a long path to being a reconciled nation remains. Even within the short period of time in which the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* has been attempting to capture some the attitudes of South Africans towards an evolving 'new South Africa', some significant changes in opinions and perceptions have already become visible.

Between early 2003 and 2004 there seemed to be a slight rise in optimism, with South Africans as a whole appearing slightly less fearful of their economic, physical and cultural security. This became evident in the slight increase in confidence in their physical safety, their economic security and the cultural autonomy for the next 12 months to 2 years. If this rise in optimism is sustained for more than a few years, and can extend to South Africans expectations for the medium to long-term human security and economic survival, there will be a greater deal of social trust and public confidence.

It also appears as if South Africans are feeling slightly more confident of their leaders, both with regard to their perceived trustworthiness and attentiveness to the concerns, needs and interests of the country's citizens. On a slightly more negative note, there has not been any improvement when it comes to ordinary people feeling that they can do anything to make the country's leaders listen to them.

When it comes to South Africans confidence in the institutions of the state, as opposed to its political leaders, some positive change also occurred. Between the three rounds of the survey there has been a slight increase in the portion of South Africans who believe that Parliament treats all South Africans fairly, and a slightly larger increase in the portion saying that Parliament can be trusted to do the right thing for the country. Less positively, there has been no improvement when it comes to people's beliefs that if Parliament makes unpopular decisions, the entire institution can simply be disbanded.

Hence it would seem that confidence levels in the will and ability of the country leaders and major institutions of democracy has improved slightly, but it is not yet clear whether this is a short-term fluctuation or a long-term sustainable trend.

At the same time, it is still far too early to tell whether this change in attitudes is actually the early signs of a trend of greater acceptance and respect of the essential institutions and procedures of democracy – a change in political values that is critical for the consolidation of the reconciliation

process. In a similar vein there is no clear evidence as to whether respect for the rule of law is actually increasing or decreasing, in that there has been a slight improvement when it comes to respecting the rule of a government one did not vote for and waiting for the legal solution, even if taking the law into 'one's own hands' might be more efficient. At the same time, however, there was no change in the portion saying it is acceptable to partially 'bend' laws, as long as they are not 'broken', which together with the very small changes in the other two questions suggests that there has not been a significant increase in unconditional respect for the sanctity of the rule of law.

There has also been little change in South African's views on dealing with the country's complex and difficult past. There has been no growth in acknowledgement of what happened during apartheid, and this appears mirrored by a lack of growth in the portion of South Africans asserting that they are either trying to forgive or forget the past. There has, however, been a slight decrease in the need for vengeance, which could prove beneficial for the reconciliation process.

Some changes have also occurred in South African's views of each other. After the temporary upswing in commitment to national unity in November 2003, abstract levels of support for the nation-building process have stabilized at quite a high level. At a more concrete level, however, there has been no real change in the portion of South Africans who would have no problem belonging to a political party dominated by another race. This suggests that this theoretical support for creating a unified South Africa is often watered down when it comes to implementing the actions that could achieve this end goal.

The same dynamics appear at play when it comes to people's views of actual local-level integration with their fellow South Africans. Between the two 2003 rounds of the survey there was an increase in the portion of South Africans who said they never have any cross-racial contact, whether during their average day during the week, or whilst socializing. The April 2004 contact levels are virtually the same as those of the November 2003 round, suggesting that the April 2003 survey may have under-reported the portion who never enjoy cross-racial contact, and that the last two surveys present a more accurate picture of the lack of cross-racial interaction. That being said, it is also not encouraging that there has been no reported increase in desire to have more cross-racial contact.

Closely linked to these findings are the findings that there has been no reported improvement in the ease with which South Africans understand and trust their fellow-citizens of other races. As in both 2003 rounds of the survey, the April 2004 survey reported that approximately 60% of South Africans struggle to understand people of other races, and 40% don't believe they are trustworthy.

Breaking down these preconceptions and stereo-types will not be an easy task, not least because South Africans have not shown any significant increase in their desire for various agents, be it the media or faith communities, to facilitate more dialogue and stereo-type reduction work.

There was also no change in the responses of South Africans to questions about their attitudes towards varying intensities of racial integration. Around 70% continue to find racially-integrated schools acceptable, 50% continue to find racially-integrated neighbourhoods acceptable and 40% mixed marriages. It would appear that schools may offer the best platform in which to try and facilitate the breaking down of many racial preconceptions and stereo-types, not only because racially-integrated schools appear to be the locus where racial mixing is least threatening and most acceptable to South Africans, but also because the nature of the school environment lends itself to pro-actively taking steps to advance the reconciliation process. It appears that South Africa's teachers and the National Education Department have an additional responsibility towards the nation and its reconciliation process.