

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE OF INFORMAL LEADERS IN WORK GROUPS: A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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By

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DECLARATION

I, Bennie Wienekus, hereby declare that this research thesis is my own and original work and that all the sources have been accurately reported and acknowledged. This document, in its entirety or in part, has not previously been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification.

B. W. Wienekus

31 January 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been twenty years since F W De Klerk unbanned the African National Congress. This momentous occasion changed overnight the business landscape in South Africa and the way business were done for many decades. Before and after this crucial moment in South African history, leaders played a significant role in bringing change about as well as managing it.

Whether hierarchical or non-hierarchical, leadership manifests itself through all spheres of civilisation. Within any collective, formal as well as informal leadership are always at work and within the environment there always seems to be an individual that appears to hold equal or more influence and sway over the collective. This research investigates the characteristics and role of this individual, the informal leader. In addition, against the melting pot of the diversity of culture, social structures, economics, and demographics in South Africa, the influence of culture on how leadership is being perceived and experienced is also researched.

The research is grounded in a post-positivists approach and conducted within a constructivist-interpretative paradigm. A qualitative approach is followed with personal interviews as the method to collect the data from respondents. The interview protocol consists of a combination of questions containing questions of both a quantitative and qualitative nature. Questions of a qualitative nature were open-ended and of an in-depth nature.

The research is two pronged. The focus of the research is an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in the South African Motor Industry and for the primary goal of the research data was collected from employees within work groups of the OEM. The primary research goal investigates the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and if there is any congruence with that of the role and characteristics of formal leaders. The study found no fundamental differences between the characteristics and role of formal and informal leaders. The characteristics and role of leaders between different cultures also appear to be the same.

For the secondary research goal – determining whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups could be underpinned in the principles of Ubuntu and if consideration should be given to any cultural differences between leaders and followers by organisational

hierarchies – the literature was reviewed in order to reach a conclusion with regards this goal. The literature indicates that culture does affect leadership, especially on how the leadership is executed and experienced in a multicultural society and if ignored, will have a detrimental effect on effective leadership.

In order to strive towards achieving maximum productivity, it is imperative that management in South African organisations be aware of the changed dynamic within their organisations as well as on the global stage. The research therefore ends with the practical implications of informal leaders for organisations in South Africa. It is recommended that the importance and contribution of informal leaders within work groups in a multi-culture organisation needs not only to be considered as an element of group leadership, but should be accommodated by the organisation.

It is also recommended that organisations recognise the cultural differences between leaders and followers in organisations and the possible consequences if ignored. If the competitive pressures and requirements of globalisation are ignored against the background of Afrocentric expectations and motivational imperatives of the South African workforce, it will result in an ineffective workforce, which will in due course render these organisations uncompetitive and non-sustainable locally and globally.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Chapter

“There is an objective reality out there, but we view it through the spectacles of our beliefs, attitudes, and values.”

(Myers, 1990)

Why does society need leaders and what makes a leader? Why is leadership such an enigma? This concept has certainly been studied and researched like few other concepts in the field of Humanities. Conceivably the answer to the first question is out of a necessity of society as expressed by Harry S. Truman (1884 – 1972), the thirty-third President of the United States of America (1945–1953): “Men make history, and not the other way round. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.” Will society be moribund without leadership? Do society and the environment produce leaders when required, or conversely, are society and the environment as we experience it a product of its leadership?

Whether hierarchical or non-hierarchical, leadership manifests itself through all spheres of civilisation. However, it certainly does not infer that leaders are always the formally appointed or elected representatives of a collective. To the researcher this enigma is made more intriguing by the colloquialism of the so-called power behind the throne. There always seems to be someone within the collective already projecting a formal and representative leadership that appears to hold equal or more influence and sway over the collective and this without any hierarchical power or authority that comes with the position of a formal leader. The researcher terms these non-official leaders in any collective, informal leaders.

Other than for reasons of self-interest to drive hidden agendas, why do these informal leaders like to remain in the background and why are they not interested in becoming the formal leader or representative of the collective? This could be for various reasons and although not the research question in this study, it is pertinent as, paradoxically, without this individual’s motives and characteristics that endear him or her to other individuals and consequently categorise him or her as an the informal leader, informal leaders will not exist. It could be out of the individual’s

own volition, but for whatever the individual's reasons, the followers within the collective where the informal leader finds him – or herself, have attached certain characteristics to this individual. This individual not only plays a role or fulfils a certain function within this collective, but must also have a concomitant influential function and responsibility too.

It would be difficult to dispute the role that leaders played in South Africa, both formal and informal, during the years leading up to the end of apartheid as well as during the period following this catalytic event. If it were not for the influence of these leaders within communities and organisations across diverse and wide divisions existing during this period, the socio-economic conditions and political landscape in South Africa of today would have been completely different. In addition to having the courage of their convictions, these leaders had enthusiasm for their visions with a non-wavering self-confidence, which they applied trenchantly for the improvement and betterment of society. They were certainly courageous and skillful and this enabled them to “seize the day.” Today the need for leaders is greater than ever before and society cannot afford indecision while the world's socio-political and socio-economic environments are in a state of flux, as they have been in South Africa for the last sixty years.

1.2 Structure of the Chapter

In this chapter a brief outline is given first of the societal background to the study, what the researcher considers to be important circumstances to the study and why the concept of a South African perspective of leaders/leadership and informal leaders/informal leadership is deemed to be appropriate to the South African business setting. The reasons for the researcher's own personal interest are then discussed whereafter the value and significance of the study is touched upon, followed by the research methodology adopted for the purposes of this research. After a synopsis of the research question and the topic of the study and any conclusion reached, the organisation of the dissertation is briefly outlined.

1.3 Societal Background to the Study

If there is a difference in the context between how leaders and the role of leadership is viewed in the Western world and the context from an African perspective, it should be examined as it could imply that the execution of the leadership process from a Western standpoint in an African environment will have a bearing on the outcome of the effectiveness of leadership as well as the

relationship between leader and follower or subordinate. If there is a difference, could one then not presume that there is a probability that there could be a fundamental difference between the role of informal leaders within Westernised and Africanised societies too and if so, should consideration be given for cause to integration of African leadership principles with the principles of Westernised Leadership, both formal and informal?

The South African business community was ill-prepared in February 1990 when, four-and-a-half years after P W Botha's infamous Rubicon speech on 15 August 1985, the African National Congress (**ANC**) was unbanned by F W De Klerk. Although there was a clarion call by enlightened local political and business leaders for some time for this to happen, the South African business community was not prepared for the consequences. Once the country was readmitted to the global economy after the **ANC**'s achievement of majority rule in May 1994, it set in motion a process that changed forever the economic landscape in South Africa.

It has been fifteen years since this momentous change in our society. In the researcher's experience, the average business leaders and managers in South Africa today, especially those of the pre-1994 generation who were schooled, trained and experienced in the ethos, dogma and principles of the apartheid era, at times find it difficult to accept and embrace this environment and continuously changing environment. The plethora of legislation promulgated by the ANC government since the transition of power to socially engineer the mindset of the then predominantly white business community to accept that the business environment has changed, gives substance to this reluctance. Moreover there is general resistance to be found within employees of mainly white owned and managed organisations in South Africa. Despite the changes that have taken place since 1994, seven years later it was borne out by whites still being overrepresented in management (Booyesen, 2001). Whites as a whole still made up 57% of managers in South Africa in 2001 (males 41% of management and females 16% of management). The corresponding figure for blacks was 27% (respectively 20% and 7%).

Other than the average human being's resistance to change in general, there must be some fundamental and underlying reason for this. Throughout South African organisations, the changed environment brought about by political, economic, and social forces, required corporate transformation in order for organisations to remain competitive and successful – certainly for public enlisted organisations. These extra-organisational forces (Swanepoel, et al., 2003) were

undoubtedly handled and managed within the ideology of change management. Yet, the resistance appears to prevail. Why is this?

The researcher is of the opinion that consideration should be given to the possibility that this reluctance could be attributable to a generation of business managers and leaders being grounded in - and this also during the apartheid era – a Westernised school of thought, which is understandable, because unfortunately, as a consequence of all the years of political and economic isolation, the South African business system was considerably isolated from the world economy at the end of apartheid (Binedell, 1993). The local economy was at the time controlled by a group of conglomerates, of which the four largest controlled 83% of the companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (Jones, 1999). This group of conglomerates represented the leadership and brains trust of the South African economy and was represented by SA Mutual, Sanlam, Anglo-American Corporation, Liberty/Standard, Rembrandt/Volkskas, and Anglovaal. Their training and values were not only steeped in a Westernised approach to management, but were also cemented in and influenced by apartheid legislation (Jones, 1999; Fine and Rustomjee, 1996).

The basis of leadership literature and the study thereof in the Westernised industrialised culture is founded on a limiting set of Westernised assumptions as most of the established theories of leadership and approximately 98% of the empirical evidence available have a typical American character (House and Aditya, 1997). According to House and Aditya (1997), the theories have an individualistic foundation rather than a collectivistic foundation, stress follower responsibilities rather than rights, and emphasise assumptions of rationality rather than simplicity, religion or superstition.

Contrasting this with the reality of the South African business environment, which was and still is operating in a completely different cultural setting than its Western counterparts, the researcher's perception that the average business manager and leader is reluctant to embrace the change in this new and constantly changing environment, could have its foundation in a lack of knowledge and understanding of the underlying culture of the majority of the employees and customers in the country, which is of an Afrocentric nature. To state the obvious, South Africa is an African country with a culture vastly different to Western paradigms. Booysen (2001) found that the culture of white South African managers is largely congruent with Western or

Eurocentric management, whereas the culture of black managers differs greatly from that of their white counterparts.

Because culture affects the way in which human beings in all societies get together and perform certain collective acts and resolve universal problems, which has to do with establishing direction, co-ordination and motivation (Pascale, 1990), it follows that the majority of employees in South Africa, namely black South Africans, will have expectations of being directed and lead from an African perspective. The establishing of direction, co-ordination and motivation therefore will be based on the situation and the outcome of the type of leadership that manifests itself. This should be driven by circumstances faced and the nature and characteristics of the followers- the employees – because leadership is socially and culturally determined (Pascale, 1990). In the West, it will be an individual that will be looked up to for leadership (top-down approach), whereas, in the African context a leader is said to be anybody whom the community can look up to and leadership is built on participation (bottom-up approach) (Ndaba, 1994; Van Der Colff, 2003). In addition, in an African context, formal community leaders are not the only leaders because of the participatory nature of the communal process; informal leaders play an equitable role too (Ndaba, 1994).

The concept of informal leaders is not foreign within the Western framework of leadership. These leaders are deemed employees who are not designated as a leader by the organisation and whose roles are not necessarily associated with a formal position within the organisation's hierarchy (Pielstick, 2000a). There is a wide variety of literature and research on formal leadership. A search of the literature reveals little beyond a few references to informal leadership in small groups (Mullins, 1999; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000). Unfortunately, little is known about informal leaders' leadership behaviours (Pescosolido, 2001) and information comparing the processes of formal leading with the processes of informal leading is sparse in leadership research (Pielstick, 2000a).

To the researcher it appears that there is a difference not only in how both formal and informal leaders are seen from the respective Western and African viewpoints, but also in the role formal and informal leaders should play within the boundaries of leader and follower. It is therefore opined that the divergence of these viewpoints contributes to South African business managers and leaders with a Westernised worldview failing to be sufficiently accepting and embracing of change. It is suggested that they could be more effective in their organisations if they were

prepared to familiarise themselves with the African culture and adopt the principles of African management and leadership as encapsulated in the principles of Ubuntu. Informal leaders play an important and much more extended role within the African context than in the Western context.

The stakeholders in the local business community and economy are faced with a harsh reality. The economic playing field has changed dramatically and business and management principles which were adequate and appropriate to operate and function in a protective and regulated economic environment for decades during the previous Government's rule, are now outmoded and archaic in the global economic arena (Crafford, et al., 2006). Cognisance has to be taken of the cultural influence and expectations of the stakeholders in the local business community and unless this is done by leaders and managers alike, none will be effective in maximising any organisation's performance. The role that an informal leader could play in assisting with the management and leading of an organisation should therefore be investigated and considered. With the contemporary emphasis in organisations on human capital in today's business environment, this role and influence of the informal leader in any organisation – the collective – should be harnessed for the benefit of the organisation.

1.4 Researcher's Background to the Study

Other than the societal background to the study, the researcher has a personal awareness of the concept of informal leaders. This awareness and interest is grounded in the English idiom "two is company, three is a crowd." The fun between three people is not the same as the fun between two people. The dynamics between two people generally will be based on freedom of choice and mutual consent and Bass's (1990) definition of leadership that it is a process of influence would not be that applicable between two people. In this dyadic relationship, if the one party does not accept being influenced, it would be this party's freedom of will and freedom of choice to distance itself from whatever situation is faced, and no one is left with a bruised ego.

Yet when a third person joins this existing dyadic relationship, the dynamic changes within the newly established triad; reaching any consensus or agreement now is not a simple matter anymore. Unless the influencing role of any one of three parties in the group is of such a nature that it fails to generate the necessary solidarity within the triad, the relationships within the group will suffer and hence its functionality and solidarity too. Within this small grouping of three, the individual with the characteristic that gives him or her the strongest influencing power, will

prevail and will be deemed to be the leader of the triad until such time as different circumstances may dictate that one of the other members of the grouping perhaps has more influential power and become the new leader.

In a small informal grouping of three, the function of leadership will always be in a state of flux because if one does not accept this dynamic anymore, there is still one's freedom of will and freedom of choice not to be part of the developing condition and situation one might walk away from it or even counter-influences the situation. However, when transposed into bigger formal groups, like organisations or groups within organisations, the crux changes and any non-agreeing party cannot just distance him- or herself from the situation without sometimes great emotional and financial cost to him- or herself. It is common acceptance that in these formal groups there is always a formal leader, either by hierarchical appointment or by consensus and formal election from within the group.

However, the election and appointment of formal leaders poses a conundrum. Unless unanimously elected, any elected or appointed leader could be leading members of the group who either did not vote for the leader, or think that the wrong person was appointed by the hierarchy into the position to be non-receptive of this leader. The researcher takes cognisance that the elected or appointed leader has to be able to influence the non-supportive or disgruntled members of the group to become followers to the group's common cause in order to become effective. Unfortunately, this is simplistic and does not happen in reality as there are too many variables that influence this influential role of the formal leader within the group.

Within these formal groups, there will always be a member of the group who, for some reason or other will be looked up to by the other members of the group for assistance, guidance and leadership outside the hierarchal structure. It is this member, the informal leader of the group that is of interest to the researcher. Does this member have special characteristics that catapult him or her into this informal position? What role does this member play within the dynamics and functions of the group?

Jago (1982) found that notwithstanding thousands of empirical studies on the concept of leadership during the last 75 years, a common and mutual understanding of what differentiates a leader from a non-leader, as well as what makes a leader effective or non-effective, has yet to emerge. Two decades later there are still as many definitions of the concept of leadership as there

are authors on the subject, resulting not only in many diverse definitions of leadership, but also in numerous studies in the many different aspects of leadership (Hughes, et al., 2002; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000).

This recognition of individuals taking on the role of informal leadership within small and large groupings of diverse people has also been reinforced within a more social and less structured environment. The researcher served in various positions on executive committees of sporting bodies, from club to provincial level, for a period of twenty-one years. During this period the same role of informal leaders was observed in that at times the elected senior representative of affiliated sporting codes to the mother club regularly was not the real leader, but rather a pawn of a vested interest with its own leader. In other instances, this informal leader did not have any desire to be elected to any formal position, was apolitical, had a benign position, and preferred to remain in the background.

The researcher has taken cognisance of the role informal leaders can play within formal and informal environments in managing and leading situations, and has actively engaged this phenomenon to assist him in achieving the goals of whichever collective group was represented by him. From this experience, he recognises the very important role an informal leader can play in assisting the formal hierarchical structure of any organisation.

1.5 The Significance of this Study

Organisational behaviour is a field of study that investigates the impact that individuals, groups, and structures have on behaviour within organisations for the purpose of applying such knowledge toward improving an organisation's effectiveness (Robbins, 1998). Managers also use organisational behaviour to understand themselves better as well as their subordinates, their superiors, their peers and colleagues and all other people inside the organisation. Within the organisation the confluence of the individual, the group, and the organisation system will determine how the organisation behaves (Robbins, 1998) and from the study of successful organisations, the importance of achieving productivity through the effective management of people and their commitment to, and involvement with, the organisation has become very clear (Mullins, 1999).

In order to strive towards achieving maximum productivity, it is imperative that management in South African organisations be aware of the changed dynamic within their organisations as well as on the global stage. If the competitive pressures and requirements of globalisation are ignored against the background of Afrocentric expectations and motivational imperatives of the South African workforce, it will result in an ineffective workforce, which will in due course render these organisations uncompetitive and non-sustainable locally and globally. If organisational behaviour is therefore not utilised by managers to not only understand themselves better but all other stakeholders and processes within the organisation, it has to be surmised that failing to recognise and understand the different cultural background of subordinates, will contribute to ineffectiveness and ultimately render the organisation uncompetitive.

In addition, the importance and contribution of informal leaders within work groups in a multi-culture organisation needs not only to be considered as an element of group leadership, but should be accommodated too by the organisation. However, the phenomenon of informal leaders and the use thereof within the organisation has to take into account the cultural grounding of the group members and should occur within an Afrocentric milieu. If the difference between the principles of Afrocentric leadership and management and that of a Westernised focus is ignored, no competitive advantage will be gained by the organisation.

A better understanding of the characteristics and role of the informal leader will enable management to harness the assistance of this individual to make groups more effective and assist management in the execution of its functions. A better understanding of informal leaders will also allow management to utilise the informal leader to substitute and compliment the formal leader's weaknesses in the group. Productivity will be enhanced within organisations and organisational behaviour within the local and global business context will improve too. Understanding more about the characteristics and role of informal leaders in groups will contribute to leadership theory, as it will underscore any differences between the characteristics and role of formal leaders and informal leaders.

1.6 Research Question and the Topic of this Study

The researcher's reality has been rooted in the main within a Westernised perspective of management and leadership principles. It recognises that this perspective limits a more inclusive grasp of the multi-cultural reality of the researcher's work environment. This study was therefore

undertaken to get a better understanding of the role and characteristics of informal leaders within a diverse working environment, with the unit of analysis populated mostly by employees with an African identity and background, but employed within a strongly cultured and long-established multi-national company.

The focus of the research is an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in the South African Motor Industry. Although a subsidiary of a multi-national European company that was established in the Eastern Cape more than fifty years ago, it also manufactures and produces non-European motor industry products. Since the re-introduction of the motor industry into the global economy, it has been exposed to new challenges of competitiveness. As a result this OEM has had to become more effective and efficient as an organisation in order to meet global challenges and remain viable, not only in South Africa but within the context of its group of global subsidiaries. After experiencing excessive plant related industrial unrest during the eighties and nineties, the company embraced a progressive human resources management programme, has a mature relationship with all represented trade unions, and is extensively involved in the local and surrounding communities. Because of the nature of its operations, widespread use is made of group work across all divisions within the OEM and the effective functioning of these groups is vital to the sustainable success of the company.

Do employees within work these groups recognise and acknowledge that, other than the formal hierarchical leaders within work groups, informal leaders do exist? Do fellow employees see any role for an informal leader within the work group? Are fellow employees able to identify any colleague within the work group as having leadership characteristics and do fellow employees deem this colleague to be an informal leader within the work group? What makes a colleague wear the mantle of an informal leader – is it incident related or as the result of certain characteristics? Does the role of informal leadership limit itself to interpersonal relationships between members of the work group or does the role augment task execution or performing of other duties within the group? What do fellow employees identify as the characteristics of the informal leaders? Could informal leaders be emerging leaders within the work group by showing interest in and availability for formal leadership development programmes? Are there any differences between the characteristics of formal leaders and informal leaders? Do informal leaders play the same role as formal leaders? Do group members recognise cultural differences within their work group? Do the role and characteristics of informal leaders have substance in the principles of Ubuntu?

These are some of the questions that will be addressed in this study; however the principal aim of this study is to investigate the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to determine whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders. Secondary to this, in view of the cultural diversity of the workplace and the role that the still predominantly white business leaders and managers play in contemporary business, to determine whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups could have any congruence with the principles of Ubuntu and should consideration be given to any cultural differences between leaders and followers by organisational hierarchies.

1.7 Research Methodology adopted in this Study

The research was conducted within an interpretive paradigm. A qualitative approach was followed as it was deemed most appropriate for collection of data in this research, with personal interviews as the method to collect the data from respondents. The data was collected on-site over a period of one week from an OEM in the motor industry in the Eastern Cape. An interview protocol consisting of 36 questions (Annexure E), with a combination of structured questions, unstructured questions and open-ended questions, was constructed and used to conduct and direct the interviews from a sample of 16 purposively selected employees.

The data was analysed through familiarisation and immersion by re-reading through field notes and the transcribed interview data many times over in order to get a thorough understanding of the data. This facilitated an in-depth understanding of the data, enabling the researcher to induce a theme or themes in the data and certain principles that naturally underlie the material (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). Coding of data was done during the development of the theme or themes to break the body of text data down into labelled, meaningful pieces. Thematic data was developed, and explored and elaborated on until no further insights appeared to emerge.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study of the role and characteristics of informal leaders is based on the follower's view of informal leaders' roles, the follower, and not from the emic view, the informal leader. The researcher's opinion that the reluctance of white managers to embrace the changed circumstances, could be attributed to this generation of business managers and leaders being

grounded in the apartheid paradigm and Westernised school of thought without any consideration of the cultural background of individuals and groups in organisations is based on an assumption and not empirical evidence. It is based on personal experience of this problem within the researcher's own work history and environment and a premise to the study.

The research was done only at a single OEM within its manufacturing division with mainly a male employment demographic. The demographic is also skewed in that the black Africans in the sample were only represented by amaXhosa males. It is therefore acknowledged that black Africans from a different area and demographic of South Africa could have a different perspective of leadership and of cultural differences. The interviewees of the sample population were also primarily drawn from hourly-paid employees and hence were members of the Labour Unions represented within the OEM. Because an interviewee's membership was outside the ambit of the research and not required to be disclosed by the interviewee, one has to take into account that responses to open-ended and in-depth questions could be tainted by an ideological lens and might not be from a pure cultural background. It is also recognised that the cultural and social background of salaried employees differ from those of hourly-paid employees and the lack of representivity of this category of employees within the sample group, could be a limitation to the interpretation and generalisation of the findings.

Interviews were also done during a period of economic growth and stable labour relationships. The probability that answers to the open-ended and in-depth questions could be responded to in a different manner in a period of an economic down turn should not be discounted.

1.9 Summary of this Chapter

Because of the researcher's personal interest in the concept of informal leaders, as well as experience of the phenomenon in formal and less informal environments, it is opined that informal leaders could play an important role and function within organisations. Unfortunately, the literature is sparse on how this could or should be done. Formal leadership has been studied extensively, but informal leadership has not been studied to the same extent. The researcher is also of the viewpoint that the cultural differences between management and subordinates in the South African business environment could be causal to ineffective management and a non-productive workforce. This study researches – against the difference between Afrocentric versus Westernised leadership and management - the role and characteristics of informal leaders, as

seen by their peers and colleagues, in work groups in a multi-cultural work environment in the South African workplace.

1.10 Organisation of the Dissertation

Chapter Two of this study is the first of two chapters addressing the review of the literature applicable to the research topic. In this chapter the topic of whether management and leadership are still two distinguishable disciplines or whether it should be approached as one and the same discipline, is critiqued. The impact of cultural diversity on management and leadership is then reviewed in order to assess organisational behaviour in terms of this. The function of human resource management as the enabler to direct employee endeavours for organisational goal achievement is then discussed. Then work groups, an interdependent variable within the organisation, are investigated. This is followed by a summation of the chapter.

Chapter Three is a continuation of the literature review. In this chapter what constitutes leadership under the heading of The Concept of Leadership is reviewed first. What makes leadership effective as well as the cultural influence on leadership is then investigated. Following on this, the role and characteristics of leaders in the execution of leadership is discussed in depth. Management and leadership approaches within an Afrocentric and Ubuntu perspective are pursued to determine if they could contribute towards the Westernised theories of management and leadership. The concept of informal leadership is then probed to get a better understanding of its existence and use within formalised management and leadership principles. The chapter is concluded with a generalised summary of the findings of the literature review in this chapter.

Chapter Four covers the research methodology adopted for the purposes of this research. Firstly the aims, goals and research question are discussed, whereafter the research paradigm and interviewing method is expanded upon. This is all followed by a discussion of the structure of the interview questions as the research instrument, the selection of research respondents represented in the sample, the manner in which way the data was collected, how the data was analysed, ethical considerations of the study, validity and reliability of the data, and the limitations of the study. The chapter is concluded with a summary.

Chapter Five represents a summary of the data collected. The chapter is divided into three sections. Questions of a qualitative nature are summarised first. Unstructured questions of an

open-ended nature are then focused upon, whereafter the results of the in-depth questions are presented.

Chapter Six aligns the outcomes of the current study with the various schools of formal and informal leadership. The primary goal is analysed and discussed first under the category of the characteristics of informal leaders. Subsequently the role of informal leaders are analysed and discussed whereafter the salient points of the literature review and findings of the characteristics and role of informal leaders from the study are brought together in a summary. The Chapter then delves into the secondary goal of the research to determine whether the concept of Ubuntu can align itself with the latest leadership and management theories. After ideas for further research is highlighted, the chapter is concluded with a short summary.

1.11 Summary

In this Chapter, the purpose of the study is first introduced. The societal background to the study is then discussed in detail against the researcher's background to the study. After the significance of the study is addressed, the research question and the topic of the study is clarified, followed by a brief overview of the research methodology adopted in the study. The delimitations of the study is then pointed out and the chapter concluded with a summary. A short depiction of the organisation of the dissertation follows on this summary.

CHAPTER 2- THE LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Introduction to the Chapter

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

(Margaret Mead, 1901 – 1978)

Organisational behaviour is the outcome of the interaction between management, employees, groups, hierarchical structures, and processes within organisations. It is how this system – the organisation – behaves; it is simply a number of interdependent components and processes, management, employees, groups, hierarchical structures and processes within the organisation, that form a whole and work together with a view to attaining a common goal – the efficient maximising of the difference between input and output (Nel, et al., 2004).

With the importance attached to leadership and the attendant emphasis on its role in organisations, the question should be posed whether or not this has become unbalanced and that this over-emphasis on leadership could be taking place at a cost to the discipline of management, especially in view of the cultural diversity managers are faced with in South Africa today and hence impacting negatively on effective management. Should the traditional view still be held that managers plan, organise, lead and control, or should consideration be given to the fact, that because of the influential role a manager plays within any organisation, managers should be leaders first and leading should not be just one of the outcomes of management.

The challenge, whether one is a leader or manager, is to optimise goal attainment; at organisational level, at group level and at individual level. The management of any resource in the organisation, both animate and inanimate, needs an understanding of the resource. Disseminating the understanding of how employees and groups should be productively managed and lead in a diverse environment is executed through the organisation’s management structures and leadership corps.

2.2 Structure of the Chapter

In this Chapter the purpose of and the researcher's approach to the literature review is briefly discussed. The literature is then reviewed to establish whether the conjecture that management and leadership are different functions or disciplines, is still valid and applicable in contemporary management paradigms. How leaders or managers can influence organisational behaviour is then addressed, followed by the importance of acknowledging cultural diversity in the workplace today. Human resource management as an enabler of effective management is then reviewed whereafter formal groups in the workplace are looked at. Lastly, the outcome of the review is summarised.

2.3 The Review of the Literature

The initial objective of the literature review was to discover relevant material (Walliman, 2001) published in the field of formal leadership and informal leadership. Whilst the researcher was searching for conceptual as well as research literature giving opinions, ideas, theories and experiences on the subject (Fox, 1969), it was realised that there is currently a vacuum in the area of identifying the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups while also simultaneously taking cognisance of the cultural diversity of the work group and that of the informal leader. The literature was therefore reviewed to synthesise previously unconnected ideas in order to establish a method for data collection and suggestions (Hart, 2001).

For the researcher, the literature review also served as a process of data gathering to assist in filling the apparent gap that the researcher has identified as existing in the field of informal leadership in that the cultural aspect of leadership and informal leadership is being ignored in South African organisations. This is in line with Phillips and Pugh's (1994) suggestion that a researcher may use already known ideas, practices or approaches but with a new interpretation, creating new syntheses not done before, being cross-disciplinary by using different methodologies, looking at areas that people in the discipline have not looked at before and adding knowledge in a way that has not previously been done.

2.4 The Conjecture of Management and Leadership – either, or?

Inconsistent views and disagreements exist in the literature as to whether there is a difference between leaders and managers and where there is a difference between leadership and management (Bass, 1990; Hughes, et al., 2002; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000). The traditional view of management is associated with the application of four basic functions in the use of organisational resources to accomplish organisational goals; planning, organising, leading, and controlling (Dessler, 2001; Schermerhorn, 2002). From this, it is unambiguous and clear that it is expected and required that managers must execute leadership and whether this is an innate skill or a functionary performance as a manager, it has to be done effectively.

Bass (1990) reflects that leaders manage and managers lead, but the two activities are not synonymous, which finds meaning in the now familiar Bennis and Nanus (1985) distinction between managers and leaders by viewing managers as people who do things right and leaders as people who do the right thing. To obfuscate the matter further is the viewpoint that a manager may not necessarily be a leader and vice versa (Kotter, 1992; Yukl, 1989).

Yukl (1989) summarises the distinction in the literature by concluding that leaders influence commitment, whereas managers merely carry out position responsibilities and exercise authority, but equally recognises that the different arguments revolve around the degree of overlap between managing and leading. Bryman (1986) bases the differences on the context of time, with leadership reflecting the desired future state and management with the preoccupation with the here-and-now attainment. According to Northouse (2001), the distinction represents itself between management's desire to produce order and consistency, whereas leadership produces change and movement, but with a mutual intent; both management and leadership require the influencing of a group towards a goal (Northouse, 2001).

A summary of a comparison of management and leadership activities as identified by Hughes, et al., (2002) and Northouse (2001) is consolidated in Table I below.

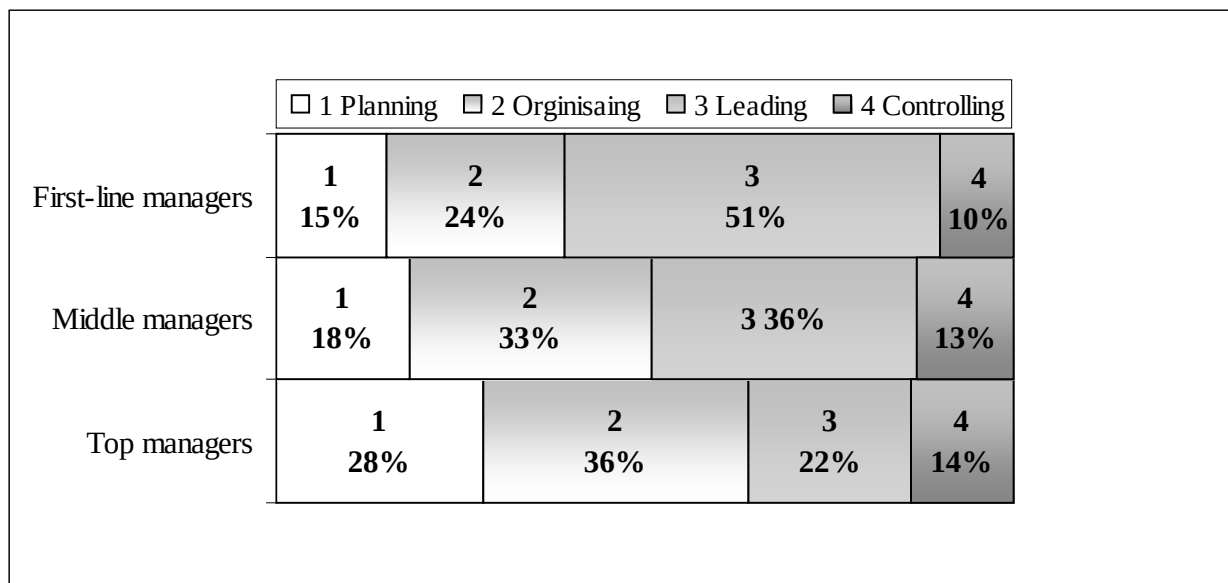
Table I: Comparison between Management and Leadership Activities

Managers as Management	Leaders as Leadership
Administer	Innovate
Control and problem solve	Inspire
Maintain	Develop
Have a short-term view	Have a long-term view
Ask how and when	Ask what and why
Initiate	Originate
Accept the status quo	Challenge the status quo
Plan and budget	Build a vision and strategise
Organise and staff	Align people and communicate

This leaves no doubt that there is a distinct differentiation between manager and leader activities, but if time spent on the four functional activities of management is reviewed across top management, middle managers and first-line managers, doubt is once again cast on this difference.

This incongruity is clearly illustrated in the following by the percentage of time spent on the functional activities by organisational level.

Figure 1: Percentage of Time spend on Functional activities by Organisational level



(Source: Adopted from DAFT, 1995)

Middle-line and first-line managers spend the majority of their time leading, with first-line managers using 51% of their time on this activity. Csoka (1998) found that the most direct influence of leadership happens at the group supervisor level (first-line managers), where the success or failure of the group is determined on the effectiveness of the group leader's leadership capabilities. Logic wants to prescribe that one would expect top managers to spend the most time on leading, but this is clearly not the case. It appears that there is an inverse relationship between leading activities of managers and their hierarchical position within the organisation – the less senior the management position, the more leading the manager has to do.

From a manager's point of view, leading entails directing the human resources of the organisation and motivating employees in such a way that their actions are aligned with the preceding two functional activities of management – planning and organising – and it means making use of influence and power to motivate and control employees to achieve these organisational goals; managers are responsible for getting things done through other people (Smit and Cronje, 2002).

Shared aims are therefore found between the leader activity of “Leaders align people and communicate” and the manager activity of “Managers organise and staff” as per Table I above in that the people in the organisation are aligned with organisational goals through organising them and this is done through communication and influence, the communication process which takes up the majority of middle managers and first-line managers' time. This view is supported by Katz (1974), who identified interpersonal skills – the ability to work with people – as one of the more important of a repertoire of skills required for sound management. As managers spend up to 60% of their time working with people, managers should have the ability to communicate, understand people's behaviour, resolve conflict, and motivate groups as well as individuals (Smit and Cronje, 2002).

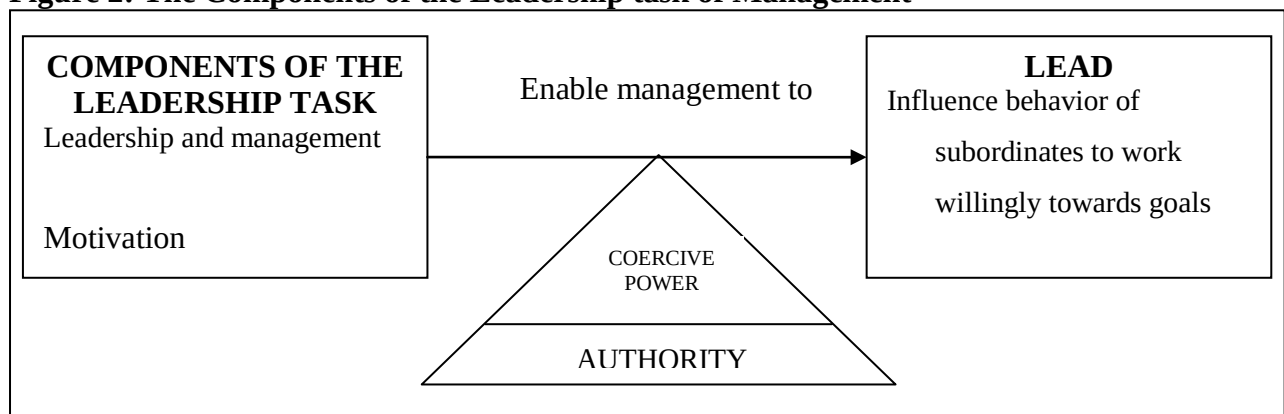
It is therefore clear that the distinction between leadership and management may have been justifiable in the past, but in today's environment this distinction has become blurred and managers cannot be successful without being good leaders and leaders cannot be successful without being good managers. As leadership is one of the attributes of effective managers, effective managers must have leadership abilities. Hence, effective management subsumes effective leadership; the skill to do one is also required to perform the other (Whetton and Cameron, 1995).

Leadership and management may therefore have been viewed as two distinct but complementary sets of management activities – a person can be a manager, a leader, both or neither and the challenge to organisations is to turn good managers into leaders and good leaders into good managers (Smit and Cronje, 2002). Schematically the integration of leadership and management can be illustrated as follows:

Management therefore has to be seen as the enabler for organisational leaders to lead, preferably without the use of authoritative power. Unfortunately, not all managers are good leaders and if managers lack the ability to lead through influence, then leading has to take place through coercive force, by using the authority bestowed on them by the organisation if necessary (Cronje, et al., 2004; Reynders, 1975).

Hence, this leadership task of management may be depicted as follow:

Figure 2: The Components of the Leadership task of Management



(Source: Adopted from CRONJE, et al., 2004)

Whether through innate or acquired leadership capabilities, the manager's intent is to influence employees to work willingly towards a common goal (Cronje, et al., 2004). This activity is echoed in a number of the definitions of leadership as a process or act today (Jago, 1982; Bass, 1990; Gardener, 1990; Jacobs and Jacques, 1990). Paradoxically, what is not clear and difficult to ascertain is what act comes first; the act of leadership through the management process or rather the manager's inherent leadership qualities and skills that manifest notwithstanding the process of management. What cannot be in doubt is that managers that lack a leader's influential role and characteristics, make the leading function a process or act in the sense that they use their hierarchical powers and what is organisationally available to them to compensate for the deficiency of inherent influence to enforce this shortcoming.

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1997) theorise that “generic managers” have generic tasks and possess some generic capabilities, which are applicable across all organisational levels. Unfortunately, this hierarchical mirroring of managerial roles has entrenched this generic application of functions, albeit at different levels within the organisation, making leadership less important and more of a functional role. They recognise how important the organisation’s human resources have become and suggest new management competencies for new management roles. In this instance, leadership becomes pivotal to the manager. Instead of forcing the individual employee to conform, the overall objective is, through influence, to capture and leverage the knowledge and expertise that each individual employee brings to the organisation, resulting in a sustainable competitive advantage for the organisation (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997).

Notwithstanding proposing new roles with concomitant new skills and abilities across three management levels, the common denominator of “influence of behaviour” is still to be found. Among operating-level entrepreneurs (group leaders) and first-line managers (supervisors) the ability to motivate and drive people is suggested to be a requirement (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997). At senior management, level (middle-management) the ability to develop relationships and build teams is equally required. At the top-leader level (top-management), the role of building a context of co-operation and trust is deemed essential (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997). It is also gleaned and suggested from their research (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997) that managers across all levels of the organisation now need a forward-looking perspective of their environment and not Bryman’s (1986) here-and-now paradigm. In a different context, managers should display leadership qualities that allow them to keep an eye on the horizon – the future (Bryman, 1986) – instead of looking at the ground in front of them – the present, the here-and-now (Bryman, 1986); thinking three-dimensionally and not two-dimensionally.

The researcher is of the opinion that in contemporary organisations, it will be myopic to still view leadership and management as two different disciplines and suggests that it is not a matter of “either or” anymore. It is suggested that the two disciplines that have morphed into a new discipline where the actuality faced should determine whether one should lead or manage. Management should be the natural outcome of leadership. It should be a competency and not a function. After all, if leaders do the right thing (Bennis and Nanus, 1985), then it follows that they will manage correctly and effectively. The researcher for that reason sees leadership and management not as mutually exclusive or mutually dependent anymore, but rather mutually interdependent. Leadership and management rather have to be seen as holistic and inclusive

processes and have to be viewed as mutually interdependent. Therefore, in this study, no distinction is made between leadership and management and in this research; no distinctions will be made between management, i.e. management at any level within the organisation, and leadership. Leadership will imply management and management will imply leadership.

The type of leadership and management influences and dictates behaviour of employees in organisations. Another dimension that plays an important role within the organisational context of leaders and managers and subordinates is the cultural background of the players as this has a direct influence on the desired outcome of leading and managing (Godsell, 1986; Pascale, 1990; Cross and White, 1996).

2.5 Managing Cultural Diversity

Organisational culture theoretically should be the same within a multi-national organisation, but it is debatable whether subsidiaries in different countries where the multi-national organisation is present become similar to each other over time (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Whitley and Kristensen, 1997). The view that technological convergence, the growing importance of multi-national organisations and global implementation of international corporate standards (International Organisational Standards – ISO – and Enterprise Resource Systems – ERP) has transformed subsidiaries across global borders into one giant organism (Meyer and Scot, 1983; Meyer, 1994), has been challenged by certain researchers. They point out that the resilience of national cultures impacts strongly on local subsidiaries of the multinational. This causes diversity among subsidiaries across countries, even though they may operate in the same industry or be subject to the same external influences (Maurice, et al., 1986; Whitley and Kristensen, 1996; Whitley, 1997; Woywode, 2002). Because organisations employ workers from a variety of cultures and subcultures, models of organisational behaviour that assume that employees share a single, relatively homogeneous culture are no longer appropriate (Stone-Romero, et al., 2003).

Nelson and Quick (1997) characterise diversity as all forms of difference among individuals, including culture, gender, age, ability, religious affiliation, personality, economic class, social status, military attachments and sexual orientation. A subtle but powerful force in the diversity stakes in South Africa is an individual's political affiliation (Nel, et al., 2004). Managers of local subsidiaries will be short-sighted by thinking that, because of the diffusion of the multi-national

organisational culture within their local subsidiary, the influence of local culture is not a factor within their organisation and may be ignored.

Where the most people employed in an organisation are from a non-western culture, value differences and misunderstandings occur when the organisation is run according to Western management and leadership principles as well as values (Godsell, 1986). People from different cultures often relate in many different ways to other people and the environment around them (Robbins, et al., 2003). Organisations today are faced with the challenge to take cognisance of a diverse workforce and to value their employees who are different from one another (Thomas, 1990).

Diversity management means the creation of an internal and external environment within which individual's different perspectives, approaches and sensitivities are incorporated and developed in order to manage the diversity so that the productivity and personal aspirations of individuals and organisations may be realised optimally (Kandola and Kandola, 1995). If well managed, workforce diversity can allow organisations to gain a competitive advantage through cost structures, creativity, problem solving, and flexible adaptation to change, low staff turnover, more job satisfaction, high motivation and less internal conflict (Cox and Blake, 1991).

Over and above the business imperative of managing diversity, the South African organisational environment has to take cognisance of legislative and moral imperatives when dealing with diversity. Even if organisations do not want to accept diversity, management strategies for sound business principles, legislative and moral requirements (in the form of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 as amended, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000 as amended, and the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 as amended as well as the King III Governance Report of September 2009) compel organisations to adhere to managing diversity within the organisations.

This enforced social engineering is the result of organisations and their management prevaricating between the old and the new; the prevalent Westernised approach to management and leadership within the mindset of management versus the realisation and acceptance that the majority of employees in this country have a different view to the Westernised approach to management.

Although organisational culture is further defined as the underlying values that serve as the foundation for an organisation's management system and the practices and behaviours that in turn reinforce those basic principles (Denison, 1990), one has to take cognisance that it is also shaped by the stakeholders in the environment in which it operates. According to Bate (1994), an organisation's culture will only respond to well-directed attempts to alter its culture if this is done through efforts that focus on the artefacts, values, and assumptions of the organisation and if this is incongruent with the macro-environment of the organisation, it will certainly result in the non-required behaviour of its employees and therefore the organisation itself.

If diversity is acknowledged and managed successfully in the organisation, the results and benefits will be numerous to the organisation. On the other hand, if there is a gap between the cultural backgrounds of manager and subordinate, this could lead to misunderstandings and a breakdown in relationship. Immediate benefits of acknowledging these differences, some measurable and some more indeterminable, may include the following (Cross and White, 1996):

- The quality of relationships between individual employees as well as management will improve
- The cultural similarities and differences between cultures in the organisation will be more easily understood
- Individual employees' emotions and minds will be more open to diversity
- Mutual respect and greater receptivity to diversity initiatives will be established
- Increased productivity will result
- Conflict between diverse groups of employees in the organisation will be reduced
- The effectiveness of managers in the organisation will increase
- Employee morale will improve
- Co-operation inside the organisation will improve
- Absenteeism will be reduced
- The recruitment, retention and promotional policies of the organisation will improve
- Teamwork will be enhanced
- Problem solving skills will increase

- Customer/client relationships will improve

Ignoring or not managing the cultural differences between employees within the same organisation as well as between employees of subsidiaries of multi-national organisations will be detrimental to the pursuit of these outcomes. Managing diversity is about valuing employees' differences and making these differences benefit the organisation by creating an environment that enables all the employees to pursue an organisation's goals. As Smit and Cronje (2002) point out, managers spend up to 60% of their time working with people and unless they understand their behaviour as well as what motivates them, they will find it problematic to value these differences and use them for the benefit of the organisation. An understanding of how the organisation will behave and react to its leaders against the cultural background of its employees is therefore important.

2.6 Organisational Behaviour

By ignoring the cultural diversity within South African organisations when addressing organisational behaviour, the reluctance of managers to embrace change is perhaps understandable as they could be viewing organisational behaviour as an organisational or functional area instead of it being the result of the application of their knowledge to continually improve the organisation's behaviour (Robbins, 1998). If there is a gap in their knowledge with regards to the impact that the cultural background of subordinates and the non-recognition of the cultural diversity within their organisations could have on their effectiveness as managers, the behaviour of their organisations as a whole could suffer.

Leaders and managers, after all, are individuals who achieve goals through other people (Robbins, et al., 2003). If they could acknowledge that there could be, or are, differences between their cultural background and their subordinates' cultural background and that this could give rise to problems in the leader-follower relationship, this will contribute to their knowledge and hence benefit organisational behaviour. One would expect the awareness of this difference to be implicit in view of Goleman (1998) having identified self-awareness and empathy as two of the five components characterising the high emotional intelligence leaders should have.

Traditional management activities of planning, decision-making and controlling (Schermerhorn, et al., 2000) have always concentrated on the performance of an organisation's financial and physical resources. Within this approach, human resources are dealt with as the production factor of labour and focus has been on the creation of a management system to minimise the idiosyncrasies of human behaviour. This system deemed individuals in organisations as replaceable parts (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994).

An organisation's total effectiveness is determined by the extent to which its mission and goals are attained and achieved. One of the instruments of measuring this effectiveness is productivity and one of the roles of management is to ensure that the organisation achieves its goals at the highest possible level of productivity (Cronje, et al., 2004; Smit and Cronje, 2002). From the study of successful organisations, one central element becomes clear; the importance of achieving productivity through the effective management of people and their commitment to, and involvement with, the organisation. Ultimately, the successful management integration of this activity within the carrying out of organisational processes and the execution of work will determine the organisation's effectiveness (Mullins, 1999).

Productivity is one of the primary dependent variables of organisational behaviour and has as its concern the goal of efficiency and effectiveness in the organisation. Its measurement is a set of tools that all managers can use to carry out their jobs more effectively (Kanter, 1989). "What we mean by effectiveness ... is the accomplishment of recognised objectives of cooperative (sic) effort. The degree of accomplishment indicates the degree of effectiveness" (Barnard, 1938:55). Productivity not only measures quantity and quality of work, but also takes resource utilisation into account (Schermerhorn, 1993), of which human resources are an organisation's most valuable asset (Swanepoel, et al., 2003).

To shape organisational behaviour, management has made use of the following four approaches to categories of management theory since Frank Taylor published *Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911 (Mullins, 1999; Stanley, 2004);

- Classical

With its bureaucratic approach, it emphasised formal structures in terms of specialisation, hierarchy of authority, a system of rules and impersonality. Employees were therefore treated as just a number in the organisation and discarded at will if they failed.

- Human Relations

Attention is shifted to the informal organisation and to the employees' psychological and social needs at work. Cognisance is now being taken of the role of the individual, group relationships and styles of leadership.

- Systems

Under this approach, the organisation is recognised as a system it attempts to integrate the formality of the Classical and informality of the Human Relations approach. The perception of the individual employee of the organisation is being taken into account.

- Contingency

The situational variables the organisation is faced with determine the most appropriate form of structure and management system for the organisation to be effective.

The classical approach of viewing labour as a replaceable factor of production as well as independent variable within the organisation with absolutely no contribution to the organisation's behaviour, has clearly given way to the contemporary contingency approach where the important contribution employees can make to the organisation is now being recognised.

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1994; 1995a; 1995b) propose that the approach where prominence is given to strategy, structure and processes – a combination of the Classical and Human Relations approach, rather be replaced by one where prominence should be given to purpose, people and processes, this approach aligns itself with the Contingency approach and values the individual employee's contribution. It takes cognisance of the social and cultural background of an organisation's employees. According to these two researchers (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994; 1995a; 1995b), it will result in employees who feel they belong to the organisation (loyalty), who view their relationship with the organisation as one of a partnership (co-ownership) where they are treated fairly and mistakes are tolerated (humane) and their knowledge and contribution are important to the organisation (belonging); in a nutshell, satisfied employees with associated productivity.

Organisations with more satisfied employees tend to be more effective than organisations with less satisfied employees (Ostroff, 1992; Ryan et al., 1996). This does not infer that satisfied

employees are more productive, but rather that a satisfied or happy organisation is more productive (Robbins, et al., 2003). Organisations are dependent on their management, leadership, and employees for their competitiveness. It is the human capital that provides the organisation with the required knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capacities to gain a competitive advantage (Hough, et al., 2003), but this capital is of no use unless it is managed and lead by taking the cultural lenses of the employees into account.

If the needs, motivation, values, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of the organisation's employees are ignored, it will ignore the cultural foundation of these demographics. This is done at the organisation's peril. Taking cognisance of the cultural diversity in the organisation will enhance managers' and leaders' own knowledge and contribute to more effective management and leadership, thereby benefiting the organisation's goals. This starts in work groups, the micro-level of the bigger organism, the organisation.

2.7 Groups

The focus of this study is on informal leaders in work groups in the organisation, which are classified as formal groups within these organisations. These are designated work groups defined by the organisation's structures (Robbins, 1998) which have a hierarchical structure. According to Huczynski and Buchanan (2001), any large organisation can be viewed as a collection of small groups and these groups, as independent variables, are a major determinant of effectiveness in the organisation (Robbins, 1998). The researcher, however, views these groups as interdependent variables as they are part of a bigger system and their output depends on other groups' input and vice versa. It is only within the ambit of their task execution, which is done in isolation from other groups, that these groups can be viewed as independent variables. If managers wish to influence the behaviour of their employees, they must understand how groups work and what kind of impact they can have on both group and organisational effectiveness if not handled well (Robbins, 1998).

Leadership, interpersonal influence between employees, group behaviour, power and politics within an organisation are powerful forces that have an impact on organisational performance (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). One has to take note that notwithstanding the formal groups, informal groups that are not formally or organisationally structured, and interest groups

consisting of employees working together to attain a specific objective with which each is concerned, do also exist in the organisation (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002).

Regardless the types of group, relationships between individuals within these groups are formed for various reasons, but psychologically they are based on perceptions. From this point of view “a small group is defined as any number of persons engaged in interaction with one another in a single face-to-face meeting or series of such meetings, in which each member receives some impression or perception of each other distinct enough so that he can, either at the time or in later questioning, give some reaction to each other as an individual person, even though it may be only to recall that the other was present” (Bales, 1950; 33).

This perception of each other, whether individual or collectively in work groups and the organisation as a whole – formal and informal – plays a very important role because it will shape and influence as well as drive the performance of the formal and informal organisation. The informal organisation develops out of the interaction between employees, their psychological and social needs and the need to develop groups with their own relationships and norms and behaviour, irrespective of those defined within the formal structure (Mullins, 1999). According to Mullins (1999), the foundational structure of this informal organisation is made up of the following;

- Personal animosity and friendships between employees in the organisation
- The grapevine, or rumour mill, of the organisation
- Formal group norms and sentiments
- Informal leaders
- Emotional feelings, needs and desires of employees
- Effective relationships between managers and subordinates
- Individual and formal group goals and perceptions
- Prestige and power structures

Through these formal and informal associations there runs a suggested thread; the majority of employees in South Africa have the same cultural demographics, but as Godsell (1986) and Robbins, et al., (2003) have pointed out, people from different cultures have different values and they relate in many different ways to others and the environment around them. Because the individual employee, the work group and the environment influence organisational behaviour

(Mullins, 1999), it is important for management to have a full understanding of what influences the effectiveness of work groups in organisations. Unfortunately, given the same circumstances some groups tend to be more effective than others, and for this reason too, it is essential to investigate the factors that contribute to effective group functioning (Nel, et al., 2004).

External factors influencing the behaviour of a work group are culture, organisational design and the organisation's HRM system (Hellriegel, et al., 2004). In addition Mullins (1999) and Nel, et al., (2004) identified the following important factors that could influence effective group functioning:

- Compatibility of its members
- Task completion (accuracy, speed, creativity and cost)
- Communication between members and between members and management
- Management and group leadership
- Group dynamics
- Group norms and conformity

Because group effectiveness is measured by a group's productive output, the growth and wellbeing of group members, and the degree to which the process of carrying out the work increases the viability or capability of group members working together in the future (Campion, et al., 1996; Cohen and Bailey, 1997; Cohen, et al., 1996 and Hackman, 1990), it is important that management fully comprehend how the aforementioned factors could impact on group effectiveness.

Hughes, et al., (2002) opines that the group will be deemed to be effective if its output meets the standards of quantity, quality, and timelines of the people or processes that depend on it. The process that occurs while the group is performing its task enhances the ability of the members to work as members of a team in the future, and the group experience enhances the growth and personal well being of the individuals who compose the group.

The goals, performance, and effectiveness of groups consequently have a direct effect on the organisation's performance and behaviour and well-developed group dynamics has, as a result, increased group performance (Pareek and Rao, 1992). Important to this study is that one of the

determinants of effectiveness and dynamics of a group is the leadership of the group (Hellriegel, et al., 1998).

Good leadership is essential to group success. Group leadership refers to the person formally recognised or appointed as the group leader who typically has responsibility for how well the group performs. The leader has access to information and resources that are less readily available to other group members (Hackman and Walton, 1986). However, within the group dynamic individuals influence each other in many ways, and therefore groups may develop their own hierarchies and leaders outside the formal organisational hierarchy (Mullins, 1999).

Within a traditionally structured organisation, the formal leader will be the decision maker, morale builder and the person who steers the course for the group (Senge, 1990). Even when a group has a formally designated leader or supervisor, informal leaders may emerge and hold great influence (Hackman, 1990; Hare, 1994). The leadership role, formal or informal, is a particularly crucial characteristic of groups as the leader exerts influence over the members of the group (Steckler and Fondas, 1995) and informal leadership has been recognised as an important factor in organisational behaviour (Bass, 1990; Robbins and Zirinsky, 1996; Senge, 1990; Whitaker, 1995).

The use of work groups in organisations to increase employee involvement and decision making, and the increased span of control because of organisations de-layering their hierarchical structures, are causing organisations to rethink how to direct and align the efforts of employees through traditional top-down, command and control systems (Spreitzer and Mishra, 1999).

2.8 Summary

Leadership cannot be seen in isolation anymore and only as part of the domain of management. Managers have to be able to lead authentically today and not through hierarchical powers bestowed upon them through their position in an organisation. Leadership should be viewed as rather an instinctive ability than an acquired skill and ability through training and experience. This ability should rather be enhanced by training and through experience.

It is also imperative that management take cognisance that the business environment in South Africa has changed and is continually changing. Being part of the global economy has brought

new pressures to organisations to become more effective and competitive and the cultural diversity of the South African workforce should be valued and used by management to the competitive advantage of the organisation, rather than viewed with antagonism. Managers should try to put themselves in the cultural shoes of their employees and should treat and manage employees accordingly. Empathising with the cultural background of their subordinates will add to their repertoire of knowledge, which will benefit of the organisation's behaviour and performance.

With the organisation seen as a macro-environment, formal work groups can be viewed as micro-environments or mini-cosmoses of the organisation. How these groups operate and function has a direct effect on the organisation as a whole. It is therefore important for management to be thoroughly perceptive of the workings of a group as well as how the group can contribute to the overall wellbeing of the organisation.

The facilitator which brings management, leadership, groups, individual employees and cultural diversity into a synergetic and holistic whole, is the organisation's human resource management system. Unless the role of all these stakeholders and contributors are acknowledged in the HRM system, fusing the organisation into an effective and successful entity will fail and therefore make the organisation competitively unsustainable.

CHAPTER 3 – LEADERSHIP

“One friend, one person who is truly understanding, who takes the trouble to listen to us as we consider our problems, can change our whole outlook on the work.”

(Elton Mayo, 1880 -1949)

3.1 Introduction to the Chapter

Leadership manifests itself throughout any organisation through not only the formal structures and official hierarchy of the organisation, but also through the informal structures of the organisation. Leadership is deemed to be the ability to influence others to achieve a common goal and because leading is one of the functions of managing (the others being planning, organising, and control), the leaders within the hierarchical structures of the organisation may use any or a combination of legitimate power, reward power, or coercive power that comes with their designated positions within the organisation to effect this influence for desired outcomes. Informal leaders do not have the aforementioned powers and their influence is through authentic leading, referent power and expert power (Pielstick, 2000a; 2000b).

3.2 Structure of the Chapter

In this chapter, the concept of leadership is reviewed in order to determine what leadership is. Whether culture has an impact on the way leadership it is viewed, experienced and executed is then addressed. Under the role and characteristics of leadership, the different theories of leadership under the headings of Traits, Behaviour, and Contingent on the Situation and Recent Developments are discussed in depth in order to ascertain whether the role and characteristics of leaders have different constructs under the different theories. The percept of informal leadership is then reviewed to determine if it is an acknowledged concept and if so, the role and characteristics of informal leaders in the organisation and work groups are examined. Afrocentricism and Ubuntu are thoroughly investigated to establish if they have any meaning for management and leadership. Lastly, the chapter is summarised.

3.3 The Concept of Leadership

Some researchers depict leadership as a position, a person, a behavioural act, a style, a relationship or a process (Nirenberg, 2001), while others look at the individual leader as a person to gain an understanding of leadership (Bernard, 1926; Blake, et al., 1964; Drath and Palus, 1994; Fiedler, 1967; House and Mitchell, 1974). Even though there are as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept (Bass, 1990), it is important to recognise that there is no single definition that is more accurate than the next (Hughes, et al., 2002).

All these different views of and approaches to leadership are clearly illustrated in Table II, which reflects a summary of definitions of leadership, extracted from a surfeit of definitions of leadership over the last 50 years:

Table II: Definitions of Leadership

Researcher/Author	Definition	Basis
1.Hemphill and Coons (1957)	Leadership is the behaviour of an individual wherein the individual directs the activities of a group toward a shared goal.	Behavioural act
2.Katz and Kahn (1978)	Leadership is an influential increment over and above a mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organisation.	Process
3.Jago (1982:315)	“Leadership is both a process and a property. The ‘process’ of leadership is the use of noncoercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of the members of an organized group toward the accomplishment of group activities. As a ‘property’, leadership is the set of qualities or characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to successfully employ such influence.”	Process, person
4.Hosking (1988)	Leaders are those who consistently make effective contributions to the social order.	Process
5.Gardener (1990)	Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation.	Process
6.Jacobs and Jacques (1990)	Leadership is a process of giving purpose to collective effort and causing others willingly to exert effort in order to achieve a specific purpose.	Process
7.Bennis and Goldsmith (1994)	Leadership is what leaders do such as acting with integrity and competence, interpreting reality, explaining the present and painting a picture of the future.	Behavioural act
8.Jacques and Clement (1994)	Leadership is a process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for others and gets them to move along together with him/her in that direction with	Process

Researcher/Author	Definition	Basis
	competence and commitment.	
9.Conger(1999)	Leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals and have the responsibility to motivate the group members and to gain the group's commitment to the direction they have set.	Behavioural act
10. Rowden(2000)	Leadership is the behaviour of an individual when that individual is directing and co-ordinating the activities of a group towards the accomplishment of a shared goal.	Behavioural act
11. Nirenberg (2001)	Leadership is a social function necessary for the achievement of collective objectives, it is a process of mutual interaction between follower and leader and involves inspiring subordinates, forming and reaching collective goals, and preserving group cohesion.	Process
12. Bass (1990)	Leadership is a process that influences the activities of an organised group.	Process
13. DePree (1992)	Leadership is not only a process of leading that fulfills commitments to others and the organisation, but a form of meddling.	Behavioural act and Process
14. Daft (2002)	Leadership is a relationship of influence between leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that will reflect their shared purposes.	Relationship
15. Yukl (2002)	Leadership is a process of influencing other individuals to understand and agree on what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively as well as the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish these shared objectives.	Process
16. Clawson (2003)	Leadership is not only the ability, but also the willingness to influence other individuals so that they respond to this willingly.	Relationship

Notwithstanding all the different views and interpretations about the essence of leadership in these definitions, it appears that researchers do agree that it is not a solo act and it does not take place in a vacuum. Northouse (2001) views these common elements as:

- Leadership is a process
- Leadership occurs within a group context, and
- Leadership involves goal attainment

This interpretation resonates with Jago's definition in Table II above in that leadership is not only some quality or characteristic that the individual possesses, or seems to possess, as a leader; it can also be, in addition to the quality or characteristic, something that the individual does and

therefore it describes an act as well as a person (Jago, 1982). It could be deduced that the “doing” is as a result of a quality or characteristic that the person possesses, innate or acquired. Leadership is therefore deemed as a process and/or behavioural act with intrinsic traits, psychological or physical, where these traits rather assist with the execution of leadership than being leadership in itself. Leadership per se is meaningless unless it is directed towards goal achievement. If this does not transpire, it renders leadership ineffective.

3.4 What makes Leadership effective?

As a management competency, leadership within modern organisations has to be effective. Effective leadership, however, is subjective and no two people will have the same view or understanding of it. Because of this, it is difficult to agree on what effective leadership is and it creates divergent expectations of what effective leaders are or should be. Applying Northouse’s (2001) aforementioned common elements of leadership, Dubrin’s (2001) description that an effective leader is one whose actions facilitate group members’ attainment of productivity, quality, and satisfaction, then is a justifiable view of effective leadership.

Bennis and Biederman (1997) conclude that to be effective leaders, organisational leaders have to bring the following about:

- The providing of direction and meaning to employees that are being lead and this is effected through constant reminding of what is important and that what is being done by the employees makes a difference
- The generation of trust between employees and leaders and between fellow employees
- The willingness to risk failure in order to succeed
- The purveying of hope and the strengthening of the belief that success is inevitable and will be achieved

Effective leadership will enable organisational leaders to persuade fellow employees, whether individual or in a group, to change their conduct and behaviour for the benefit of the organisation (Wren, 1995) and is achieved by influencing fellow employees not to be selfish by thinking about their own interests, but rather the interest, and ultimately the objectives, of the organisation (Lussier and Achua, 2001). It could even be construed as a form of disciplinary action – discipline without the use of penalties but through the use of influence – to transform incorrect

behaviour (own interests) to correct behaviour (the organisation's interest). Thus effective leadership produces role models who have the capacity to transform individuals, societies, communities and institutions (Robbins, 1998).

However, if the leadership process to achieve the goal of the organisation or group takes place in isolation without taking cognisance of what influences the execution of this leadership, it will negate the effectiveness of the leadership.

Heller (1995) opines that effective leadership lies in the mastering of a wide range of skills, from implementing and administering processes to inspiring others to achieve excellence and if this is consistently achieved within the above framework, it is this competence that will determine the return that organisations realise from their scarce resources – human and financial capital. The quality and performance of its managers give an organisation a competitive advantage in a competitive economy (Charlton, 1993).

3.5 The Cultural Context of Leadership

Leadership is socially and culturally determined and because culture affects the way in which human beings in all societies get together and perform certain collective acts to resolve universal problems which have to do with establishing direction, co-ordination and motivation (Pascale, 1990), leadership cannot be exercised without taking cognisance of subordinates' and followers' cultural foundations within organisations

Contextually, leadership is a dyadic relationship between leader and follower taking place within a certain milieu, at a micro level within the organisation. The organisation is a microcosm of the society within which it operates – the macro level (Friedman, 1993). A major variable influencing leadership may be the national culture within which the organisational leader finds him- or herself in (Mullins, 1999; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000).

Three levels of culture have been identified as being important to the management of organisations (Hellriegel, et al., 2004):

- Social culture

- Industry culture, and
- Organisational culture

Organisational leaders shape the organisation's vision, the meaning within which employees work and live. However, this leadership and vision remain fundamental to the thinking, understanding, attitudes, and behaviour of people and their institutions (Adler, 1997). This understanding and behaviour of people will mirror their social culture, which is the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret, experience and generate social behaviour (Hodgetts and Luthans, 1997). McGregor concludes that the social, economic and political environment affect the leadership relationship, together with the attitudes and needs of employees (McGregor, 1960).

Misapprehension regarding how employees in organisations make decisions and how they interpret their roles could have far-reaching effects on the organisation's performance due to misrepresentation and misunderstanding of culture (Hodgetts and Luthans, 1997). A multicultural leader is a leader with the skills and attitudes to relate effectively to motivate people across race, gender, age, social attitudes, and lifestyles (DuBrin, 2001) and that leader will have full realisation of the negative consequences of such misapprehension.

Because of the increased globalisation of markets as well as the increased interdependence of nations over the past twenty years, there is a need for a better understanding of cultural influences on leader behaviour and effectiveness (Swanepoel, et al., 2003). Regrettably, the majority of the existing theories of leadership and the empirical evidence available are distinctly North American in nature and character (Swanepoel, et al., 2003). Ninety-eight percent of leadership theory emanates from the United States and it has been developed primarily by studying American leaders (House and Aditya, 1997).

After analysing a number of American textbook leadership definitions, House, et al., (1997) concluded that because of the variance in terms of the following, leadership will positively be defined in different ways across cultures:

- emphasis on leader abilities
- personality traits
- influence or power relationships

- perceptions of followers versus communication of leaders
- cognitive versus emotional orientation
- individual versus group orientation, and
- appeal to self versus collective interests

This is supported by the following factors, which also influence leadership perspectives (Meyer and Boninelli, 2004);

- cultures, beliefs, norms and values
- history, folklore, mythology, motives and ethos,
- social identities and philosophical thought systems
- interest groups, emotions, social attitudes and workplace behaviours
- expectations, hopes and aspirations, and
- experiences and outcomes driven by cultures, beliefs, norms and values

Leadership and management studies mostly ignore the perspectives of African and non-Westernised approaches (Cox and Nkomo, 1990; Nkomo, 1992; Prasad, 1997 and Prasad, 2006). As a result, authors of Western leadership and management studies not only advocate the view that a Westernised approach to leadership and management should be the benchmark against which Africa and the non-West are to be measured, but also that their approach should be the standard style of organisational leadership within all organisations (Mohanty, 1984; Manning, 1996). This clearly is short-sighted as it completely discounts House, et al., (1997), Meyer and Boninelli's (2004) findings that culture does impact on leadership influence. What also aggravates this skewed promotion of Westernised approaches is the dichotomous position of House's, et al., (1997) findings which were based on research done on American text books.

Theories and practices that have their genesis in the Western world have limited application in developing worlds (Mintzberg, 2002) and it would be a mistake to assume that a business culture can be imposed on people without taking into account the culture of the people in question (Booyesen, 2001; Khoza, 1994). Because of the different cultural foundations, individuals' expectations and assumptions about management will differ between a Western culture and those from the non-West (Blunt and Jones, 1997; Meyer and Boninelli, 2004; Mintzberg, 2002 and Nzelibe, 1986). This is supported by the underlying argument found in the expanding body of

research on national culture in organisation studies that those American theories of leadership and management may not apply outside the North American continent because of differences in national culture (Nkomo, 2006).

Cultural values and traditions can influence the attitudes and behaviours of leaders (Hofstede, 1998). If cognisance is not taken of the values, norms, and customs of African and non-Western countries and this Western ethnocentric approach to leadership is viewed as superior, communication problems could arise between the organisational leader and the employees (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). Therefore, ignoring “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group of people or category of people in a nation from another” (Hofstede, 1993a: 89) – that of the mindset of the African people versus the mindset of the people from the West, will be narrow-minded and detrimental to effective leadership. Cross-cultural studies indicate that cultural differences influence leadership behaviour and management philosophies typically evolve in harmony with the cultures within which they function (Booyesen, 2001). For that reason it is essential for multi-national organisations to have a comprehensive understanding of the local cultures of the different countries in which their subsidiaries operate.

3.6 Roles and Characteristics of Leaders in the Execution of Leadership

It is not only employees’ wellbeing in organisations that relies on the choices their leaders make, but the organisation’s wellbeing too. These choices are executed according to the leaders’ leadership characteristics, style, and behaviour, and it is the characteristics, style and behaviour that determines the way in which leaders will interact with others. According to Jago’s (1982) definition of leadership, leadership is both a process and a property; the property being a set of qualities or characteristics attributed to leaders. “Leadership is not only some quality or characteristic that one possesses or is perceived to possess; it can be something that one does” (Jago, 1982: 316). Conversely, the leader’s traits will determine how the leader will interact with subordinates or followers.

Leadership theories have been categorised into several historically distinct approaches that focus either on traits (characteristics), behaviours (which role is being played), situational contingencies (the role that should be played), transformational leadership or into the cultural contingency approach (Van Seters and Field, 1989; Gibson and Marcoulides, 1995; Yukl, 1989; Yukl, 1999).

3.6.1 Traits

It is suggested that leadership is not merely “something that one does” (Jago, 1982). More important is how this ‘something,’ is done or executed and leadership characteristics play a fundamental role in the ‘how’ of this. Although the trait theory of leadership has been discarded as meaningful in explaining leadership as it does not take situational and environmental factors into account (Horner, 1997; Stone and Patterson, 2005), the behaviour that a leader displays in getting something done, also qualifies as a characteristic or trait. Whether one does or does not take into account the situation or the environment a leader is faced with, a certain intrinsic or behavioural characteristic will be required to respond to and influence the situation being faced.

Jago (1982) recognises that others have to accede to be influenced by a leader and unless this is organised around some common or agreed upon purpose or mission, achieving this will not only be difficult, but also will depend on the leader-follower relationship. Jago (1982) developed a Typology of Leadership Perspectives wherein a leader’s traits will drive the behavioural aspect of the leader, but will be dependent on the situation and environment and the relationship between the different traits of the leader. The following Table III is a depiction of the Typology:

Table III: A Typology of Leadership Perspectives

FOCAL LEADERSHIP CONSTRUCT		THEORETICAL APPROACH	
		UNIVERSAL	CONTINGENT
	LEADER TRAITS (if not innate, can be taught)	TYPE I	TYPE III
		TRAITS	TRAITS AND BEHAVIOUR
		Physical Personal Relationship between Traits Attributional	Combination of Types I and II
	LEADER BEHAVIOURS (skill is not present, it can be taught)	TYPE II	TYPE IV
		STYLES / BEHAVIOUR	BEHAVIOUR BASED ON CONTINGENCY
		Consideration Initiating Structure Autocracy - Democracy	Combination of Type I + II + III

(Source: Adopted from JAGO, 1982)

Leadership characteristics identified by Jago (1982) are categorised under four dimensions:

1. Physical and Constitutional Factors

- Active; Energy; Appearance; Grooming; Height; Weight

2. Skills and Ability

- Administrative ability; Intelligence; Judgment; Knowledge; Technical competence; Verbal fluency; Personal Characteristics; Achievement, drive; Adaptability; Adjustment, normality; Aggressiveness; Alertness; Antiauthoritarianism; Dominance; Emotional balance, control; Enthusiasm; Extraversion; Independence, nonconformity; Initiative; Insightfulness; Integrity; Objectivity; Originality; Persistence; Responsibility; Self-confidence; Sense of humour; Tolerance of stress

3. Social Characteristics

- Co-operativeness; Interpersonal skills, sensitivity; Popularity, prestige; Sociability; Socioeconomic position; Talkativeness; Tact

This list of characteristics predates Daniel Goleman's research on emotional intelligence and leadership (Goleman, 1995; Goleman, 1998), but the five components of emotional intelligence at work in leaders as identified by Goleman (1998) - self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill are being alluded to under the above characteristics of active, energy; intelligence; judgment; adaptability; adjustment, normality; emotional balance, control; initiative; insightfulness; integrity; objectivity, tolerance of stress; interpersonal skills, sensitivity; sociability and tact. While there is a question regarding the exact definition of emotional intelligence, it is deemed to be the ability of an individual to understand and manage his or her personal feelings and emotions, as well as his or her emotions towards other individuals, events and objects (Goleman, 1995; Goleman, 1998; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). It would therefore be an important element of a leader's repertoire when having to deal with subordinates whose interpretation of any situation in an organisation is based on their backgrounds and not on viewing it through the organisational or cultural lens or the leader's eyes.

These five components as identified by Goleman (1998) encapsulate the following:

Table IV: The Five Components of Emotional Intelligence at Work

*Self management skills		#Manage relationships with others
	DESCRIPTION	CHARACTERISTIC
* Self Awareness	The ability to recognise and understand one's moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effects on others	Self-confidence, Realistic self-assessment, Self-depreciation sense of humour
* Self-Regulation	- The ability to control or redirect disruptive impulse and moods - The propensity to suspend judgment-to think before acting	Trustworthiness and integrity, Comfort with ambiguity, Openness to change
* Motivation	- A passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status - A propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence	Strong drive to achieve, Optimism, even in the face of failure, Organisational commitment
# Empathy	- The ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people - Skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions	Expertise in building and retaining talent, Cross-cultural sensitivity, Service to clients and customers
# Social Skill	- Proficiency in managing relationships and building networks - An ability to find common ground and build rapport	Effectiveness in leading change, Persuasive, Expertise in building and leading teams

(Source: Adopted from: GOLEMAN, 1998)

3.6.2 Behaviour

It is the cognitive ability of the leader that will determine which characteristics possessed by the leader need to be used (Jago, 1982). It is here where the 'how' becomes important in making the leadership effective or ineffective. Importance is now attached to the role the leader plays in these circumstances. Under the typology of a Type II leader –as developed by Jago (1982), the leader's cognitive abilities will determine the role that will be assumed. The Ohio State University studies (Kerr, et al., 1974) in the late 1940s into leadership behaviour, identified that a

leader can either play the role of someone high in consideration or someone that is high in initiating structure, or a combination of both; these two approaches are not opposite ends of a single leadership behaviour continuum, but two separate and conceptually independent dimensions - distinct and unrelated from each other (Bass, 1990; Dessler, 2001; Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001).

Consideration is the relationship behaviour by a leader towards his or her subordinates and reflects the level of concern the leader has for the welfare of his or her subordinates (Bass, 1990; Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001). A leader that is high in consideration will exercise two-way communication and consultation with subordinates and display mutual trust, respect and warmth towards subordinates too (Jago, 1982). This will only be possible if the leader possesses high emotional intelligence and the characteristics common to this as identified in Jago's list (1982). Studies also determined that leaders who were above average in leadership showed more empathy or understanding of others and were also more accurate in judging other members' feelings and opinions relevant to the group (Dimock, 1970).

In contrast to a high consideration factor, a high initiating leader's focus will be on the degree the leader defines and organises relationships amongst group members, the establishment of well-defined channels of communication and methods of accomplishing the group's task (Jago, 1982). Initiating structure is a task-behaviour by the leader and shows the leader's emphasis on initiating work, organising work, giving structure to the work context, defining roles and responsibilities and scheduling work activities (Bass, 1990; Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001). Initiating structure leans more towards a function of management, than leadership. Research indicates that the most effective Type II leader will be the leader that scores high in both of these dimensions, high consideration as well as high initiating structure (Hemphill, 1955; Fleishman, 1957; Halpin, 1957a; Halpin, 1957b; House, et al., 1971; Jago, 1982).

Researchers at the University of Michigan also identified two leadership behaviours, or roles, in organisations, namely employee orientation and production orientation (Dessler, 2001; Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001). Employee orientation is very similar to the consideration behaviour and production orientation to the initiation structure behaviour found in Ohio State Studies (Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001). The fundamental difference between these two studies centres on the assumption of these behaviours: Ohio State views them as independent whereas University of Michigan views them as mutually exclusive (Hughes, et al., 2002). The

assumption common to both, however, focuses on a leader's ability and behaviour that could influence a group to goal accomplishment (Hughes, et al., 2002).

The results of behaviour research suggest that effective leaders are concerned with both people and task production (Schermerhorn, 2002). A criticism levelled at the style approach to leadership is that this approach has not established one style that is common to all situations (Northouse, 2001). Yukl (1989) indicates that behaviour differs from context to context and leadership effectiveness varies across situations.

Important for organisations is that conceptualising leadership in terms of behaviour suggests that effective leadership is a skill that is not innate, but that can be acquired and therefore be taught (Campbell, et al., 1970; Bass, 1990; Jago, 1982). Unfortunately this does not guarantee effective leadership (Campbell, et al, 1970) as a number of studies have indicated that the circumstances the leader is faced with could be detrimental to the emphasis of both consideration and initiating structure (Kerr and Schriesheim, 1966; Korman, 1966). No amount of training will replace the leader's personal judgment. It has been determined that the effectiveness of these two structures is dependent on the following situational contingencies (House and Dessler, 1974.; Kerr and Schriesheim, 1974):

- Follower needs and dependencies
- Follower ability
- The degree of task structure
- The degree of intrinsic satisfaction associated with the task
- Task pressure, job level
- Follower expectations
- Leader's upward influence

The follower's needs and dependencies, ability and expectations and the leader's upward influence will all be influenced and impacted on by the cultural background of the follower.

Even though these situational contingencies tend to hamper the training of leaders, Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid program is widely adopted and used to assist leaders to identify the role they should play; a permutation of a high concern for production and a high concern for people is considered to be the most desirable (Blake and Mouton, 1964; Blake, et al., 1964; Keller, 1978). It is usually viewed either from a perspective of accomplishing the task or task

behaviours, or satisfying the needs of group members and relationship behaviours (Dessler, 2001; Northouse, 2001).

On the continuum of leadership behaviour one also finds autocratic and democratic leaders. The role of an autocratic leader is characterised by highly centralised decision-making and a complete concentration of power in the leader's position, whereas the democratic leader's role is one of a highly participative decision-making nature and the equalisation of power between the leader and subordinate (Jago, 1982). Democratic leadership overlaps somewhat with the consideration dimension of the consideration and initiating structure paradigms (Halpin, 1957b).

Research suggests that democratic leadership provides subordinates with the opportunity to express and fulfil individual needs in the process of accomplishing group goals (Morse and Reimer, 1956). It enhances the subordinate's psychological identification with the group and its task and provides a means of satisfying ego-esteem and self-actualisation needs through the group rather than at its expense (Jago, 1982). Group morale and productivity therefore benefit from a democratic leadership style.

Leaders who adopt autocratic and authoritarian approaches typically focus on production and not employees and often have to depend on coercion and persuasion in efforts to accomplish organisational goals (Bass, 1990). Bass (1990: 420) also wrote "By means of careful coaching and practice, the authoritarian leader was trained to determine all policy for group members, to dictate the methods and stages of goal attainment one step at a time, to direct the actions and interactions of group members, and to praise the members in a personal manner." According to Block (1993), patriarchy's fundamental belief is that in order to organise effort towards a common goal, which is what organisations are all about, people from top to bottom need to give much of their attention to maintaining control, consistency, and predictability. Because patriarchal leaders are autocratic, they have failed to discover, have ignored, or have discarded the value of employees.

Regrettably, authoritarian and patriarchal leaders in bureaucratic, mechanistic organisations display an uncaring, uncompassionate, and detached leadership approach to employees. This negative attitude has a detrimental affect on employees, the work environment and hence the organisation (Block, 1987; McGregor, 1960; Shafritz and Ott, 2001). By continuing to rely on authoritarian, impersonal and uncaring approaches to leadership (Bolman and Deal, 1997;

Morgan, 1998), the value of employees is denied by suppressing and ignoring their emotions and knowledge. Authoritarian leaders treat their employees like machines and not like human beings. (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Morgan, 1998).

Fineman wrote (1993: 22), “Pushed to its limits, the emotionalized framework suggests that the social construction of organisations simply cannot be without human feeling.” Many organisational leaders rely on leadership approaches that are patriarchal and exemplify McGregor’s Theory X Management approach (Block, 1993; McGregor, 1960). These leadership approaches have produced largely negative attitudes and behaviour and employees have been prevented from performing at their highest potential. (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Senge, 1990; Shafritz and Ott, 2001). Such attitudes and behaviours strongly influenced the organisation’s culture. (DeConinck and Lewis, 1997). Oppressive leader attitudes and behaviours do not reflect competitive-edge competencies (Lombardo, and Eichinger, 2002).

Although autocratic leadership approaches have enabled leaders to create stable and efficient organisations, these approaches have stifled employee participation and growth. With leaders striving to gain the competitive edge in their respective markets, many are seeking to adopt a more employee-sensitive approach and to influence employees into becoming contributing participants. Perrow (1986) referred to this approach to leadership as good leadership. He defined it as democratic rather than authoritarian, employee-centered rather than production-centered, concerned with human relations rather than bureaucratic rules. He also hypothesised that this type of leadership would lead to high morale, which concomitantly would lead to increased effort by employees, resulting in higher production. The acknowledgement of suppressing and ignoring the feelings and knowledge of brought the realisation the value of the contribution of employees can make towards the productivity and sustainability of an organisation if influenced by more than just a leader’s traits and behaviours.

To play an effective role, a leader therefore has to match the leadership style to the demands of the different situations faced (Northouse, 2001). This requires leadership to be reliant on the dynamics of the leader, the follower and the situation (Hughes, et al., 2002). The importance of the leader’s diagnostic ability to the situation is hence of crucial importance (Hersey, et al., 2001). As this theory evolved, the previous focus on leader behaviours of initiating structure and consideration from the Ohio State Studies was modified by giving focus to the amount of

direction – task behaviour – and the amount of social-emotional support – relationship behaviour – a leader must provide given the situation (Hughes, et al., 2002).

Under Jago's (1982) typology of leadership, Type III leaders are more concerned with the conditions in which certain traits a leader possesses are effective. Leadership thus depends on the circumstances of the situation. Because the circumstances are never the same - the complexity and uniqueness of the circumstances change with the situation - the influence on leadership is variable. According to Jago (1982) the reaction or role of a Type III leader towards the contingency will be driven by the leader's traits and not the leader's behaviour. Because the traits are inherent to the leader, it is suggested that situation and circumstances the leader is faced with to be managed (Fiedler, 1965).

Because situations vary, certain traits that a leader may possess may allow him or her to influence one situation more effectively than another. Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership based on a leader's least preferred co-worker strives to encapsulate this principle or view (Fiedler, 1964). Fiedler ascribes a personality trait labelled "task versus relationship motivation" to the leader and it is the leader's position on this continuum of task and relationship that will determine how favourable this position is to the leadership situation (Fiedler, 1964; Jago, 1982).

According to the leader's likes or dislikes of his subordinates, the leader's orientation towards the task or relationship trait will be determined. The leader's most preferred co-worker, who is viewed in a favourable light, will be more concerned with interpersonal relations than the task whereas a leader's least preferred co-worker who is viewed in an unfavourable light will be more concerned with task-relevant problems (Fiedler, 1964; Jago, 1982). Therefore, leaders who score high on the least preferred co-worker scale are described as relationship-motivated leaders and those leaders who score low as task-motivated leaders (Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001).

In view of the difference in cultural backgrounds of leaders and subordinates in South Africa, this could be problematic. Fiedler's Leadership Contingency Model suggests that three major situational variables determine whether a given situation is favourable to leaders. High levels of the following three factors give the most favourable situation and low levels the least favourable with the leader-member relation being the most influential variable in determining the favourability of the situation (Fiedler, 1964; Hersey, et al., 2001):

- The leader's personal relation with the members the group
- The degree of the structure in the task that the group has been assigned to perform
- The power and authority that the leader's position provides

The leader-member relations and the position of authority will be influenced by the cultural differences that could exist between the leader and members of the group. If the leader is subjectively influenced by a different cultural lens, the leader's scoring of his subordinates for determining where they will be positioned, could be subjective and distorted. A leader could inadvertently be task orientated rather than relationship orientated, which will certainly influence the leadership effectiveness. A practical example could be a leader that has authoritarian traits and has a negative view of a subordinate that perhaps dared to question the leader's decision or authority.

Fiedler (1967) therefore concluded that task-orientated leaders tend to perform the best in group situations that are either favourable or very unfavourable to the leader and relationship-orientated leaders tend to perform best in situations that are intermediate in favourableness. Is thus not meaningful to speak of an effective leader or an ineffective leader, one should rather speak of a leader who tends to be more effective in one situation and ineffective in another (Fiedler, 1967; Jago, 1982; Hersey, et al., 2001). He further suggests that it may be easier for leaders to change their situation to achieve effectiveness than to change their leadership style (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002) and management can achieve effectiveness by selecting the right kind of leader for a certain situation or changing the situation to fit the particular leader's style (Hughes, et al., 2002).

This is not always practical or possible. In addition, the following summarised review of the shortcomings of Fiedler's model (Hughes, et al., 2002; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002) makes it even more problematic:

- Field settings by other researchers concluded in mixed results
- There are too many uncertainties regarding the measurement and interpretation of low preferred co-workers scores on the scale
- The interpretation of situational favourability varies according to the effectiveness of leadership styles

- The relationships between low preferred co-workers scores and situational favourability are unclear
- The theory does not address how to remedy mismatches between a leader and a situation

3.6.3 Contingent on Situation

Combining traits with situational demands is positioned under the categorising of Type IV leaders in Jago's (1982) Typology of Leadership. Type IV leaders are defined in terms of behaviour in a situation rather than traits. How the leader will behave based on the relationship that exists between leaders and followers now becomes the crucial variable in the leadership situation (Hersey, et al., 2001). Effective collaboration between the leader and subordinate creates the necessary synergy that results in achievements that could not have been accomplished separately and provides satisfaction to both (Bennis and Biederman, 1997). In this approach, the importance of subordinates emerges and leadership is seen as an interaction between the goals of the subordinates and the leader (House and Dessler, 1974; Horner, 1997).

The most appropriate style is based on what motivation the leader uses to shape the behaviour of the subordinate by controlling the consequences associated with the subordinate's behaviour. A leader's greatest impact on subordinates is hypothesised to exist through the ability to reward or punish the subordinates' contingent on their performance levels (Skinner, 1969; Jago, 1982). This approach assumes that flexibility to situations is necessary and that an effective leader is the one who consistently chooses the most appropriate decision for a situation (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). Giving rewards conditional to high levels of performance by subordinates, has been associated with higher overall levels of performance and higher levels of subordinate satisfaction (Oldham, 1976; Sims and Szilagyi, 1975; Sims, 1977). Making corrective rewards conditional on low levels of performance has shown contradictory results. In some instances, it has shown to be related to lower overall levels of performance and satisfaction and in other instances, the opposite (Keller and Szilagyi, 1976; Keller, 1978; Sims and Szilagyi, et al., 1975).

This underlying theme is followed in the following four leadership models:

1. Robert House's Path-Goal model
2. Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership model
3. Vroom and Yetton's Leader-Participation model

4. The Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) Theory

- Robert House's Path-Goal model suggests that leaders are primarily responsible for helping subordinates develop behaviours that will enable them to reach their goals or desired outcomes. If the leader's behaviour does not satisfy subordinates' immediate or future needs, the leader's behaviour becomes unacceptable to the subordinates (Jago, 1982; Horner, 1997; Robbins, 1998). It must also create an environment for subordinates that provides coaching, guidance, support and rewards, all of which are necessary for effective performance and which may be otherwise be lacking in subordinates or their environment (Filley, et al., 1976; Jago, 1982; Robbins; 1998).

The effectiveness of this type of leadership will hinge on the characteristics of the subordinates (their state of need, ability, tolerance for ambiguity and self-esteem) and the characteristics of the environment the subordinates have to work in (task structure, role ambiguity and formal reward systems) (Jago, 1982). The leader following this model will have to take cognisance of subordinates' states of need, abilities, tolerances for ambiguity and self-esteem; all shaped and influenced by their background. The Path-Goal model postulates that directive leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership and achievement-orientated leadership behaviours should be used in different situations to enhance satisfaction, effective performance and rewards (Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001).

Subordinates with an internal locus of control – subordinates who believe they control their own destiny – will be more satisfied with a participative style. Subordinates, however, with an external locus of control will be more satisfied with a directive style (Robbins, 1998). The nature of Afrocentric management and leadership, as eschewed in Ubuntu as well, is participative. In essence the member of an African community subjugates his or her wellbeing to that of the community (Robbins, 1998) suggesting an external locus of control. Yet the directive style required when dealing with individuals with strong external locus of control, clashes with the participative style that drives the communal and collective interaction process within this environment. Perhaps in the South African context consideration should be given to initiating the leadership process with a participative style first and then to evolving into directive style, if the necessary

influence cannot be established effectively - a variant of the Vroom-Yetton model of leadership.

As is the case with both the Trait and Behavioural theories of leadership, training may equip a leader with the necessary skills to exercise leadership within the Path-Goal paradigm. However, in addition to training focusing on the attainment of new behavioural styles, it will also have to concentrate on providing skills in diagnosing the leadership situation and rules for harmonising the appropriate behaviour to the situation. Hence, leaders will also have to be coached to display initiating structure and consideration as well as be taught the specific conditions or circumstances that are likely to contribute to subordinate motivation and satisfaction (Jago, 1982).

- Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership model focuses on subordinates and has at its foundation the subordinates' readiness to be lead, where the readiness of the subordinates relates to the extent to which they have the ability and willingness to accomplish a specific task (Hersey and Blanchard, 1974; Hersey and Blanchard, 1993; Robbins, 1998). This model uses the same two leadership dimensions that Fiedler (Fiedler, 1964) identified; task and relationship behaviours. Hersey et al., (2001) views task behaviour as the degree of involvement of the leader in the spelling out of duties and responsibilities of individuals. This would entail telling individuals (or the group) exactly what to do, explaining how it should be done as well as where it has to be done and then who would be responsible for doing it. Relationship behaviour again, is the extent to which the leader engages in two-way or multi-way communication. The behaviours include listening, facilitating, and supportive behaviours.

Once again the emphasis is on the dyad between leader and subordinate and if there is a gap between the cultural backgrounds of the two parties, it could lead to misunderstandings and breakdowns in this relationship. It was found that the following situational factors would influence the leader's effectiveness; the leader him- or herself, the leader's followers, supervision, key associates, the organisation, job demands and time allowed for making decisions (Hersey, et al., 2001).

The effectiveness of leadership behaviour will be subject to the particular level of a subordinate's readiness, which in turn is derived from the subordinate's maturity

(Hughes, et al., 2002). Maturity depends on the follower's job maturity – or self-confidence, ability, and readiness to accept responsibility as well as his or her psychological maturity – or relevant skills and technical knowledge (Hersey and Blanchard, 1974; Hughes, et al., 2002). Employees are deemed to be at a high maturity level if they are interested and confident in their work and they know how to do the task. They are deemed to be at a low maturity level if they have little skill for the task, but have the motivation or confidence to get the job done (Northouse, 2001). It is important to note that both these components of maturity are meaningful only with regard to a particular task the subordinate has to execute and will vary from task to task (Hughes, et al., 2002).

The Situational Leadership Theory reflects strong direction (task behaviour) and is appropriate for subordinates with low readiness. Subordinates who are unready but who do show an increase in readiness should be rewarded by increased positive reinforcement and social-emotional support (relationship behaviour) (Hersey, et al., 2001). Conversely, as the subordinate's maturity increases, leadership should be more relationship motivated than task motivated. The model addresses leader behaviours towards four degrees of subordinate maturity levels from highly mature to highly immature; leadership can consist of the following behaviours towards subordinates: delegating (low task – low relationship), participating (low task – high relationship), selling (high task – high relationship) and telling (high task – low relationship) (Hersey, et al., 2001; Schermerhorn, 2002).

- Vroom and Yetton's Leader-Participation model is an operative conditioning model that is designed to provide guidelines to a leader to assess a problem by taking into account the various situational variables and choosing the most appropriate decision-making style (Hersey, et al., 2001; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002).

Five leadership styles have been identified by Hersey, et al. (2001) and Ivancevich and Matteson (2002) in how leaders make a decision within an individual or group situation. Under an Autocratic I-style the leader makes the decision to solve the problem based on information available; Under an Autocratic II-style the leader obtains additional information from the group before making the decision; Under a Consultative I-style the leader shares the problem with subordinates individually before making a decision;

Under a Consultative II-style the leader shares the problem with subordinates as a group before making a decision and under a Group II-style the leader shares the problem with subordinates as a group and the group makes the decision with the leader acting as the chair.

The effectiveness of a leader's decision judged by whether a subordinate will accept the outcome is one function of three classes of outcomes, each of which may be affected by the decision process used. The other two are the quality or rationality of the decision and the amount of time required to make the decision (Maier, 1963; Vroom and Yetton, 1973). "The decision to allow participation should be based on such considerations as the need for a high quality decision, the boss's knowledge, and the probability that the decision will be accepted if it is made by a superior" (Gist, et al., 1987; 246).

The Vroom-Yetton model takes the shape of a tree diagram and is a very methodical and direct way to choose how best to handle the issue at hand. A situational diagnosis consisting of seven items is suggested before the selection of the most appropriate decision-making style (Hersey, et al., 2001; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). The first three pertain to the quality or technical accuracy of the decision; the last four pertain to the acceptance of the decision style (Hersey, et al., 2001; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). Once the leader has responded to the seven yes or no questions in relation to the tree diagram, the leader will have chosen the most appropriate decision-process from the five above referenced managerial methods. These five managerial methods are relevant to group decision-making, and include two authoritarian processes; two consultative processes: consultation with subordinates individually and consultation with subordinates as a group; and a group process of joint decision-making (House and Aditya, 1997). It is obvious that the two consultative processes and the group process slant itself towards an Afrocentric and Ubuntu approach of decision-making.

Hersey, et al., (2001) identifies three reasons to view this model as important:

- It is a widely respected leadership behaviour theory that has major support among the contingency theories
- It provides the leader with the flexibility to adopt the best approach to a situation
- It affords the opportunity for leaders to develop into those that are more effective.

Hughes, Ivancevich and Matteson (Hughes, et al., 2002; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002), however, criticise this theory as lacking validity due to insufficient evidence in that it does not unequivocally prove that those that follow the model are more effective than those that do not. It oversimplifies decision-making by viewing it at a single point in time.

According to Jago (1982), effective leadership in decision-making will be enhanced if leaders are taught to use this model to guide the choice of the appropriate levels of subordinate participation. Training leaders in this facet will therefore be beneficial to the organisation.

- The Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) Theory focuses on the exchange between leaders and followers (Hughes, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2001). This theory postulates that leadership develops over time in three phases: the stranger phase, the acquaintance phase, and the mature partner phase (Northouse, 2001). It also suggests that leaders group subordinates into either as a member of his or her in-group (consisting of subordinates whom the leader prefer because of personal reasons) or as a member of his or her out-group (consisting of subordinates whom the leader prefer less because of personal reasons) (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). Subordinates with in-group status will have higher performance ratings and greater satisfaction with their superior and staff turnover appears to be less than that of the out-group (Robbins, 1998).

It is not clear how a leader chooses subordinates to be categorised within the in-group, but there is evidence that leaders choose in-group members because they have personal characteristics (e.g. gender, age, attitudes) that are similar to the leader, a higher level of competence than out-group members or an extroverted personality (Robbins, 1998). It should be considered that if members are from a different demographic background to the leader, it could affect the subjective judgment of the leader in categorising group members and thus influence the relationship if the subordinate does accept the leader's decision because of this difference. The competence of a group member should also be viewed with suspicion. The competence could be the result of lack of training, illiteracy, and innumeracy. Unless competence is evaluated according to established and accepted norms, the evaluation may once again fall short because of the leader's subjectivity.

This leadership model, however, reflects the importance of communication and indicates that effective leadership occurs if the communication between leaders and subordinates is characterised by mutual trust, respect, and commitment (Northouse, 2001). Unfortunately it appears to favour discrimination and it is not fully supported (Northouse, 2001).

3.6.4 Recent Developments

A multifactor leadership theory was developed by Bass in the 1980s, which addresses transformational, transactional, and charismatic styles of leadership. These leadership styles have been described as having a direct effect on individual and organisational level outcomes (Bass and Avolio, 1990; Yukl and Van Fleet, 1992.) The basis of his descriptions of transformational and transactional leaders is found in the work done by James Burns (Bass, 1985).

Burns proposed that one could differentiate ordinary from extraordinary leadership. He described ordinary and transactional leaders as those leaders who influence employee compliance by expected rewards (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership is the most prevalent leadership method in organisations today and comprises the bulk of relationships between leaders and followers (Burns, 1978; Avolio, et al., 1991; Seltzer and Bass, 1990). It is based on an exchange relationship that involves the reward of effort, productivity and loyalty; a concept based on bureaucratic authority and a leader's legitimacy within an organisation (Tracey and Hinkin, 1994; Yukl, 2002). These transactions are reciprocal in nature and are used to gain and sustain influence over subordinates over time; leaders not only influence subordinates, subordinates also influence the leader. A leader earns influence by adjusting to the expectations of followers. Transactional interactions comprise the bulk of relationships between leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). A criticism of transactional leadership is that it is nearsighted and does not take into account the entire situation, subordinates, or future of the organisation when offering rewards (Crosby, 1996).

Transformational leadership is a development of transactional leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994). A leadership style deriving traditional power from a hierarchical position in a bureaucratic, organisation has become outdated. To be effective in today's organisational environment, leaders have to work and transform from within the organisation to motivate subordinates to perform beyond expectation. This is done by raising the follower's confidence levels and providing support to higher levels (Burns, 1978). Bass (1990: 53) states that, "The 60

transformational leader asks followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group, organisation, or society; to consider their long-term needs to develop themselves, rather than their needs of the moment; and to become more aware of what is really important.” Transformational leadership typifies the leadership exhibited by the ideal leader; it expands the leadership concept presented by the transactional approach and focuses on the needs of subordinates (Bass, 1990; Hughes, et al., 2002).

Four dimensions with accompanying characteristics are associated with and used by transformational leadership to affect influence (Dessler, 2001; Hughes, et al., 2002; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002; Northouse, 2001; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000; Stone and Patterson, 2005). These dimensions have been tabulated as follows:

Table V: Four Dimensions with accompanying Characteristics that are associated with Transformational Leadership

Dimension	Role	Characteristic
Charisma (emphasise influence)	Leaders who exhibit high standards, provide a vision and mission for followers, and arouse subordinates’ respect and trust	• Vision • Trust • Respect
Inspirational motivation	Leaders who inspire and motivate subordinates through communication to achieve high standards towards the attainment of the vision	• Risk-Sharing • Integrity • Modeling • Commitment to Goals • Enthusiasm
Intellectual stimulation	Leaders who stimulate subordinates to become creative and innovative towards problem solving	• Rationality • Problem Solving • Personal Attention • Mentoring
Individualised consideration	Leaders who treat subordinates as individuals and advise and coach them towards success	• Listening • Empowering

Transformational and transactional leadership are not mutually exclusive and may be used concomitantly (Schermerhorn, et al., 2000). It has been proven that in situations where change is necessary, using the two forms simultaneously is necessary to achieve sustainable high-performance results (Schermerhorn, 2002). Ivancevich and Matteson (2002) identified the following two additional dimensions unique to transactional leadership that should be added to situations where combinations of both leadership approaches are used:

- Contingent reward – leaders who reward subordinates for goal accomplishment as mutually agreed upon
- Management by exception – leaders who allow followers to perform and intervene only when necessary to provide corrective action or non-achievement of standards

Transformational leadership cannot be executed without trust between leaders and subordinates; it is the foundation of transformational leadership. Trust relies on the leader's character (Maxwell, 1998), and without a moral character a leader will fail to elicit the necessary trust. Covey (1989: 178) writes, "Trust is the highest form of human motivation because it brings out the very best in people." Leading from a moral basis allows full organisational transformation to occur as all of the leader's skills emerge to influence subordinates positively (Bottum and Lenz, 1998; Clawson, 2003). This moral basis starts and ends with trust and creates a moral foundation for extraordinary, value-based transformational leadership, creating effective, sustaining leadership that leads to profitable and successful organisations (Ford, 1991).

Northouse (2001) expresses the following criticisms of the transformational leadership approach;

- It is difficult to interpret clearly because it is a very broad approach that is difficult to succinctly define and is often viewed from a simplistic perspective
- Because of its focus on leader dimensions, it emphasises a trait focus instead of also considering the behavioural element
- It establishes a potential of abusing subordinates through control and power

Although charisma (idealised influence) is one of the four dimensions of transformational leadership, charismatic leadership is also viewed as a leadership theory and it is premised on subordinates making attributions of heroic or extraordinary leadership abilities when they observe certain behaviours in a leader (Robbins, 1998). Several attempts have been made to identify the personal characteristics of charismatic leaders. The most comprehensive analysis was done by Conger and Kanungo (1988) and they have identified the following key characteristics:

- Charismatic leaders do not lack self-confidence
- Charismatic leaders have a strong vision

- Charismatic leaders have the ability to articulate their visions
- Charismatic leaders have strong convictions about their visions
- Charismatic leaders display behaviour that is out of the ordinary
- Charismatic leaders are perceived to be agents of change

Research shows impressive correlations between charismatic leadership and high performance and satisfaction between subordinates (Waldeman, et al., 1990; Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996). The subordinates of charismatic leaders are also more motivated to exert extra work effort and express greater satisfaction (Robbins, 1998). However, charismatic leadership has a negative side too. A charismatic leader's self-confidence could be a liability as it could lead to the leader being unable to listen to others or become uncomfortable when challenged by aggressive subordinates and may be rigid with regards a decision or belief (Robbins, 1998).

In a five-year study on what it requires to transform a good company into a great company, Collins (2001) identified a type of leader that possesses a paradoxical combination of characteristics that serve as a catalyst for this to happen. He termed this leader a Level 5 leader. The overarching and catalytic characteristics foundational to this type of leader are of extreme personal humility blended with intense professional will; modest and wilful, shy and fearful. In addition Collins (2001) also identified the following characteristics to be present in Level 5 leaders:

- Calmness
- Determination
- Unselfish ambition
- Self-depreciating

Whether one subscribes to the Trait Theory of leadership, the Behavioural Theory of leadership, the Contingent Theory of leadership, or the latest development of transactional, transformational, or charismatic forms of leadership, these theories all have one common purpose – to establish how to make leaders effective in goal achievement. However, a leader's single job is to get results (Goleman, 2000). How a leader achieves this goal has been a research topic for many decades; the degree of literature and research material available speaks volumes and seems endless. In research done by the consulting firm Hay/Mcber, which drew on a sample of 3 871

executives selected from a database of more than 20 000 executives worldwide, it was found that six different leadership styles are adopted by these executives (Goleman, 2000), sometimes single, but mostly in combination with each other.

The six leadership styles identified in this research best encapsulate the common theme that runs through all the aforementioned leadership theories. Nevertheless, Goleman (2000) advises that it is important for leaders to have a full understanding of their own levels of emotional intelligence in order to achieve the maximum impact of the style, or combination of styles, they need to apply in any given situation. By then concentrating on improving their weaknesses, they will improve their effectiveness. Regrettably, few leaders possess all six styles and fewer know how and when to use them. According to Goleman (2000), it is advisable for a leader – through the emotional intelligence percept of self-awareness – to permeate subordinate groups with members who will compensate for the leader’s shortcomings. The six leadership styles identified with indicative roles a leader will play under each style were found to be the following in the Hay/Mcber-study (Goleman, 2000):

Table VI: The Six Leadership Styles at a Glance

Coercive	Authoritative	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coaching
Demands immediate compliance	Mobilise people towards a mission	Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds	Forces consensus through participation	Sets high standards for performance	Develops people for the future
Do what I tell you	Come with me	People come first	What do you think	Do as I do now	Try this
Drive to achieve, initiate, self-control	Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst	Empathy, building relationships, communication	Collaboration, team leadership, communication	Conscientiousness, drive to achieve, initiative	Developing others, empathy, self-awareness
In a crisis, to kick start a turnaround, or with problem employees	When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances	To build buy in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths
Negative role	Most strongly positive role	Positive role	Positive role	Negative role	Positive role

(Adapted from GOLEMAN, 2000: 82)

3.7 Informal Leadership

Informal leaders are individuals that have the ability to exercise influence over others through either special skills or resources that meet the needs of these other persons (Schermerhorn, et al., 2000). Calder (1977) suggests that leadership is indeed a disposition or characteristic, but that it only exists in the perceptions of others, particularly followers or subordinates. Leadership is therefore not a viable scientific construct or variable, but a process by which people infer that real or imagined leadership qualities exists in others (Calder, 1977). The attribution of leadership posits that people label others as possessing or not possessing leadership qualities and the manner in which this comes about is the foundation of the attribution theory of leadership (Calder, 1977; Jago, 1982). Under this theory, the leaders are not the focal point, but the observers of the leader – it is an attempt to comprehend the psychological processes of the observers that leads to certain perceptions, labels, and attributions (Jago, 1982).

It strengthens the argument that leadership is subjective; in order to lead, a leader has to have followers. If one observer attributes leadership qualities or characteristics to a leader for whatever reason, it does not imply that a colleague of the observer will do the same. In a hierarchical structure, the latter observer does not have a subjective choice; the leader is empowered through the leader's legitimacy within this structure and availability of power afforded to the leader because of this. An observer of the leader attributes leadership to another person by either actual observation of the person, second-hand accounts of the person's behaviour, or inferred observations (Calder, 1977; Jago, 1982). Inferred observations are the deduction of the existence of otherwise unobserved behaviour from observed behaviour (Jago, 1982).

Subjectively the observer analyses the observations using the following four criteria (Calder, 1977; Jago, 1982):

- Is the observed person's behaviour distinctive?
- Is the behaviour of the observed person typical of how a leader is expected to act?
- Is the observed person's behaviour consistent, or extreme?
- May other characteristics of the observed person be rejected because of current behaviour?

It should be clear from the subjective interpretation of these four criteria, that their application would not have the same outcome among different people. It will have to be established empirically that there are common characteristics of an observed person between the observers. It is suggested that Calder's Attribution theory of leadership is foundational to the phenomenon of informal leaders. The observers, or members, within a workgroup in an organisation could through this aforementioned process, with time, identify a colleague in their work group to have characteristics that qualify the colleague as a leader, albeit not formal, but rather informal. Kirk and Shutte (2004) are of the opinion that formal leadership and informal leadership can paradoxically coexist, but only when leadership is conceived from the pretext of the attribution role of relations within a group.

In addition to this though, charisma also plays a role in whether a colleague of the observers could be identified as having leadership qualities. House, et al, (1977) implies that charisma will only play a role if one takes into account the nature of the charismatic effects, the conditions under which these charismatic effects occur, and the cause and effect of the conditions labeling someone as possessing charismatic qualities. Once again, it infers subjectivity; what makes a person appear charismatic in one mind does not infer the same in a different mind.

The majority of research has examined leadership within the framework of a managerial role in a formal organisational setting and has produced little in the understanding of processes that lead to the development of informal leaders and informal leadership; the processes by which a member of a work group becomes elevated to a position of status and leadership with associated influence over fellow group members (Jago, 1982; Pielstick, 2000a). It is also suggested by Jago (1982) that in certain instances, the informal leader in a group could have greater influence over the group than the hierarchical formal leader. In the South African context, this speculation is supported by the role that informal leaders within a workforce in the form of Labour Union shop stewards can play.

These informal leaders are recognised by group members as the ones executing leadership functions and they play an important role in how the group works together and performs (Neubert, 1999). There is very little information available that compares the processes of formal leading and informal leading in leadership research (Pielstick, 2000a) and little is known about informal leadership behaviours or the effect of these methods on the group (Pescosolido, 2001). Pielstick's study (2000a) concludes that the vision of informal leaders tends to be based on

shared needs, values, and beliefs. Moreover, it was found that informal leaders seemed to be motivated by a higher purpose, were more likely to have a sense of humour and enjoyed having fun, which included encouraging imagination and creativity.

One has to consider informal leadership within the ambit of Agency and Stewardship theories. Agency theory deals with situations in which principals (the work group and/or informal leader) and managers (the formal leader of the work group and/or the organisation) have different goals and risk preferences. This theory operates under the assumption that humans (in this instance the formal leader of the group) will behave in ways to maximise their self-interest and will tend to be more risk averse than their principals (the work group and/or informal leader) (Eisenhardt, 1989). It is proposed that the work group or informal leader should not have self-interest and risk aversion at heart. Because extrinsic rewards are used in agency theory (Davis, et al., 1997), the informal leader cannot use any rewards to influence fellow members in a work group.

The Stewardship theory tries to clarify how manager-principal interests may be aligned. Managers are said to act as stewards when they are motivated not by individual goals, but rather by intrinsic motives that are aligned with the objectives of the organisation and also believe that their personal needs are best met by working toward the best interests of the organisation's collective needs (Davis, et al., 1997). According to Thomas and Velthouse (1990), meaningfulness, autonomy, impact and self-efficacy at individual and group-level are the keys to intrinsic motivation and the expected outcomes of increased intrinsic motivation are higher levels of effort and attention to doing a task well (Thomas and Tymon, 1997). Identification with the organisation is a key factor in stewardship and occurs when an individual or group employs elements of an organisation's identity to define him- or herself or the group itself (Pierce, et al., 2001). Hence, individuals who identify with their organisations are more likely to become stewards while those who do not, are likely to behave like agents.

Another important factor in differentiating management stewardship from agency theory is the source of power. One source of power found in organisations is the institutional power vested in the holder by virtue of his or her position within the organisation (Gibson, et al., 1991). In principal-agent relations, control is likely to be maintained with institutional power to establish the desired levels of coercion, hierarchical control, and influence over rewards, whereas in principal-steward relationships personal power is more likely to be used (Davis, et al., 1997).

Personal power utilises influence derived from perceived expertise or affective relationships where individuals identify with each other.

Ilies', et al., (2005) four-component model of authentic leadership identifies self-awareness, unbiased processing, authentic behaviour and authentic relational orientation as fundamental to authentic leaders. Shamir and Eilam (2005) describe authentic leaders as people to whom the role of a leader is central to their self-concept; have achieved a high level of self-resolution or self-concept clarity, with goals congruent with their perceived personality, and behaviour that self-expressive. These two studies show understandable dimensions and factors of Goleman's (1998) five components of emotional intelligence pertaining to leadership (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill). Luthans and Avolio (2003) and May, et al., (2003) are of the position that authentic leadership includes a positive moral perspective characterised by high ethical standards that guide authentic leaders' decision-making and behaviour. Pielstick (2000b) characterise authentic leading as shared vision, communication, relationships, community – the organisation, guidance and character.

What are the attributions observed by followers that cause them to identify an individual as a leader, albeit an informal leader? Maxwell (1998) identified seven key areas that have to be present in a leader's life that will cause that individual to step forward as a leader:

- Character
- Relationships
- Knowledge
- Intuition
- Experience
- Past success
- Ability

Over time, members of a work group could identify and label an individual of the same group, who consistently displays successful application in these areas, as the group's informal leader. The combination of these characteristics within an individual should grant the individual enough advantage in the form of referent and expert power to exert the necessary influence to exercise non-institutionalised authority (legitimate power, the power of reward and coercive power) within the group.

From an informal leader's perspective, expert power will be gained through acquiring more knowledge, keeping informed about technical matters, developing exclusive sources of information, demonstrating competency to fellow group members by solving difficult problems, not making rash, careless statements, not lying or misrepresenting facts and being consistent with positions taken on any matter (Yukl, 2002). To gain the necessary referent power, an informal leader will have to show acceptance and positive regard for fellow group members, act supportively to other group members, defend their members' interests and back them up when appropriate, make self-sacrifices to show concern, and use sincere forms of ingratiation. The leader will not manipulate and exploit other group members for personal advantage and will not break promises (Yukl, 2002).

If power is not used in a discretionary manner by leaders, both formal and informal leaders, it could have negative consequences for effective management of the organisation. The following table highlights the outcome of the use of power:

Table VII: The Uses and Outcomes of Power

Source of leader influence	Result		
	COMMITMENT	COMPLIANCE	RESISTANCE
REFERENT POWER (derived from admiration and respect for the leader)	Likely	Possible	Possible
	If request is believe to be important to leader	If request is perceived to be unimportant to leader	If request is for something that will bring the leader harm
EXPERT POWER (skills, expertise training related)	Likely	Possible	Possible
	If request is persuasive and subordinates share leader's task goal	If request is persuasive but subordinates are apathetic about leader's task goals	If leader is arrogant and insulting, or subordinates oppose task goals
LEGITIMATE POWER (hierarchically related)	Possible	Likely	Possible
	If request is polite and highly appropriate	If request or order is seen as legitimate	If arrogant demands are made or request does not appear proper
REWARD POWER (hierarchically related)	Possible	Likely	Possible
	If used in subtle, very personal way	If used in a mechanical, impersonal way	If used in a manipulative, arrogant way
COERCIVE POWER (hierarchically related)	Very unlikely	Possible	Likely
		If used in a helpful, non-punitive way	If used in a hostile or manipulative way

(Source: Adopted from GRIFFIN and MOORHEAD, 2001)

Implicit in the use of power, is finding an optimum balance between the power accessible to the informal leader and that available to the formal leader of the group. The two positions or persona should compliment each other and not be in an adversarial position. Informal leaders therefore do not receive special compensation or rewards and do not have the power to hire and fire fellow

employees (Pescosolido, 2001). The power, control and influence of an informal leader through the leader's activities and capabilities can contribute hugely to the organisation (Pfeffer and Salanick, 1978).

Informal leaders, depending on the circumstances and conditions, may assume any or all of the following roles: shape task strategies, help with the establishment of a group's basic norms and values, co-ordinate group efforts, assist in obtaining and allocating resources through their connections and relationships, negotiate on behalf of the group, assist with the communication process in an organisation as they often have the ear of the rest of the organisation through informal networking processes, guide and mentor colleagues, act as role models, challenge the status quo, and influence the morale of the group or workforce (Cook and Emerson, 1978; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz and Laurie, 1998; Kramer and Neale, 1998; Pielstick, 2000a; Sparrowe, et al., 2001; Maccoby, 2004).

Informal leaders play an important role in organisations and their leadership and influence has to be acknowledged by the formal leadership structure of an organisation. An organisation needs both formal and informal leadership. It is important to note that informal leaders, even though leading in a formal manner, facilitate and guide in a controlled manner.

3.8 Afrocentricism, Ubuntu, and Leadership

According to Van Rensburg (2007), Westernisation can be viewed as the assimilation of the Western culture, which is based on individualism. Individualism holds that the individual is the unit of achievement and that every person is an end to him- or herself. In capitalism, labour – which is composed of individual employees – is viewed as a production factor and the early Western schools of thought on management reflected this. To curtail the idiosyncrasies of the individual as well as individuals as a collective workforce, management systems under these schools of thought were to make every individual an optimum worker (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995a; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995b; Stanley, 2004).

Socially, individualism can be described as a system that views the individual above society (Van Rensburg, 2007). This philosophy, when juxtaposed against capitalism, has a certain commonality; "Individualism, competition and materialism provide criteria for self-definition as a natural consequence of a worldview in which a finite and limited focus orientates us towards

such disorder that we fight one another to sustain an illusion” (Meyers, 1993: 10). In addition to being the only social-economic system that recognises the individual’s right over his mind and the products of his mind, capitalism also protects the right of the individual within an economic context. The motto of the survival of the strongest individual or most competitive business organisation becomes the foundation and the driving force in this worldview – society is shaped, built and developed around the interest of the individual and the needs of the best performing business are served sometimes at a cost to the society within which it operates, now the zeitgeist of the Westernised view. This view and philosophy, unfortunately, has been the underlying foundation to the initial approach in the development of management and leadership theories in the West.

The African cultural paradigm has in its origin the community, which drives the obligations of the individual in relation to the community (Mbigi and Maree, 1995; Robbins, 1998). Communalism places the importance of the community above that of the individual. The cultural position regarding individualism versus communalism is likely to be the most obvious difference between African and Western cultures with regards to this continuum (Van Rensburg, 2007). This difference is best reflected in the African concept of Ubuntu. According to Shutte (1993), Ubuntu is not synonymous with either Western individualism or collectivism. Collectivism, once again according to Shutte (2001) was a term coined by Leopold Senghor that describes a collection of individuals in which the collective interest supersedes the individual interest. Ubuntu expresses an African view of the world, anchored in its own person, culture and society (the community), which is not only different to the Western context but also difficult to define in a Western context (Mbigi and Maree, 1995).

The upbringing and socialisation of individuals in African society emphasise interpersonal, informational, and decision-making roles (Mbigi, 2005). Interpersonal roles are subsumed in the notion of Ubuntu (Mbigi, 2005). It is a literal translation of the notion of collective personhood and collective morality, but answerable to the community, which is in direct contrast to individualism roles (Mbigi, 2005). Therefore, the company guided by the Ubuntu philosophy is expected to inform and communicate with its employees and to be their mouthpiece in external communication. Decision-making is the hallmark of leadership, which involves analysis of the situation at hand, in consultation with others, and guiding the process until a course of action is selected through a process of consensus (Mbigi, 2005). It definitely has the hall mark of a bottom-up approach to leadership and management.

South Africa's history is grounded in colonial rulers, which were followed by the apartheid governments of independent South Africa (Littrell and Nkomo, 2005). The colonial rulers and the apartheid governments controlled both political and economic developments and hence Western approaches in an African country had a high degree of legitimacy (McFarlin and Coster, 1999). Leadership challenges in Africa are rooted in a Westernised cultural, political, economic and social context (Blunt and Jones, 1997; Jaeger, 1990; Jackson, 2004).

Western theories of leadership display the following characteristics and approaches (Bass, 1990; Swanepoel, et al. 2003);

Table VIII: Characteristics and Approaches of Westernised Leadership

Swanepoel, et al. (2003)	Bass (1990)
It is individualistic rather than collectivistic	It is the focus on group processes
It emphasises assumptions of rationality rather than ascetics, religion, or superstition	It is a matter of personality
It is stated in terms of individual than group incentives	It is a matter of inducing compliance
It stresses follower responsibilities rather than rights.	It is the exercise of influence
It assumes hedonistic rather than altruistic motivation	It is a form of top-down persuasion
It assumes centrality of work and democratic value orientation	It is the creation of power relations and ranks
	It is an instrument to achieve goals
	It is an effect of interaction
	It is a differentiated role
	It is the initiation of structures

White South African leaders largely tend to align themselves culturally with Western leadership, while black South African leaders appear to find congruence culturally with Afrocentric leadership (Booyesen, 2001; Hofstede, 1994; House and Aditya, 1997). Emerging proponents of African management philosophy (Horwitz, 2002; Jackson, 2004 and Thomas and Schonken, 1998) argue that dominating Western leadership and management practices are inadequate because leadership and management practices in Africa are embedded in a very different cultural, political, economic, and social context (Blunt and Jones, 1997; Jaeger, 1990 and Jackson, 2004).

African culture is based on a collective and communal concept (Robbins, 1998) and a leader in the African context is said to be anybody whom the community can look up to (Ndaba, 1994).

African leadership has been built on participation, responsibility and spiritual authority (Van Der Colff, 2003) and it requires transparency, accountability and legitimacy (Lessem and Nussbaum, 1996). The community will, as a result, have a formal leader, tribal, political, or through any other formal method, but all members of the community are allowed to question the leader. Khoza (1994) describes Afrocentricity as encompassing African history, traditions, culture, mythology, and value systems. Afrocentricity views the organisation as a community with the importance of the individual been stressed. This is in clear contrast with Westernised leadership with its emphasis on assumptions of rationality rather than on ascetics, religion, or superstition as identified by Swanepoel, et al.'s (2003) (Refer Table VIII above). "This description of Afrocentricity fits the philosophy of Ubuntu and Ubuntu can therefore be regarded as such an Afrocentric approach" (Broodryk, 2005: 37). In order of relevancy and importance, the community is ranked first in Afrocentricism, the collective interest of the community second, with the individual's interest ranking last.

In African anthropology humans are regarded not as individuals but as groups of created beings inevitably and naturally interrelated and interdependent (Gyekye, 1997: 210). The basic quality of Ubuntu is the inner value and dignity of the human personality. It is defined as an all-inclusive, ancient African worldview which pursues, most importantly, values of intense humanness, caring, sharing and compassion and associated values. This ensures a happy community life in a family atmosphere where the significance of the group and its solidarity is deemed to be more imperative than the individual (Broodryk, 2005). This view aligns itself with Bartlett and Ghoshal's (1994; 1995a; 1995b) research which suggests that to be more productive organisations are moving away from a strategy, structures and systems focus to compel employees to achieve organisational goals to a more facilitative and participatory focus of common purpose, processes and the people in the organisation. "The most basic task of corporate leaders is to recapture those valuable human attributes by individualising the corporation. To do so, they need to adopt a management philosophy that is based on purpose, process, and people" (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995b: 142).

The following Table contrasts different researchers' views of the key characteristics, values, and practices of Ubuntu with Swanepoel, et al. (2003) and Bass's (1990) characteristics and approaches of Westernised Leadership as per Table VIII above:

Table IX: Characteristics, Values, and Practices of Ubuntu

Mbigi (2005)	Koka (1998)	Broodryk (2005)
Respect for the dignity of others	A spirit of oneness and exclusivity	Warmth, tolerance, understanding, peace, humaneness
Group solidarity	Teamwork	Empathy, sympathy, helpfulness, charitableness, friendliness, caring
Collective hospitality	Informality	Unconditional giving, redistribution, openhandedness, sharing
Teamwork	Collectivism	Commitment, dignity, obedience, order, normative, respect
Supportiveness	Responsibility	Love, cohesion, informality, forgiveness, spontaneity, compassion
Interdependence	Respect	Promotes flexibility, rather than stability
Expression of being	Discipline	It embraces plurality
	Good behaviour	It highlights the importance of the extended family

This is encapsulated by Nkomo (2006: 10), “Whereas Western management thought is said to advocate Eurocentricism, individualism and modernity, ‘African’ management thought is said to emphasise traditionalism, communalism, co-operative teamwork, and mythology. Traditionalism has to do with the adherence to accepted customs, beliefs and practices that determine accepted behaviour, morality and characteristics of individuals in African society.” Whether African management is addressed through Afrocentricism or Ubuntu, it leaves one with no doubt about the underlying importance imbued to the individual’s contribution to the community or society, but never at a cost to this collective.

Ubuntu is not Western individualism or collectivism, but an African view of the world, with life anchored in its own person, culture, and society, which is difficult to define in a Western context (Shutte, 1993). Ubuntu prescribes a management approach emphasising teamwork, attention to relationships, mutual respect, and empathy between leader and followers as well as participative decision-making (Mangaliso, 2001). The researcher has experienced that this approach manifests itself in Labour Unions in South Africa. Although collectivistic in nature because the individual’s interest is sacrificed in favour of the interest of the bigger group, the Labour Union’s members, Ubuntu principles drive this collectivism. The Labour Union represents a community for its members and is reflected in their motto of “an injury to one is an injury to all” (Vavi, 2009).

Mbigi (1997) opines that this African worldview can be translated into what he terms “The African Dream in Management.” It is proposed that the introduction of Ubuntu as a management concept will not be to replace the transfer of knowledge from Western management concepts, but rather to lend support to the development and enhancement of a hybrid management system operating in Africa where, within these Western concepts, the transfer of knowledge can find a proper African translation (Karsten and Illa, 2005).

A suitable African management system could produce a management style as characteristic as American and Japanese styles (Karsten and Illa, 2005) which will be able to set catalysts for managers and leaders to act in the way employees are treated and particular events are handled (Purcell, 1987). South Africa needs to develop its own unique approaches to the development of management models, given the need to change and the limitations of Western management development models (Binedell, 1993). This was after all, the approach the Japanese followed when they adopted W. Edwards Deming’s ideas – developed in the West – about production management and produced an economy that the West and scholars are increasingly looking towards for new perspectives on management and leadership (Prince, 2005).

Using Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, which are based on Western ideologies, research into the cultural values of three key South African groups evidently illustrates support for development of a South African management model as there is a clear congruence between the principles of Ubuntu and the following Hofstede dimensions; of very high uncertainty, avoidance, high power distance, collectivist, femininity and short-term orientation (McFarlin and Coster, 1999).

The predicted differences between the three major key cultural groups of Afrikaner, Anglo and African were found to be as follows:

Table X: Predicted differences among major South African cultural groups using Hofstede’s cultural dimensions.

Cultural Dimension	South African cultural groups		
	Afrikaner	Anglo	African
Uncertainty avoidance	High	Low	Very high
Power distance	High	Moderate	High

Cultural Dimension	South African cultural groups		
Individualism-Collectivism	Individual	Individual	Collectivist
Masculinity-femininity	Masculine	Masculine	Feminine
Long-term vs. short-term orientation	Long-term	Long-term	Short-term

(Adapted from McFARLIN, D.B. and COSTER, E.A. 1999: 63 – 78)

The following Table links Hofstede’s dimensions (1998) against certain Ubuntu dimensions as highlighted as per Table V above:

Table XI: Hofstede’s Dimensions versus Ubuntu Characteristics, Values, and Practices

Hofstede (1998)		Ubuntu	
Cultural Dimension	Outcome	Dimension	Outcome
Uncertainty avoidance	Avoiding of uncertainty and ambiguity in people’s lives	Commitment, dignity, obedience, order, respect, expression of being	Avoiding of uncertainty and ambiguity in people’s lives
Power distance	Accepting/Rejecting differences in power between individuals in an organisation	Empathy, sympathy, helpfulness, friendliness, caring, interdependence, tolerance, understanding, peace, humaneness	Leader should earn respect of followers and should serve followers
Individualism-Collectivism	Individuals viewing themselves as either individuals or members of a group	Interdependence, teamwork, group solidarity, respect, collective hospitality	Individuals view themselves as members of a group
Masculinity-femininity	The importance of the acquisition of money and power (masculine) versus relationships and quality of life (feminine)	Love, cohesion, informality, forgiveness, spontaneity, compassion, respect	Focuses on gaining understanding, in-put and buy-in from everyone
Long-term vs. short-term orientation	Long-term; the embracement of future-orientated values (e.g. persistence and thrift). Short-term; the embracement of the past and present (emphasis on tradition and current social obligations)	Respect for the dignity of others, expression of being warmth, tolerance, understanding, peace, humaneness, interdependence	Informality and the sharing of information about the future

Against the findings of McFarlin and Coster (1999) as per Table V above, underlying South African philosophies and values must be identified in order to develop and test theoretical management models that could guide management and leaders in decision making. Hofstede's (1998) current conceptualised construction of five basic cultural dimensions could aid in the growth of management development in South Africa by framing the cultural dimensions that might affect it (McFarlin and Coster, 1999).

Mbigi and Maree (1995) are of the opinion that traditional African models of communal leadership, or Ubuntu, may have useful lessons to offer to the West. African leadership should be seen as a process and not a person (Kirk and Shutte, 2004). This view is supported by Horner (1997) in her conclusion that leadership should be seen as a process in which leaders should not be seen as individuals in charge of followers, but as members of a community of practice; where the community of practice is a collection of people united in a common enterprise who all share a history and thus certain values, beliefs, ways of talking, and ways of doing things (Drath and Palus, 1994).

In research conducted out of a set of forty countries, the United States of America was found to be the most individualistic country (Hofstede, 1980). In view of the fact that the United States has been the world's largest exporter of management theories covering such aspects as motivation, leadership and organisation (Hofstede, 1980), it follows that Westernised management and leadership theories have to be slanted in favour of the relative importance of the social interests of the individual and the financial interest of the organisation over the social interests of the group and the financial interest of the organisation over the financial interest of the of the community.

Power orientation in these Westernised theories also leans towards power respect (authority is inherent in one's position within a hierarchy) versus power being tolerated (individuals assess authority in view of its perceived rightness or their own personal interests) from an Afrocentric and Ubuntu perspective (Hofstede, 1994). This obviously presents a problem even though Western organisations are now moving increasingly towards more team-based and interagency forms of operations and away from hierarchical structures. A shift towards team-based models of leadership is gaining more ground (Horner, 1997), which is foundational to an Afrocentric and Ubuntu view of management and leadership.

With the cultural diversity that exists in the South African workplace and this against the background of apartheid, people working in organisations and work groups in the same organisation will have different agendas and an unequal distribution of power (Kirk and Shutte, 2004). The same researchers (Kirk and Shutte, 2004) suggest that this places a greater value on the rigour of collaboration through polarity. The style of leadership to be adopted should take into account hard realities of concepts like inclusivity, collaboration and diversity. For this purpose Kirk and Shutte (2004) suggest that the concept of community leadership as exercised within the African and Ubuntu paradigm; “leadership within communities of different people who come together in collaborative effort” (Kirk and Shutte, 2004: 237). This is manifested through dialogue, connectivity and empowerment. Kirk and Shutte (2004) in their research reach a very important conclusion in that there is a need for developing leadership capacity that is grounded in and emerges from particular cultural settings and that it should be steeped in the very two principles that would appear to pull it apart; incorporation and diversity.

3.9 Summary

Notwithstanding which leadership theory one is inclined to subscribe too, if subordinates are not prepared to subject themselves to a leader’s influence, authority, and power, the leader’s role will be negated and the leader’s effectiveness will be curtailed. Within a work group context, leadership is a process and a property that is based on either a leader’s physical or psychological characteristics or a combination of both. How the leader behaves and utilises these characteristics within the process of leading will determine the leader’s effectiveness.

How successful the leader is in utilising the process of leadership in combination with personal traits to influence the work group’s productivity and contribution towards the common goal of the organisation, will ultimately determine the leader’s effectiveness. It is the subordinates’ perception of how the leader is doing this, as well as simultaneously satisfying the group’s needs, that will be causal to whether the leader’s leadership is accepted or not. This will have the desired outcome of the members of the work group as well as the work group itself, serving the interests of the organisation as a whole instead of personal interests or work group interests.

Leaders have to transform societies, communities and institutions with their leadership. Leadership does not take place in a vacuum; it is influenced by external influences that exist within the very same societies, communities and institutions. A very important variable within

the external environment is the social culture of the employees of the organisation, which if ignored by leadership, will have negative consequences for leadership effectiveness. Ignoring the cultural background of employees in South African organisations, the majority of which are shaped within an Afrocentric and Ubuntu view of the world, will impact on the influencing role a leader is expected to play.

This could be problematic for South African organisations as a certain section of management and leadership in South Africa - the older white generation - is still historically and ideologically grounded in a Westernised foundation. As a result the contribution and added value that Afrocentric principles of management and the primary leadership principles of Ubuntu can make to assist management and leadership in the contemporary business environment are being ignored not entertained or are still in their infancy. This position is myopic as leadership behaviour and management philosophies typically evolve in harmony with the culture within which they function.

The fundamental difference between the Westernised approach to management and leadership and the Afrocentric and Ubuntu approach to management and leadership is in the way the individual is treated in society, communities and institutions. Whereas the interests of individuals are valued in the West, in Afrocentricism and Ubuntu principles the individual's interest is subsumed to that of the community. Compared to the traditionally top-down approach of the Westernised thought, in this communal approach, decision-making and leadership is participatory and by consensus. The input and contributions of all the individuals within a community are actively promoted and pursued before decisions are reached.

Latest trends in the development of management and leadership theories within the Western paradigm would suggest that there is a move away from the top-down approach. It is recognised that by acknowledging the emotions, feelings and knowledge of individuals, it could contribute towards the productivity and sustainability of an organisation. Participatory and non-authoritarian management and leadership are actively promoted in order to unlock the potential of an organisation's employees. The values of Afrocentricism and Ubuntu, which build cohesiveness, dignity, solidarity, teamwork, supportiveness, and interdependence within communities, are all outcomes now being espoused in Western management and leadership theories and models.

This trend is to be welcomed and encouraged within South African organisations, as this approach is congruent with the Afrocentric and Ubuntu fundamentals. It is not suggested that the Western approach be usurped by Afrocentric and Ubuntu approaches and principles. Rather there is a strong motivation for South African management to embrace these principles. Common ground should be found between these approaches and out of this an approach and philosophy unique assimilated for the South African business environment.

Leadership styles have to meet any demand that different circumstances and different situations may pose. The demands and circumstances have to take the variables into account that shape the type of leadership required. A leader's diagnostic ability therefore becomes important and this intimates that leaders in South Africa would require high levels of emotional intelligence. A leader's influence and effectiveness is an outcome of the leader-member relationship within a work group, the task structure of the group, and authority expectations and acceptance within the group. A leader with high self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills will foster better cognitive abilities, which will make the leader realise that the cultural influence on these variables within the work group cannot be ignored. Ignoring it will diminish the leader's influence and effectiveness.

While there is no best way of leadership, it is proposed that transformational leadership and the leadership styles of the Contingency models of leadership are the best suited to meet the demands of the South African business environment. The styles of leadership executed under these models all display the characteristics of leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence. The inclusive and transactional nature of leadership interaction with subordinates finds support within the Afrocentric and Ubuntu view of leadership. The use and application of power as well as the decision-making process becomes crucial to leader-subordinate relations under these styles of leadership. Power in the African view is collective with the leader in the community acting as a figurehead to facilitate the execution thereof.

Although the concept of informal leadership is recognised in the literature, the role that informal leaders can play in work groups has not been well researched. Because the use of power as well as the concept of leadership has a different perspective within the African setting, the role of informal leaders in work groups should be reconsidered. Individual employees who get categorised and labelled as informal leaders within organisations and work groups, have certain traits – physical and behavioural – which could be contributory to these individuals being viewed

as such. Circumstances contingent to the situation could also be decisively why an individual is deemed a leader within the work group, albeit informal.

Informal leaders can have an influential role and function in work groups. If an individual is fulfilling the role of an informal leader within a group based on contingencies, it may be deduced that this individual has the same characteristics as a formal leader with high emotional intelligence. Within the cultural context of informal leaders in the greater society, overlooking this role and influence at organisational and group level will be limiting and detrimental to effective management.

Intrinsically informal leaders will therefore not be motivated by personal goals, but the goals of the greater good – the work group and in due course the organisation as a whole. Hence, management has to view the informal leader in a work group as functioning as a steward of the organisation within the work group. The use of power by the formal leader in the group could be diffused through the group by assimilating it with informal leaders' use of power in order to increase group satisfaction. In embracing informal leaders, effective management will be enhanced, thereby assisting the whole organisation in achieving its goals.

CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction to the Chapter

The researcher has been a member of the senior executive management team in a medium sized manufacturing concern in the motor industry for the past twenty-three years and has been responsible for the organisation's human resource management and labour relations within a large Unionised labour force during this period. During this tenure the organisation's headcount varied from as low as 120 to as high as 360, but was on average 225. In the middle to late nineteen-eighties, the relationship between management and the workforce was at times acrimonious and antagonistic. However it became more harmonious and mature long before labour legislation compelled management within the South African business environment to undergo a paradigm shift in how to deal with and treat employees in this country. This was largely due to the founders of the company being from America and Europe and, from the inception of the company, no segregation between the different races was allowed within company boundaries.

The researcher realised on many occasions that the elected workers' representatives, or shop stewards, were not representative of the real leaders of the collective being presented in dealings with management. The formal recognition agreement between the Labour Union and management is not only particular, but also prescriptive in how these representatives are to be elected. Unfortunately during the nineteen-eighties the functioning of industrial relations between management and the Labour Union members was marred by various states of emergency in South Africa because of the political and social unrest the country found itself in during this period. Initially it was recognised that the real leaders remained anonymous because of fears for their safety and mistrust. This was substantiated by visits to the researcher during these states of emergency from the then Security Police on more than one occasion as these employees representing the real leadership within the workforce were invariably also leaders in the local communities where they lived. They were also deemed to be instigators against the State. The liberal treatment by management of the employees when compared to the reality experienced outside the factory gate during this period generated a perception of a "hidden agenda by management" within the workforce in various instances.

However, after the end of apartheid and the maturing of the relationship between management and the employees, the real leaders at times still chose to remain in the background and not to become formally elected shops stewards. New shop stewards get elected every second year and the notion that the real leaders were not present in the shop steward council could easily be verified because of the number of times the shop stewards had to report and consult with their collective membership before any binding agreement could be reached between management and the employees. When the real leaders within the workforce were the representatives on the shop steward council, agreement was reached numerous times without any report back or consultation with the collective. This was clearly indicative of the influencing power these informal leaders had within the workforce.

The researcher's reality, knowledge and understanding of informal leadership have been grounded through his personal experience of human resource management and labour relations. Knowledge is socially constructed through our experience of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1966). However, ontologically, where does a researcher anchor his or her own perception of reality against societal or scientific knowledge? Ordinary knowledge is gained through personal and first-hand experience and this lay knowledge allows one to cope effectively with one's daily tasks. Scientific knowledge is gained through scientific research and investigation (Babbie and Mouton, 2001) and has its reference in the physical or empirical world, as the end product of rational processes, experiential sensing and empirical observations (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: xxiii), scientific knowledge is "a set of statements which are better or worse approximations of reality (the ideal truth), but which are accepted by the scientific community as being truthful, after having been scrutinised (the criterion of rationality), and which are based on the best supporting evidence gained through the application of rigorous methods and techniques (the criterion of objectivity)." Do the findings of research embody objective truth or the understanding of the researcher of the truth or the various understandings of the truth of those being researched, or some combination thereof (Rubin and Rubin, 2005)?

It is an open question whether the researcher's experience and interpretation of reality is extant to anyone else's and to prevent a flawed human apprehension of it, the researcher's contractual understanding of it should be approached through the utilisation of methods that prevent human contamination – which sets it apart from "ordinary knowledge" – of its apprehension or

comprehension (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Yet, conversely it is acknowledged that the researcher's experience will influence the research.

4.2 Structure of the Chapter

This chapter thus focuses on the methods used in this research to comply with these requirements and discusses the aims, goals and questions of the study, the research paradigm, the research method, the research instrument, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, limitations of the study and conclusions reached regarding the role and characteristics of informal leaders within work groups within a South African perspective.

4.3 Aims, Goals and Questions

Because this researcher's view of reality has been shaped through a westernised lens, it is recognised that this perspective limits a more inclusive grasp of the multi-cultural reality of the researcher's work environment. Any researcher speaks from a particular class, gender, racial, cultural or ethnic community perspective (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) and since contemporary leadership research remains largely in a western paradigm, this study was therefore undertaken to get a better understanding of the role and characteristics of informal leaders within a diverse working environment, with the unit of analysis populated mostly by employees with an African identity and background, but employed within a strongly cultured and long-established multi-national company.

The following questions are addressed in the research:

- Do employees within work groups recognise and acknowledge that, other than the formal hierarchical leaders within work groups, informal leaders do exist?
- Do fellow employees see any role for an informal leader within the work group?
- Are fellow employees able to identify any colleague within the work group as having leadership characteristics and do fellow employees deem this colleague to be an informal leader within the work group?

- What makes a colleague wear the mantle of an informal leader – is it incident related or because of certain characteristics?
- Does the role of informal leadership limit itself to interpersonal relationships between members of the work group or does the role augment task execution or performing of other duties within the group?
- What do fellow employees identify as characteristics of the informal leaders?
- Could informal leaders be emerging leaders within the work group by showing interest in and availability for formal leadership development programmes?
- Are there any differences between the characteristics of formal leaders and informal leaders?
- Do informal leaders play the same role as formal leaders?
- Do group members recognise cultural differences within their work group?
- Do the role and characteristics of informal leaders have substance in the principles of Ubuntu?

The goal of this research is therefore to find understanding and meaning to these questions. Being perceptive to the characteristics and role of informal leaders in work groups in a diverse working environment will enable a better comprehension of informal leadership against the body of knowledge of formal leadership theory and it will also underscore any differences between the characteristics and role of both formal leaders and informal leaders in the organisation.

The aim of this study for that reason is twofold:

- Primarily, to investigate the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to investigate whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders

- Secondary, to determine whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups could be underpinned in the principles of Ubuntu and should consideration be given to any cultural differences between leaders and followers by organisational hierarchies

4.4 Research Paradigm

This research was done within a qualitative paradigm.

Empirically, the foundations of scientific truth and knowledge about reality are inherent in a rigorous application of testing phenomena against a framework as much devoid of human bias, misconception and other idols as possible (Francis Bacon, cited in Polkinghorne, 1989). However, the independence between the objective realm and the subjective realm when approached from a foundationalist's point of view in the empiricist tradition (Lincoln and Guba, 2000) cannot be substantiated in the researcher's reality.

It is recognised that there are multiple realities within the South African working environment, as encapsulated by the Ubuntu slogan, "I am a person through other human beings" (Broodryk, 2005: 1). The "other human beings" not only create their own subjective realities relative to each other but to the researcher's too. Cognisance has to be taken that the objective world is created by the interaction between these individuals, "the other human beings," in a fluid environment and not the subjective interpretation of what constitutes "real" or what should be – as demonstrated by Descartes' dual substance theory that because the individual can think, the individual therefore also exists (Polkinghorne, 1989; Moustakas, 1994). Whose thinking is creating reality, the subjective view of the researcher as thinking and hence existing individual, or rather the thinking of the collective being studied objectively?

Ontologically, reality for the researcher is therefore the experiential outcome of society's collective thinking and not individual thinking. It is the researcher's perception of this reality through individual and relative experience and interpretation thereof, the researcher's epistemology (the creating and understanding of truthful knowledge of the relationship between the researcher and the known) – and regardless of the ultimate truth or falsity, that becomes partially self-validating in the researcher's individual thinking (Babbie and Mouton, 2001; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). However, no single method can capture all of the subtle variations in

ongoing human experience so qualitative researchers may use a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods to improve the ways of better understanding the worlds of experience being studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Consequently because different paradigms may exist simultaneously, it is possible for the researcher to draw on more than one paradigm (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999; Maxwell, 2005).

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) the conceptual framework of one's research – the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs one's research – is a key part of one's research design. Maxwell (2005), however, views the conceptual framework in a broader sense and suggests that it also includes the actual ideas and beliefs that the researcher holds about what is being studied, written down or not, and the research paradigm selected by the researcher will be a reflection of this. He (Maxwell, 2005) therefore advises against limiting the conceptual framework to the literature review only, for the following three reasons:

- It could lead to a narrow focus on literature of theoretical and empirical publications, thereby ignoring other conceptual resources that may be of equal or greater importance to one's research. It also leads the researcher to ignore his or her own experience and speculative thinking
- It could generate a strategy of a broad focus of the field being investigated rather than focusing specifically on the studies and theories that are particularly relevant to the researcher's investigation where these relevant studies may only form a small part of the research in a defined field and may well range across a number of different approaches and disciplines. "In fact, the most productive conceptual frameworks are often those that integrate different approaches, lines of investigation, or theories that no one had previously connected" (Maxwell, 2005: 35).
- It could also lead the researcher to think that the task is simply descriptive and only to report what previous researchers have found or what theories they have proposed. The literature should be treated as a useful but fallible source of ideas. It should not be treated as an absolute authority, but rather as the current and established view. It should also not prevent one from framing alternative ways or ideas.

The literature review was executed within Maxwell's (2005) three guidelines. The purpose of the literature review was not only been to establish the current and historical view of leadership, formal and informal, but also to determine if support could be found for the researcher's view of the reality that the characteristics and role of informal leaders within work groups – in a South African context – could be in congruence with the examination of African leadership as found in the principles of Ubuntu. The literature was literally “mined” for this perception, similar to Kvale's (1996) view of the interviewer's role as a miner in the interviewing process.

Building on this implementation of the literature review, it was further approached within the constructionist paradigm of critical theory; rather than promoting neutrality, critical researchers bring problems to light, the sidelined and the silenced (Rubin and Rubin, 2005) – in this instance the sidelined being the informal leaders within the workplace in South African organisations. According to these authors (Rubin and Rubin, 2005) knowledge does not exist outside the perceiver, waiting to be discovered by the receiver as identical and universal truth. Instead, they argue that knowledge is subjective – what one sees depends on whose perspective one takes, or through whose eyes one views it. The literature was therefore also perused to determine the standpoint it takes on leaders – formal and informal – within a management and cultural paradigm. During the literature review the researcher also undertook to determine the standpoint the literature is reflecting on the recognition of informal leaders and the integration of Afrocentric management approaches and the application of Ubuntu principles in the formal workplace. This subjective approach is sometimes also called standpoint theory as it emphasises the point or view the researcher is taking (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

Although the empirical and theoretical research in the fields of leadership, organisational behaviour and human resource management from a westernised perspective is vast, research on Afrocentric leadership and management is less available. Ubuntu as a likely driver of Afrocentric leadership and management has been addressed in few research initiatives. The approach to the literature review in this research was because of this, at times, even exploratory. This approach is typical when a researcher examines a new interest or when a subject of study itself is relatively new (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). According to them it is typically undertaken *inter alia* for the following reasons:

- To satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for a better understanding of the problem
- To test the feasibility of a more extensive study

- To explicate the central concepts and constructs of the study

Exploratory research may take the form of a literature review of the related social sciences or a survey of people who have had practical experience of the problem studied (Selltiz, et al., 1965). Exploratory studies usually lead to insight and comprehension, rather than the collection of detailed, accurate, and replicable data (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

This research is therefore grounded in a post-positivists approach and framed within a constructivist-interpretative paradigm. Whereas a positivist researcher is grounded in the assumption that variables of the social environment constitute a self-determining reality, relatively constant across time and settings that can be empirically studied, captured, and understood by the researcher, a post-positivist researcher is grounded in the assumption that the variables of the social environment are constructed as interpretations by individuals and these interpretations tend not to be fixed at a point in time, but are transitory situations that keep on developing never to be fully apprehended, only approximated (Guba, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

A constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjective epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic world set of methodological procedures (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). The perspective that fellow employees have of the role and characteristics of informal leaders within work groups, is based on their subjective experiences. The aim of the interpretive approach is to find ways to explain the subjective reasons and meanings behind social actions. If a researcher believes that reality also consists of a fluid and variable set of social constructions – as within a work group – the researcher may adopt a constructionist approach, which aims to show how versions of the social world are produced and to demonstrate how constructions of reality make certain actions possible and others unthinkable (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999).

4.5 Interviewing as the Research Method

When there are huge differences in language, race and culture between the researcher and a group of people being studied in a social environment, it is important to get an insider's perspective – the “emic” perspective – to try and understand their actions, decisions, behaviour, practices and rituals (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). According to Pike (1967), the term “emic” signifies an approach to understanding from within a cultural system, one that provides insight

into indigenous phenomena, and which meaning derives from understanding phenomena in their own terms. An emic understanding follows an inductive process, which means suspending one's own belief and letting the data talk for itself (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999).

A qualitative approach is usually adopted as the most suitable way for the researcher when the focus is on gaining an emic perspective of the group of people being studied as the primary goal of this approach is rather to describe and understand human behaviour than to explain it (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Qualitative researchers are primarily interested in describing the actions of the research participants in detail and then attempting to understand those actions in terms of the participants' own beliefs, history, and context (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1991). Qualitative research also stresses the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being studied, and the situational constraints that shape the inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

In addition, the following key features of qualitative research as identified by Bogdan and Bilken (1998) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) lend support to the methodology adopted in this research:

- The naturalism of the actual setting as the direct source of data with the researcher as the key instrument is especially appropriate to the study of attitudes and behaviours
- The descriptive data collected takes the form of words and pictures rather than numbers
- The researcher is concerned with the process – the study of events as they occur and not reconstruction after the event – rather than simply outcomes or products
- The researcher's strategy is to analyse the data interpretively; abstracts are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together
- The researcher looks for meaning in that participants' perspectives are being probed and analysed.

A qualitative approach has thus been deemed most appropriate for the collection of data in this research with personal interviews as the method to collect data from the respondents.

A qualitative interview is a conversation between the respondent and researcher in which the researcher gently guides the conversational partner in an extended discussion (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The epistemology of the qualitative interview tends to be more constructionist than

positivist and the purpose is to derive interpretations from the interviewees and not facts of law (Warren, 2001).

Research is a voyage of discovery, a journey, an attitude, an experience, and a method of critical thinking, a careful critical enquiry in seeking facts for principles (Kothari, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). This is achieved by the interviewer's role as a miner – the participants have specific information and the researcher's function through the interviewing process is to dig for this information (Kvale, 1996). Qualitative interviews built on a naturalistic, interpretative philosophy, are extensions of ordinary conversations and the respondents are partners in the research process, rather than subjects to be tested and examined (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

The open interview consequently allows the participant to speak for him- or herself instead of the participant being bombarded with the researcher's own pre-determined hypothesis-based questions (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Not only is it an iterative process. It is the exact nature of this iterative process that makes the personal interview also flexible and continuous – questioning can be redesigned throughout the interviewing process (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). This quality therefore lends itself to Kvale's "mining" approach (Kvale, 1996). Questioning may be changed if required to allow the interviewer to dig deeper.

Researchers have to take cognisance that the interview is a social interaction and like any other human interaction, it involves specific norms, expectations and social roles (Babbie and Mouton, 2001) and is thus fallible. This especially, is applicable to cross-cultural interviewing where the interviewer and respondents are from different cultural backgrounds. This has been highlighted by Russell and Mugenyi (1997) in that the social survey technique remains a Western cultural product and ignores the importance of how time is treated in African culture; introductions are lengthy, discursive, probing, public and of great importance. These authors (Russell and Mugenyi, 1997) further propose that the establishment of good rapport is far more complex, demanding and time-consuming in Africa than envisaged in first world textbooks.

This problem of failing to establish within a very short time a good relationship with respondents from different cultures is also recognised by Ryen (2001). The author is of the opinion that unless this is achieved between researcher and respondent, access to the respondent's own perspectives will not only be problematic, but it will be difficult to validate any cultural understanding. This point of view is clearly also supported by Kvale (1996) in as much as if the

researcher fails to create an atmosphere in which the respondent feels safe enough to talk freely about his or his experiences and feelings, the exchange and sharing of personal experiences will not materialise legitimately.

To guard against this problem, Babbie and Mouton (2001) propose that researchers have to be mindful that with open-ended questions there is always the danger that some respondents will give answers that are essentially irrelevant to the researcher's intent. In addition the coding process requires that the researcher interprets the meaning of the responses, opening the possibility of misunderstanding and researcher bias. According to the authors (Babbie and Mouton, 2001) the questionnaire items should be clear and unambiguous. Respondents must not only be competent, but also willing, to answer questions. Questions should also be relevant and short and the researcher must avoid biased items and terms in the questionnaire and ensure that questions are posed in a language the respondents feel comfortable with.

4.6 The Structure of the Interview Questions as the Research Instrument

The nomenclature of open interviewing as viewed by different authors and researchers did pose as an impediment to the construction of the final interview protocol. What qualifies as an open-ended question, or an in-depth question? The following interpretations to interviewing by various authors guided the researcher in structuring the interview questions:

- Rubin and Rubin (2005)

Research based on depth interviews helps us to understand respondents' work lives. One approach to depth qualitative interviewing is an open-ended, unstructured interview. The authors deem "responsive interviewing" and depth interviewing as one and the same and in their opinion this model relies heavily on the interpretive constructionist philosophy, mixed with a small amount of critical theory, and shaped by the practical needs of the interview with the intent to generate depth of understanding, rather than breadth. Depth is achieved by paying attention to the specifics of meanings, situations, and history.

Depth is further achieved through the researcher being flexible in the research design to allow for new information to be accommodated during the research project. Because of this, questions asked during the project may have to be changed to allow for unexpected

situations. Questions cannot be fully worked out in advance. This contrasts with traditional survey research that often begins and ends with the positivist approach of pre-developed questions before the gathering of data.

- McCracken (1988)

The author distinguishes the depth interview from the long interview in so far as it is concerned with cultural categories and shared meanings rather than individual affective states. This method of interviewing can take the researcher into the mental world of the respondents, to see and experience the world as they do. Respondents' time scarcity and concern for privacy make the long interview a valuable means of inquiry. It also anchors the researcher against his or her own culture as the instrument of data collection.

For the purposes of the long qualitative interview, a questionnaire is therefore imperative and has several functions:

- It ensures that the researcher covers all the terrain in the same order for each respondent
- It ensures care and scheduling of prompts necessary to manufacture distance – it is too much to expect the researcher to formulate and recall them in the demanding circumstances of each interview
- It establishes channels for the direction and scope of discourse
- It protects the larger structure and objectives of the interview so that the researcher can attend to the immediate tasks at hand
- It does not pre-empt the open-ended nature of the qualitative interview. Within each of the questions, the opportunity for exploratory, unstructured and responses remains

- Babbie and Mouton (2001)

These authors make a distinction between basic individual interviewing and depth interviewing. Basic individual interviewing is deemed to be an open interview which allows the respondent to speak for him- or herself, whereas depth interviewing is a process where the researcher is not at all interested in the content of the conversation, but rather in the process by which the content of the conversation has come into being.

- Johnson (2001)

According to the author an in-depth interview is a face-to-face interaction between the researcher and an informant that seeks to build intimacy that is common for mutual self-disclosure. The intent is to gain information and knowledge that is deeper than what is sought in informal interviewing and is used to verify independently knowledge the researcher has gained through participation as a member of particular culture settings, or to explore multiple meanings of perspectives on some events.

- Fontana and Frey (2000)

- o Structured Interviewing

In structured interviewing all the respondents are asked the same series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories and there is little room for variation in responses except where open-ended questions – which are infrequent according to the authors – may be used. The nature of the interview leaves very little flexibility in the way questions are asked or answered in the structured interview setting.

- o Unstructured Interviewing

The authors opine that unstructured interviewing provides a greater breadth of data than other types of interviewing and equate it to the traditional open-ended, ethnographic (in-depth) interview, which is also favoured by Fowler (1995) in that unstructured open ended questions are among the best ways to measure respondents' knowledge and open ended answers to questions are usually a better way to find out what people know.

As the researcher remains the primary instrument for data collection and analysis in qualitative research (Patton, 1990), the researcher constructed from the aforementioned views and opinions an interview protocol that combines structured questions, unstructured questions and open-ended questions, consolidated into a questionnaire of 36 questions (See Annexure E).

- Twenty-two questions were structured questions and of a quantitative nature. The purpose of these questions was to establish the quality and dependability of the profile of the

respondents within the sample as well as establishing a rapport with the interviewee. If the majority of respondents were recently appointed to their positions, the quality and dependability of their input to questions could have weakened the reliability of the data collected

- The ten unstructured questions were posed with the option given to the respondent to expand on his or her answer, if it was not a simple yes or no. The intent of these questions was twofold, firstly to ensure that the respondents not only had a personal understanding and knowledge of the concepts of formal and informal leadership, but also to ascertain if the respondents experienced the process by which the content of the conversation had come into being that Babbie and Mouton (2001) refer to, and secondly, to further corroborate the quality and reliability of the profile within the sample
- Only four questions, questions 25, 27, 29 and 32, were asked as open-ended questions of an in-depth nature. These questions were deemed to be the heart of the study and respondents were prompted, if necessary, to expand on their responses.

4.7 The Research Respondents Represented in the Sample

The sample of respondents interviewed was limited to sixteen.

In qualitative research, the typical way of selecting individuals for interviewing is through purposeful selection, or purposive selection, and this is a strategy of allowing the researcher to deliberately select persons in order to provide information (achieving representativeness of the individuals selected) that cannot be gained through other more stringent methods of statistical sampling (Maxwell, 2005). According to Maxwell (2005) purposive selection criteria should also take into account the feasibility of access and data collection, the research relationship with the respondents, validity concerns and ethics. Babbie and Mouton (2001) recommend purposive sampling when it is appropriate to select the sample based on the researcher's own knowledge, its elements and the nature of the research.

Although the main concern in sampling is representativeness, qualitative research is less concerned with statistical accuracy (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). Hence, purposive sampling was used within the target population, which was a combination of employees in

positions of authority and responsibility as well as members from different groups in the organisation, but was weighted in favour of group members.

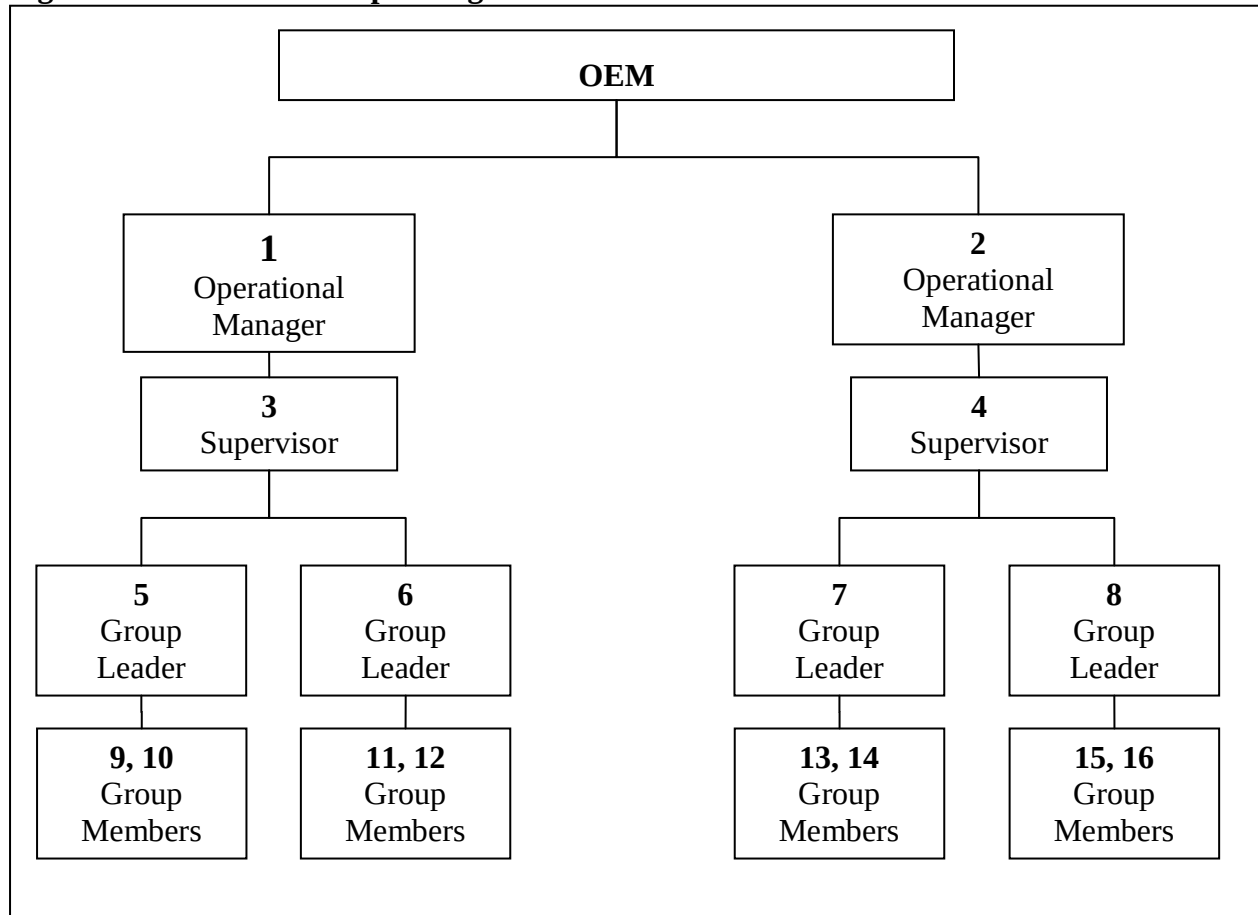
To circumvent possible bias being introduced if the researcher played an active a role in deciding who should or should not be included in the sample (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999), the manufacturing operations manager and the human resources manager of the OEM were given independence, and the responsibility for selecting the sixteen respondents in the sample group. To provide for any contingencies, these two senior managers were also asked to select one additional respondent, at their discretion, at group level as a replacement in the event of another respondent being absent on the day of the planned interview. They were provided with the following criteria and guidelines for the identification and selection of respondents and it was these employees that were interviewed from the target population:

- Executive/Senior Management – 2 Operational Managers (from different functional departments)
- Middle/Lower Management – 2 Supervisors, one from each of the functional departments of the Executive/Senior Manager selected
- Group Level
 - o 4 Group Leaders – 2 Group Leaders from the functional area of each Supervisor selected
 - o 8 (9) Group Members – 2 from each Group Leader selected, plus one other

These criteria were selected to ensure to provide a broad spectrum of representivity across the hierarchical structure of the company, but skewed in favour of non-management.

Schematically the sample composition may be depicted as follows:

Figure 3: Interviewee Sample Diagram



It was also requested that the employees selected should be weighted in favour of the demographics of South Africa. This ensured that the majority of the sample group was of African descent. No weighting preference for gender was prescribed and the selection outcome determined the gender composition of the sample.

This method of selection prevented the following from being selected: the informal leader, employees that are new to their positions or not familiar with the organisation or group and employees that could possibly have adversarial relationships with the informal leaders in groups – this bias could have tainted the responses to questions. Notwithstanding this, because statistical theories of probability do not apply to non-random samples, the degree of accuracy to which properties of the sample can be used to describe the target population will always remain in doubt (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 2002).

4.8 Data Collection

The data was collected over a period of one week from the OEM's main plant in the Eastern Cape after the following were concluded:

- Processing and completion of confidentiality documentation and any other documentation required by the OEM in order for the research to continue on site, with the option open to the OEM to withdraw its approval for the research to be conducted on site and for making respondents available on time, at any time during the research process
- Documentation review to establish group structures, functions and leadership hierarchy throughout the OEM's organisation as well as organisational hierarchy
- Identification of target population and selection of sample in collaboration with the OEM's human resources manager and the manufacturing operations manager

Of concern were the language barrier and the impact which interpreters could have on the essence of the interviewee responses as well as the researcher's lack of experience in interviewing. The issue of the language barrier was addressed by the researcher making use of an assistant who is fluent and literate in Xhosa, during the interviews. The assistant also helped with converting the verbal data to transcriptions and clarified any problems during the interview process that could have presented themselves because of language barriers, in the respondent's mother tongue. The assistant was also briefed beforehand in detail about the intent and purpose of the study and also familiarised herself with the literature review by reading through it several times. The assistant also has a post-graduate degree in Humanities which contributed to her grasp of the topic of this study.

Interviews were done on-site in amenities supplied by the OEM and interviewing times were scheduled by the OEM with interviewees being available at the appointed times, but subject to operational requirements. An hour-and-a-half was provided for each interview with the understanding that if any interview could not be concluded within the allotted time span, the interview would continue the next day with availability of the interviewee and timing and scheduling once again subject to operational requirements. All interviews, but two, commenced on time and were concluded within the scheduled times. Two interviews were delayed because

of operational requirements. These two were both interviewees from the late-afternoon shift and after consultation with the management on duty, the interviews were rescheduled and concluded before the end of the shift.

After general introductions, each interview commenced with the interviewee being informed of the following:

- The purpose of the study
- The interviewee had been nominated by management to participate in the study
- Participation was voluntary and the interviewee could withdraw immediately from the process, or at any time during the interview with no consequences whatsoever to the interviewee
- The steps of the interview process
- The interview would be recorded on tape, but only with the interviewee's consent
- The interviewee had the discretion not to answer questions asked and could also request clarification of any of the questions asked if the question was not understood or the intent of the question was unclear
- The role of the researcher's assistant and that if the interviewee objected to her presence or role, that she would recuse herself and her absence would not impact on the interviewee's role or contribution to the study
- There was no cost in, or any form of compensation for participating in the study
- Interviewees had the right to anonymity at all times, during the research, in the research document and after the research. The privacy and anonymity of the interviewee was guaranteed and at no stage would the identity of the interviewee and his responses to the questions be disclosed to any third party; either the recorded responses or the transcript of the recording
- The interviewee was informed that his well-being and comfort during the process was paramount and would not be jeopardised at all by the research. The researcher was to

be informed if this was transpiring or was to transpire

The steps of the interview process involved the following:

- Each interview was given an informed consent agreement, which had to be agreed to and signed before the interview process could commence and continue (see Annexure C); together with duplicate copies of the interview protocol, which did not include the column “Nature of the Question” (see Annexure E). In addition to the questionnaire list, the interview protocol also recorded the respondent’s sample ID, ethnicity, gender, age, time of interview, date, place, interviewee number and length of interview. The interviewee was given the opportunity to read through the list of questions to familiarise him- or herself of the content of the questionnaire. The difference between structured questions, unstructured questions and in-depth questions was explained to the interviewee, but with the caveat that if the interviewee wanted to expand on or explain any response or answer to structured questions, he or she was free to do so.
- The interviewee was informed that he or she would be presented with duplicated copies of the transcription of the interview within one week of the interview for approval and acceptance. At this feedback session, if required, additional follow up questions generated out of the transcription process could be posed to the interviewee – and vice versa, questions or clarification to the researcher, which would then be added as an addendum to the original transcription to become part of the data. Once again, responding to any follow up questions would be voluntary and there would be no obligation on the interviewee’s part to answer any follow up questions.
- The interviewee was required to sign one transcribed copy, to be retained by the researcher, with the extra copy left with the interviewee. Notwithstanding any mutual clarification that could take place during the verification and signing of the respondent’s transcript, the interviewee was also requested to contact the researcher within one week of the signature of the transcription if any more changes or additional questions came to mind during this period. If the researcher had not heard from the interviewee by the end of that week, his or her signed transcription – with

amendments, if any - would then be processed as the respondent's final data contribution for the purpose of the study.

Transcriptions of interviews were presented to interviewees on the first Thursday of the week following the week of interviews itself. The OEM was operating a double-shift operation during the interviews and because of respondents' different shift patterns and logistical reasons; transcriptions could not be presented sooner for confirmation and signature. At the time of confirmation and signature, interviewees were once again informed of their anonymity and right to withdraw as well as the opportunity to question, clarify, amend or expand on any response or question. At the same time, the respondents were also informed that they could also request the researcher to clarify or expand on anything pertaining to the questionnaire as well as the study itself.

Of the sixteen respondents, one respondent refused to sign his transcript, which was then discarded from the sample and one respondent (the Human Resources Manager), as a result of time constraints, responded in writing to his questionnaire. Because of the intent, nature and requirements of open-ended interviewing, the researcher initially wanted to discard this response from the data too. However, because of the seniority, education and training of the interviewee, as well as the fact that the interviewee was closely involved in the selection of the sample and based on the numerous discussions that took place between the researcher and the interviewee, of which notes were taken, the researcher was confident that he had an "emic" grasp of the interviewee's view on the topic of this study and hence included the interviewee's responses to his questionnaire in the study. Only one transcript was amended, which was effected in pen on the presented transcript, initialled and then signed by the interviewee.

4.9 Data Analysis

According to Yin (2003), the purpose of data analysis is to address the initial propositions of one's study and the analysis is achieved by examining, categorising, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the research data. Although this strategy guided the researcher's analysis of the data collected, the researcher could not isolate or divorce the literature review from the analysis of the data collected through the interview process. Ideas, categories and theories should be developed before the collection of data is started and one should already have a preliminary understanding

of the meaning of one's data by the time the analysis of the actual data collected commences (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999).

Maxwell (2005) identifies these categories as organisational categories which are broad areas or issues that the researcher should establish prior to interviews. The analysis of the data itself was therefore predisposed by the researcher's approach to the literature review and had consequently already commenced during the literature review and not only upon the completion of the data collection process. These categories, or topics, lend explanatory names to subject matter, but do not help in making sense of the actual data itself (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001; Maxwell, 2005).

Yin (2003) also suggests a specific technique should be followed for analysing the collected data. Synthesising the recommendations of Cresswell (2002), Maxwell (2005), and Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), the data was analysed and interpreted as follows:

- The data was first prepared and organised
- The data was then explored, through reading, familiarisation and immersion
- Out of this exploration of the data, themes were induced and described
- The findings of themes were reported and interpreted

Preparation and organisation of the data involved developing a template of the interviewees, the tape recording and verbatim transcription into texts of these recordings, organising the data by interviewee response and transcription, tabulating each questionnaire by question and response, and finally by entering both the interview and response data into a database for storage, sorting and response.

The data was explored according to the nature of the question. The twenty-two questions of a quantitative nature were summarised to create a picture of the sample base. The ten unstructured questions were summarised for context and meaning of interviewees' insider view on leadership, both formal and informal, within the workgroup. These questions were structured in such a way as to either reinforce or weaken the outcome of the open-ended in-depth questions. The four open-ended and in-depth questions were explored for themes and meanings.

During the exploration process of the data, immersion of the data was achieved by rereading field observation notes taken during the interview process, re-listening to the recorded interviews numerous times and by writing memos on what the researcher was gleaning from the field notes and hearing in the data. Provisional ideas about categories and relationships between what was being heard in the data itself and with what the literature review produced as well as with the researcher's perceptions and own reality as created through experience of informal leadership, were developed. The writing of memos during data analysis not only allows the capture of one's analytical thinking about the data, but also facilitates such thinking and stimulating analytic insights (Maxwell, 2005).

As a thorough understanding of the data enables the induction of a theme or themes in the data through certain principles that naturally underlie the research material (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999), the respective transcripts of the unstructured open-ended questions and the open-ended in-depth questions were subsequently perused many times over in order to achieve this thorough understanding of the data. Further data reduction enabled the researcher to recognise categories and themes in the transcripts and between the transcripts.

Categories assist the researcher in making sense of what is going on in the research data and implicitly make some sort of claim about the topic being studied (Maxwell, 2005), whereas themes should preferably occur naturally from the data, but have a definite bearing on the research (Kelly and Terre Blanche, 1999). Maxwell (2005) views these themes as substantive categories; "Substantive categories are primarily *descriptive*, in a broad sense that includes description of participants' concepts and beliefs; they stay close to the data categorised, and don't imply a more abstract theory" (Maxwell, 2005:97). While the devising of categories is an intuitive process, it is also systemic and informed by the study's purpose, the researcher's points of reference and knowledge, and the meanings made explicit by the respondents themselves (Merriam, 1998).

Even though the ideas, categories and theory of the literature review guided the researcher – a top-down approach, the language of the interviewees was used to label the categories - the bottom-up approach (Kelly and Terre Blanche, 1999). Coding of data was done during the development of themes to break down the body of text data into labelled, meaningful pieces. Initially categories as established during the literature review suggested and directed the researcher's approach to the coding, but the danger of viewing concepts and themes through

established theoretical lenses was taken cognisance of in that this approach would negate the researcher's own insights in the data.

The data was therefore very carefully scrutinised for any concepts and themes that did not fit the literature. The coding involved the use of descriptive and interpretative codes and codes were changed and revised as themes unfolded (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The thematic data was then further explored, refined and elaborated on until no more insights appeared to emerge. Only then was the data interpreted and checked again.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher is of the opinion that the following ethical issues as identified by Cresswell (2003), Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000) have been adequately addressed and complied in order to comply with these ethical implications of qualitative research:

- The requirement that the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents have to be safeguarded has been complied with and not breached at all
- No respondents refused to participate in the study once informed that participation was voluntary, at no cost to them and that no compensation would be paid to any respondent, or withdrew from the study during any stage of the data collection process
- By giving the respondents a full explanation of the background, intent and explanation of the purpose of the study as well as the role and contribution of their participation in the study, any deception was prevented
- All participants signed an informed consent agreement (Annexure C) that captures the essence of these requirements.

4.11 Validity and Reliability

Lincoln and Guba (2000) identify that one of the issues around validity is the conflation between research method and the interpretation of the results. Unfortunately, qualitative researchers have

no unified stance or agreement on addressing traditional topics such as validity and reliability in qualitative studies (Creswell, 2003). The researcher relied on three of eight primary strategies identified by Cresswell (2003) to ensure accuracy and credibility of the findings in qualitative research:

- Member checking was achieved by asking respondents to peruse and appraise their respective interview transcripts to ensure that a misinterpretation of the meaning of what was said and conveyed during the interview did not occur during the transcription process. This facilitated the researcher accurately and reliably, giving voice to the interviewee's experience (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999) thereby making it authentic and related to the way others construct their social worlds (Lincoln and Guba, 2000), even though it only represented a particular point of view or was shaped by special characteristics (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984).
- Use of a detailed, rich, and thick description to convey the findings: the necessity of a thick description ensures that the findings are transferable between the researcher and those being studied, assists the readers of the study to the setting and gives the discussion an element of shared experiences (Cresswell, 2003). This was maintained by the researcher keeping field notes, a log of day-to-day activities, and a methodological log (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).
- Researcher Bias; Because of the researcher's background and the westernised lens which has shaped his view, cognisance was taken by the researcher to guard against bringing a "cultural self" (Scheper-Hughes, 1992) to the study. The researcher recognised that the structure of questions in the interview protocol could have lead interviewees to answer the questions in a particular way (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Care was therefore taken to keep all the questions of a quantitative nature objective, unambiguous and short as possible with the remit that there would be no wrong or right answer to any question posed.
- Notwithstanding this, it is acknowledged that because of the subjective nature of the motivation for undertaking this study and the researcher's perceptions and expectations of the role of leaders and managers as well as how subordinates in organisations should behave and react due to the researcher's own senior position within his own organisation, the researcher's role and subjectivity cannot be divorced from the process.

- It is for this reason that the interview protocol was handed to all interviewees to keep once the initial on-site interview was concluded. An invitation was given to contact the researcher within the prescribed time if anything else came to the interviewee's mind to add to his or her initial and original responses. It was hoped that re-reading the interview protocol at the interviewee's own time post-interview would enable him or her to conceptualise the purpose behind the questions from the interviewee's own cultural perspective and present him or her with an opportunity to add to original responses. None of the interviewees made use of this opportunity to contact the researcher between the time of the respective interviews and signing of individual transcripts.

4.12 Limitations to the study

Interviewing as a research instrument has its limitations and weaknesses. Because the interviewee becomes a conversational partner in the interview process (Rubin and Rubin, 2005), the nature of the personal interaction could limit the quality of the interview itself and the data provided by the interviewee. Marshall and Rossman (1999) identified the lack of expertise of the interviewer in the interviewee's mother tongue and vice versa, the lack of expertise of the interviewees in the interviewer's mother tongue to be detrimental to interviewing. This may result in interviewees being unwilling to share information or the interviewer not asking questions that can evoke discussions.

Even though the researcher was assisted by someone fluent in the majority of the interviewees' mother tongue, cognisance has to be taken that the assistant's mother language is English. The researcher's complete unfamiliarity with the mother language of the majority of the interviewees was certainly an impediment to the research process. Not one interviewee required clarification to any question in their mother tongue or requested to respond to any question in their mother tongue.

As a positive, this could be construed that the interview language did not pose as a barrier to the interviewee, but as a negative that the interviewee was not willing to request any clarification or assistance because of a fear that he or she might be perceived to be either uninformed or ignorant. It might be that interviewees responded to the questions as it was deemed fit and did not relay their actual experience of the reality that was being researched.

Rubin and Rubin (2005) as well as Babbie and Mouton (2001) recommend those interviewees should be knowledgeable, experienced, competent, willing to answer and possess a variety of experiences. Unfortunately the researcher left in abeyance in the selection criteria of the purposive sampling to ensure a criterion to verify participants' education, literacy levels and language proficiency. Ensuring the inclusion of females, or balance between males and females, was also neglected and hence meeting these recommendations is a limitation to this study. The only deterrent that was specified was that all participants had to have been in their respective job designations for a long period.

The differences in the researcher and the interviewees' cultural background also posed as limitations to the study (Ryen, 2001). Unless a rapport can be established with an interviewee, he or she will remain a "passive vessel" to answers and the interviewer will not be able to get to the store of data that is available within the interviewee (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997; Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). The researcher did not disclose his working experience and background to any of the interviewees, except to the two operational managers and this had to be done because of the role – other than being interviewees themselves too – these two employees in the OEM played in the study.

This was done to prevent any interviewee from creating a perception of "us-and-them" roles ("us" being subordinates and "them" being management), which would have hindered the establishment of the required rapport. With the cultural differences in the historical socio-political background of this country, the threat the researcher (Western) posed in establishing a proper rapport with the majority of the interviewees (African) has to be recognised in this study.

Even though no interviewee objected to the presence of the researcher's assistant, the difference in gender, as well as culture, between the interviewees and the assistant could have influenced the dynamics of the interview and the interviewee process itself. It is impossible to determine to what extent this did take place, but the influence thereof on how interviewees shared their experiences within the open-ended questions has to be taken into consideration, which limits the value the researcher could put to interviewee responses.

Although the employees selected to be part of the sample were easily accessible, this in itself is some cause for concern. One could also question whether participation was entirely voluntary, as interviewees could have agreed to participate because of the request being channelled through

senior managers who have identified participants beforehand for participation. This ease of access was due to the sample selection being from two distinctive areas within the OEM's operations. Also, all interviewees knew about their nominated participation in the study before meeting with the researcher. Unfortunately this would also have allowed the interviewees already interviewed and those still to be interviewed to communicate with each other during the period of data collection and this could have caused cross-pollination of individual experience, ideas and perceptions relating to questions on the interview protocol. Leaving copies of the questions with the interviewees post their respective interviews could have led to the still-to-be-interviewed respondents to prepare for their interviews, resulting in conditioned and prepared responses to the questions.

The organisational culture of the OEM was noticeable in the vernacular of the interviewees in responding to the open-ended and in-depth questions. The researcher views this as a possible limitation as the organisational culture could have become so indoctrinated within the mindset of the interviewees, that their responses could be based on learned conceptions – what the researcher would term as “their actuality” – and not on their personal experiences and perceptions – what the researcher would term “their reality.” The actuality of organisational culture is therefore infused into the interviewee's own reality, thereby distorting the cultural background and experience of a phenomenon of the interviewee.

4.13 Summary

In this chapter the research methodology, ethical considerations and data collection methods of this study were defined and discussed. A detailed account of the research approach, sampling technique, setting of the study and the target population were given. The interview preparation, the research instrument and data collection were also reviewed, with possible limitations highlighted. Analysis of the data was also addressed

CHAPTER 5 – PRESENTATION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction to the Chapter

The primary aim of this study is to establish the role and characteristics of informal leaders from their fellow employees' perspective. The respondents were purposively selected by two senior divisional managers. In total, seventeen employees were interviewed; the sample selection required sixteen employees, but the researcher requested that one additional respondent be identified in the event of absenteeism on the day of the scheduled interviews. No respondents were absent. As a result, all seventeen respondents in the sample were interviewed. However, the transcripts of only sixteen respondents were deemed valid for analysis as one respondent refused to sign his transcript. This transcription was thus discarded.

A request to supply basic information to establish respondents' ethnicity, gender, and age was inserted in the interview protocol that was handed to each respondent, which the respondent was requested to complete prior to the start of the interview. Disclosure of this information was not compulsory. All this information was supplied by the respondents, except in the age category where four respondents did not disclose their ages. All respondents disclosed their ethnicity and are reflected below.

The demographics of the sixteen respondents are as follow:

- Ethnicity
 - o Black: 7
 - o Coloured: 5
 - o Indian: 1
 - o White: 3
- Gender
 - o Male: 16
- Age
 - o Average age of twelve respondents: 39 years
 - o Age of oldest respondent out of twelve: 51 years
 - o Age of youngest respondent out of twelve: 31 years

What is concerning is the lack of females in the sample group. Their omission is purely due to the nature of the work performed within the work groups that the respondents were selected from; it is strenuous and hence the lack of females. The average interview lasted twenty-five minutes, with the longest forty minutes and the shortest a mere fifteen minutes. This short interview interestingly enough was with one of the respondents who has been working for the OEM for twenty-five years.

5.2 Structure of the Chapter

In this chapter, the responses of the twenty-two questions that are identified as quantitative in nature (Annexure E) is discussed first, whereafter the unstructured questions with an open-ended nature (Annexure E) are summarised, followed by an analysis of the four open-ended questions with an in-depth nature (Annexure E).

5.3 Responses to Questions of a Quantitative Nature

Collectively the sixteen respondents have been working for a period of 239 years, or on average, 15 years each for the organisation. As for working in their current work group, at the time of the interviews, the collective total came to 81 years, 5.4 years on average. Fifteen respondents had precise knowledge about their job title and/or position within the work group and organisation, this no doubt because on average each respondent had been in his current position for a period of 6 years. One respondent though, did not answer this question. No indication was given whether the question was unclear to the respondent, but it has to be noted that the respondent was hierarchically the most senior employee within the sample group and it was within the participant's privilege not to answer a question if that way inclined.

The size and function of the work groups from which the respondents were selected varies considerably. The largest representation had an organisational span of control of 2 500 subordinates, that of the one divisional manager. On average, the departmental group came to 220 employees, with an average of 28 employees per work group. Not only did all the respondents know exactly who was in charge of their respective work groups as well as this person's designation, but also the length of time the person in charge has been in this position; an average of 4.6 years. Fifteen respondents knew where this current incumbent came from; eight were appointed into their current positions from another department altogether, five from within

the same department, and one from outside the organisation. One respondent did not know. Although no statistical inferences may be drawn from the aforementioned, it gave the researcher confidence to justify the sample group as knowledgeable enough and well informed about the organisation's hierarchical structure and processes.

Although the question to establish if there also exists an informal hierarchical structure other than the formal company hierarchical structure within the respondent's work group required a definitive yes or no answer, only two respondents had definite responses – both yes. Nine other respondents qualified their yes responses with an explanation. Three respondents replied with a definite in the negative, while one also replied in the negative, but expanded upon his answer. One respondent did not know. Notwithstanding the four negative answers, there is majority consensus that such an informal structure does exist within their groups.

Although not part of the question, an interesting outcome of the qualified answers to the aforementioned question is that informal leaders were alluded to when the need for leadership qualities focused on someone other than the formal leader of the group, specifically when experience and skills are needed. Members of the work group then look upon colleagues who have the necessary skills, experience, and knowledge because of years of service or special training to fulfill a support role to assist the group. The evidence also suggests that these last-mentioned colleagues are used as a sounding board to facilitate feedback and an exchange of ideas within the group, but outside the formal leadership structure. These colleagues' ability to communicate with and to challenge the formal hierarchical structures is clearly valued by members within a work group. It appears that the informal hierarchy manifests itself in times of uncertainty and will be depended upon and determined by a situation. Employees are uncomfortable to speak to managers in formal positions, so they make use of intermediaries – “a middle-man” - in the informal structures to play the role of go-between between the employees and management, the inference being that these intermediaries are informal leaders or play the role of informal leaders. The qualified negative response did not dismiss the concept, but merely pointed out that the informal hierarchy seems to manifest itself only lower down the organisational structure; the higher one moves up the “organisation tree” the less need there is for an informal structure and leaders.

Another aspect that was highlighted by this question was the fact that the OEM does acknowledge the concept of informal leadership and has tried to incorporate it into its formal

structures. A position of a team coordinator has been created to fulfill this role. This position, however, is rotational and employees within the work group have to apply for this role every two years. This position also fulfills the formal leader's role in his absence. The requirement for this role is leadership qualities, but respondents were uncertain whether this appointee could actually have been deemed the informal leader before taking on the function of a team coordinator. A certain feeling of distrust towards the intent by management and towards the idea and position was also discerned in the responses. The merit of the acknowledgement of the concept of informal leadership by the organisation itself is not the topic of this study and the mechanism behind it was not pursued by the researcher. Suffice to say evidence suggests that employees other than these team coordinators are still viewed as informal leaders, while the organisation would view the team coordinator as the informal leader.

Regarding the generic question of what the respondent's concept of leadership is, it is evident that the respondents are all well informed and have a good consensual idea of what leadership entails. In view of the differences in the cultural and educational backgrounds of the respondents, of concern is the consistent vernacular used throughout all the respondents' responses. This could be indicative of good organisational training, but also groupthink. The following salient points were raised as to what leadership is:

- Having influence to get people to work together towards a common goal
- The capacity to coach
- Strategic thinking
- The ability to give direction and advice to subordinates
- Being a role model – setting an example to fellow employees
- Being transparent and trustworthy

In addition to the formal leader, twelve respondents identified a colleague within their work group as having leadership qualities. One respondent indicated no, and there were three qualified positive responses. The qualified respondents' view is that it is management's responsibility to have leadership development plans in place to develop leadership qualities within all members of a work group. The responses to the direct question whether any of these colleagues showed leadership qualities, were varied. Nine respondents gave an unequivocal yes response, while six, although saying yes, had mixed feelings in their views of whom this individual could or should be. Some identified the team coordinator as fulfilling the role of informal leader. Others, whilst

acknowledging the team coordinator to be the so-called informal leader as recognised by management, identified someone else as the informal leader of the work group.

Fifteen positive responses though were unanimous in their view that an informal leader does exist within the group though. Important is also the view that the informal leader could be, depending on the circumstances the work group is faced with over time, a different person when it is dictated by the situation. It was opined that group members have strengths in different areas. If expertise is needed in a certain area, the group member possessing the strength in that area will function as the informal leader. This perception of the informal leader as having experience is borne out by the fact that respondents could identify the informal leader within the group as being a colleague of group members for an average of 4.4 years and fulfilling the role as the informal leader for 3.4 years. It would suggest that the need for using certain strengths when required has proved itself to group members during this period. However, no indication was given whether it was the same individual every time or different individuals at other times. The one negative response is significant in that the respondent observed that scope for informal leadership in work groups is small because of cultural differences between members within the work group; "... link to culture, white male who is old and still lives in the shoes of the old South Africa." Because of this response, an additional question, question 36: "Do you think that the perception of informal leaders varies between different cultural groups?" was inserted into the interview protocol. This question was therefore unfortunately only put to the eight respondents that followed the recording of this observation.

Whether the informal leader has shown interest in becoming part of the formal structure of the organisation or not as well as whether the organisation has ever attempted to recruit or entice the informal leader to be developed into formal structures, was met with varied responses. While nine respondents responded in the affirmative, six qualified their response. Of the seven that respondent in the negative, three qualified their response. One qualified response stood out; "True leaders would naturally take on a leadership role within the group – they would therefore not see the need to seek out a formal leadership position just to hold a title." An observation was also made that informal leaders are not interested in the pressure that the responsibility of formal leadership brings and prefer to remain where they are. General consensus within the qualified responses, whether yes or no, is that education and experience could appear to play a role in whether the informal leader will be tempted to pursue a formal upwards career in the

organisation; this respectively both from the informal leader's perspective as well as the organisational perspective.

Nine of the sixteen respondents belonged to informal interest groups within the organisation. Five respondents could also identify the individual who has been identified as the informal leader in their respective work groups as fulfilling the same role within the informal interest groups. Five said no, while five indicated that they could not say yes or no, as they did not belong to any informal interest group. Because only nine respondents belonged to informal interest groups, the responses to the question whether the informal leader has a dual role as informal leader within the organisation as well as the informal interest groups, are anomalous; the five positive answers plus the five negative answers add up to ten, one more than the total of nine respondents that belong to informal interests groups in the organisation.

It is evident from the responses to the questions of a quantitative nature, that the respondents do acknowledge that informal leaders exist in work groups. From their perception of formal leadership, it is also clear that the respondents have a good understanding of the concept of leadership, but with a caveat; the perception could be tainted by an organisational lens. The researcher however, is confident enough that, notwithstanding the vernacular used, the meaning behind the words still convey a perception of leadership in congruence with the literature. All respondents were also au fait with the function and workings of their work groups as well as that of the organisation as a whole. Although the direct question of whether there is an informal leader in respondents' work groups is addressed as an open-ended question, responses thus far indicate that this is indeed so. That the role that is being alluded to in this instance is related to when skill and experience is required for problem solving within the group. Other than the formal leader, the respondents also confidently identified leadership qualities within other members of their work groups and pointed out the lack of education and training preventing informal leaders from striving for further formal development.

5.4 Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Question 14: Are you of the opinion that the person currently in charge and responsible for your workgroup is, other than leading the group because of the official company sanctioning thereof, a leader in terms of your understanding of leadership?

The majority of respondents (twelve) agree that the formal and hierarchical group leader does meet the criteria that they deem to represent leadership, with only one respondent not thinking so. This respondent did not explain why he had this view of his group's formal leader. Over and above meeting their perception of leadership, three respondents actually identified the following specific qualities that they also ascribed to their formal leader:

- The formal leader is trustworthy person
- The formal leader has high ethics
- Using a participative and non-authoritative leadership makes the formal leader's leadership "sustainable"

Question 15: Would you consider that a workgroup may have an informal leader – a colleague that is not formally appointed by the company, but informally recognised as such by the majority in the group – in addition to the formally company appointed employee?

All respondents were unanimous in their affirmation to this question. Seven had an unambiguous yes, with the nine others prepared to expand on their yes to the question. Although the role of informal leaders was not the focus and topic of question, the clarification on their affirmation to the question itself actually identified some roles and characteristics that the respondents deemed necessary to make an individual stand out as an informal leader. It has to be pointed out that even though all sixteen respondents were unanimous, one respondent had a firm position that the informal leader and the team coordinator is the same person, and outside of this individual, there is no other formal leader.

The roles of the informal leader were identified as follow:

- Serves as liaison between management and group
- Is the confidante of group members
- Acts as consultant to the group when required
- Influential in getting the work group to be cohesive

The characteristics of the informal leader were identified as follow:

- Very experienced individual

- Very skilled individual
- Very good communicator
- Very trustworthy individual
- Respected for his age
- Very supportive individual
- Very relationship orientated

Question 16: Are you of the opinion that such an informal leader can co-exist within the structure of the workgroup and be of assistance to the formal leader of the group or could this role, or should this role be adversarial?

Fifteen respondents agreed that the formal leader and informal leader of a work group could co-exist. One was of the opinion that this would not be possible and further opined that the informal leader should subjugate himself to the formal leader. Twelve of the positive respondents qualified their position about co-existence as follows:

- To be successful, the formal leader as well as the informal leader should have high levels of maturity
- Communication between these two should be open and transparent
- The positions should never become adversarial and should always be supportive
- There should be no ambiguity in their different roles

A suggestion was made that organisations should embrace informal leaders and encourages the formal leader and informal leader to work together for the benefit of the organisation. The informal leader should be the “link” between the working group and the formal leader with the informal leader assisting with operational issues and the formal leader focusing on strategic issues.

Question 24: To your knowledge, has the informal leader ever changed, and if so, how often has it happened?

Only seven of the respondents have experienced or witnessed a change of the informal leader within their working group. It was highlighted that either this was because of organisational changes (members leaving the group and replacements joining the group) or that circumstances changed within the group that required new skills or expertise or the dynamic within the group changed resulting in the natural evolution of a new informal leader.

Question 26: Would you consider that coming to the fore by this person on the occasion referred to in the previous question (see Question 25 below), this person displayed a leadership role and qualities?

This question is related to Question Twenty-Five, which tries to establish if there had been a specific incidence, or occurrence, which caused an individual in the work group to be labelled as the informal leader. Ten respondents responded with only a yes, two no, one did not answer the question, and only three qualified their yes with an explanation. These three pointed out that they observed these individuals to have had very clear opinions when they assisted with resolving disagreements between the formal leader and group members, and that they were logical and intelligent.

Question 28: Does the informal leader play any cross-functional role, especially in your perception of him/her as an informal leader of the group, outside the boundaries of your workgroup (e.g. liaising with other groups in the same department or even other departments)?

The majority of the respondents (thirteen) agreed that the informal leader does play a cross-functional role outside the boundaries of the respondents' work groups. Specifics mentioned are to resolve quality issues and to get "buy-in" from the rest of the workforce when needed.

Question 33: Are you of the opinion that informal leaders should be recognised as such in the company?

All sixteen respondents responded positively to this question, but twelve respondents had strong qualifiers. The reasons varied from a reference to tribal chiefs not being educated, yet "make" remarkable leaders; the inference being that if an informal leader does exist in the organisation, he or she is to be recognised by management and his validity is to be judged on his influence and all-round leadership capabilities and not his formal education, to the diametrically opposed position that individuals should not be recognised as informal leaders unless they have the right training and qualifications. In general, no consensus is to be found between the respondents to the reason why informal leaders should be recognised by the organisation.

Question 34: If recognised by the company, are you of the opinion that informal leaders can contribute to better performance of the company from all stakeholders' points of view?

The question is linked to the previous question and even though all respondents in the previous question agreed that informal leaders should be recognised by the organisation, but with no consensual reason why, only fourteen respondents were of the opinion that it would be beneficial to the organisation if it were to recognise informal leaders and the role they could play in the organisation. Once again, the motivations for why it would be beneficial are too varied to find any consensus among the responses and to draw any meaningful conclusions from the responses.

Question 35: Other than your responses to all of the above questions, is there anything else that you consider central to the concept of informal leaders within the company?

This question was posed in order to elicit any additional thoughts from the respondents on informal leadership. No common theme could be detected within the sixteen respondents' answers and so they were discarded for the purpose of analysis. However, responses to the questions verified again that all respondents have a well-informed concept of informal leadership and its connotation to formal leadership and that it does have a role to play in the organisation.

Question 36: Do you think that the perception of informal leaders varies between different cultural groups?

This question was only inserted in the interview protocol after the eighth respondent was interviewed and in response to the respondent's negative response that the scope for informal leadership in work groups is limited because of cultural differences between members within the work group. This question was therefore only posed to the remaining eight respondents of the sample group.

Six respondents said no and qualified their responses. Three, including the respondent that was causal to this question being posed, said yes and qualified their responses. Out of the nine responses, the following principles could be identified:

- Different cultures deal with the term of informal leadership differently. In the African culture, the informal leader is recognised as such and has a huge role to play; "there is no competition around his position"

- Leadership is about principles of good behaviour and good attitude, it does not matter what your colour is or what culture you are from
- Leadership is about personality and inherent qualities and not about culture
- Differences between cultures need to be reconciled before organisations can move forward
- Generally white people are more rigid and strict whereas coloured or black people are more flexible; hence coloured and black people are more acceptable to informal leaders
- There is no difference from a culture perspective, but there is a communication barrier

The ten unstructured questions were posed to ensure that the respondents not only had a personal understanding and knowledge of the concepts of leadership and informal leadership, but also to ascertain if the respondents experienced the process by which the content of the conversation has come into being that Babbie and Mouton (2001) refer to, secondly these questions were posed to further corroborate the quality and reliability of the profile within the sample. These questions confirmed the following:

- That formal leaders of the respective working groups are viewed as possessing leadership qualities
- In addition to the formal leaders in the work groups, informal leaders also do exist within the same groups
- Within the same work groups informal leaders and informal leaders can co-exist
- Formal and informal leaders should not have adversarial roles
- The function of the informal leader does not remain within the same individual in a work group, but may transfer to another individual if the circumstances demand it
- Informal leaders are deemed to display leadership qualities when circumstances demand them to take the lead as an informal leader
- Informal leaders appear to be the same individual in formal as well as in informal groups

- Informal leaders should be recognised by the organisation, but the way it should be done is not clear
- Informal leaders can contribute to the better performance of the organisation
- Informal leadership is not culture bound. It appears in all cultures, but the way it is responded to could be culturally determined.

5.5 **Responses to Open-Ended Questions**

Question 25: Has there been a specific incidence or occurrence, which made this person stand out and made his/her presence felt as an informal leader?

Thirteen respondents could identify specific incidences or occurrences that required the informal leader to come to the fore to lead and assist the work group. It occurred most pertinently during the following:

- In the absence of the formal leader
- When expertise, skill, and experience were required for problem solving
- The formal leader was assisted in performing his duties when there appeared to have been a lack of trust in the capabilities of the formal leader
- Assistance in task execution

Question 27: Other than acting as an informal leader for the group with reference to specific incidents or occurrences, has this person displayed the same role and qualities in general to help with task execution within the group, group decision –making and group performance?

All sixteen respondents responded yes to the question and gave the following examples of it happening:

- Decision-making has its limits and the informal leader assists when decisions have to be made to ensure the group maintains work of the highest quality
- The informal leader has a way of convincing his fellow colleagues to do things that they may not necessarily have wanted to do in the first place. The informal leader then becomes very persuasive when it comes to task execution and group performance

- Over time the informal leader goes the extra mile and performs tasks out of the scope of work or band of control
- The informal leader assists in group decision making and can be persuasive because of his age and experience
- The informal leader takes the lead in group meetings, encourages discussion amongst members of the group and approaches conflict situations in a manner suitable for all

Question 29: Can you identify any other roles that the informal leader has played in your workgroup?

Eleven respondents responded in the affirmative and five in the negative. The following roles were identified by the respondents:

- A facilitator to advance the interests of the work group and that of the organisations
- Administrative functions
- Assist with the communication between the formal leader and the group
- Assist with ambiguous instructions
- Resolve disputes between group members
- Political
- Team building

Question 32: In your opinion, what do you consider are the attributes and characteristics of the informal leader in your workgroup that make him the unofficial leader of the group?

The following characteristics were identified by the sixteen respondents:

- Assertiveness
- Trustworthy
- Principled and strong values
- Expertise, skills, experience
- Humility and honesty
- Level-5 leader: “Leadership is making the job of those below you successful and not the other way round”
- Inspirational
- People skills

- Knowledgeable about the organisation
- Supportive
- Shows interest in colleagues all the time
- Good communication skills
- Motivational skills
- Good problem solving skills
- Positive demeanor
- Tenacity
- Participative leadership style and democratic in decision-making

CHAPTER 6– DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction to the Chapter

“Leadership is more – if not much more – influence than position.”

John Maxwell (year unknown).

The primary goal of this research is the investigation of the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to determine whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders. Secondary, the research also ascertains whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups could be underpinned in the principles of Ubuntu and if consideration should be given to any cultural differences between leaders and followers by organisational hierarchies.

The vast body of literature available on leadership is indicative of how important leadership is considered to be to all civilisations. Few things are more important to human activity than leadership. It has been researched for many decades and the need for leadership right now during this latter half of the first decade of the 21st century is possibly greater than ever before in the history of this planet. Whether it is global leadership, national leadership, organisational leadership, civic leadership, or leadership at a more micro level right down to small groups, the basic tenet of leadership – that of influencing people to attain a common goal – remains the same.

Effective leadership assists in allowing an organisation to become successful and steers it towards achieving its mission. The literature places a great deal of emphasis on the notion that timely, complete and correct decision-making is the key to being a successful organisation. However, after decision-making comes the implementation and execution of these decisions. Problems encountered in the phase of implementation and execution correlate to how effective leaders are in influencing behaviour, changing the course of the action and overcoming resistance from colleagues. Without effective leadership within organisations, organisations will move too slowly, stagnate and lose their way.

Given that the large majority of research available is based on a Western paradigm, this study was been undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the role and characteristics of informal leaders within smaller work groups within a diverse working environment. Data was thus collected from employees working within work groups at a strongly organisational-cultured and long established multinational organisation, with the sample skewed in favour of Black employees. This research therefore focuses on the types of leadership displayed at a micro level, within the smaller working groups of an organisation.

The majority of leadership literature is limited to a set of assumptions of leaders, leadership styles and leadership behaviour operating in front of a Westernised backdrop. Contrasting this with the reality of the South African business environment, which operates in a completely different cultural setting to its Western counterparts, the researcher believes that the study outcomes are all the more pertinent in allowing the average business manager and leader to better understand organisational behaviour and the workings within groups in culturally diverse organisations in order to use leadership as a tool for a competitive advantage and ultimately success.

6.2 Structure of the Chapter

This chapter seeks to align, where possible, the results of the current study with the various schools of formal and informal leadership as detailed in the literature review of Chapter 2 and 3. In aligning this information, the characteristics and role of informal leaders are analysed and discussed first. Following this, the salient findings to questions posed additional to the primary and secondary aim of the study are discussed. The Chapter then delves into the secondary goal of the research to determine whether culture plays a role leadership and if the principles of Ubuntu can align itself with the latest leadership and management theories. Ideas for possible future research are briefly touched upon and the chapter finalised with a summary.

6.3 The Research Problem

Leadership manifests itself throughout any organisation not only through formal structures and through the official hierarchy of the organisation, but also through the informal structures of the organisation. No matter which leadership style is made use of, whether it is the actions of the formal or informal leader, the leader's intent is to influence employees to work willingly towards

a common goal. The researcher has recognised, through personal experience both inside the workplace and outside the workplace, that within any group of people –whether a formal or informal group – there seems always to be a member of the group that has as great an influence, over the members of the group as the formally appointed or elected leader of that group. This influence at times could be perceived to even exceed that of the formal leader. This individual is of interest to the researcher and is the primary focus of this study.

There is a wide variety of literature and research on formal leadership. A search for literature pertaining to informal leadership reveals that information on informal leadership is limited in comparison; however, one does come across references that speak to informal leadership in small groups. This leaves a vacuum in terms of literature about informal leader behaviour and the comparisons between the processes of informal versus formal leadership practices. As such, this study attempts to bridge this gap and provide insight into the key differences and similarities between the characteristics as well as the role played by the formal and informal leaders.

Giving perspective to the characteristics and role of informal leaders in work groups in a diverse working environment will enable a better comprehension of informal leadership. This research was thus also undertaken to facilitate a better understanding of the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups. More specifically, because of the nature of management and leadership theories predominantly being grounded in and based on westernised principles, it was done to get a South African perspective of the role and characteristics of informal leaders and then to position the findings of this research against firstly, the current body of knowledge with regards informal leaders and secondly, how the findings also compare to the role and characteristics of formal leaders.

The researcher is of the opinion that because of the difference in the cultural context of leadership - how it is viewed and experienced by followers and subordinates – the effectiveness of leadership in the South African workplace is being adversely affected. If one considers that, the majority of the current generation of white business managers and leaders are from the apartheid era and has been grounded in a Westernised school of thought; this was investigated to determine if it has merit. If there is a fundamental difference in how leadership and its role is viewed from a Western and Africa perspective respectively, consideration should be given to the integration of African leadership principles with the principles of Westernised leadership, both formal and informal.

6.4 The Methodology

This research is grounded in a post-positivists approach and conducted within a constructivist-interpretative paradigm. A qualitative approach was followed as it was deemed most appropriate for collection of data in this research, with personal interviews as the method to collect the data from respondents. The data was collected on-site over a period of one week from an OEM in the motor industry in the Eastern Cape. Although a subsidiary of a multi-national European company that was established in the Eastern Cape over 50 years ago, the organisation like many others continues to strive towards overcoming challenges that will lead it to become more effective and efficient as an organisation in order to compete in the global economic arena.

To fulfill the primary goal of the research, the researcher compiled a questionnaire consisting of thirty-six questions that contained questions of both a quantitative and qualitative nature. Twenty-two questions were structured questions and of a quantitative nature, ten questions were unstructured and four questions were open-ended questions of an in-depth nature. The sample group of seventeen individuals who participated in the questionnaire was purposively selected by the senior management of the OEM. All seventeen individuals participated in the questionnaire; however, transcripts of only sixteen members of the sample group were used for the purposes of data extraction for the study. The researcher was at all times sensitive to issues around language, culture, ethics, gender and other similar matters that could result in biased information in the compilation of the questionnaire, the interviewing process and the collection and analysis of data.

In order to get a thorough understanding of the data, the data was prepared and organised, then analysed through familiarisation and immersion by re-reading through field notes and the transcribed interview data many times over. From this, themes in the data as well as underlying principles were identified, coded, and labelled into meaningful pieces. Thematic data was developed, and explored and elaborated on until no further insights appeared to emerge.

An in-depth literature review was conducted in order to uncover relevant material published in the spheres of both formal and informal leadership. The purpose of the literature review was twofold. It was firstly appraised to establish the role and characteristics of leaders within the

context of the current and historical view of leadership, formal and informal. It was also assessed in line with the secondary goal of this research to determine if the researcher's view that because of cultural differences between leaders and subordinates within working groups, there is a disparity between how leadership is perceived, executed and experienced in the dyad between leader and follower. In addition, the largely westernised approach to leadership in an African environment was also critiqued to establish whether it could give cause to ineffective leadership in this environment. The African leadership and management principles as found in the values of Ubuntu were also investigated to establish whether its application in the South African working environment could assist in leadership that is more effective.

This review was to a certain extent exploratory as it served as an attempt to gather theoretical data to assist in filling any apparent gaps that the researcher has identified in the field of informal leadership in that the cultural aspect of formal leadership as well as informal leadership is being ignored in South African organisations.

6.5 Discussion of the Results

In spite of the various roles and characteristics identified between formal and informal leaders, the common denominator of both is to 'influence the behaviour' of the collective in achieving a common goal. Based on the literature review of the characteristics and the role of the formal leader, the formal leader is generally the individual who is officially recognised or appointed to lead and who typically holds the responsibility for the success of the working group or organisation. This individual assists with key decisions and is strategic and visionary by helping in directing the group for benefit of the group and the organisation.

There is a consensual view between the respondents that there are informal structures within the formal hierarchy of their work groups. The concept of informal leadership within work groups was unequivocally recognised by fifteen of the sixteen respondents. The informal leaders are identified by respondents as the people the members of the group look up to for assistance, guidance and leadership outside the formal group structure. Although the informal leader has no hierarchical position within the group or organisation, respondents agree that certain members of the workgroup are looked up to from time to time to lead them under certain circumstances and conditions. Respondents have a cohesive view that the informal leader therefore does not remain within the same individual in a work group, but may transfer to another individual if the

circumstances or situation demand it. It was pointed out by respondents that informal leaders are likely to come to the fore in situations such as the absence of a formal leader, when expertise, skill and experience are required for problem solving, when there is a lack of trust in the formal leader or when specific task execution is required.

As opposed to formal leaders that have historically gained traditional power and a level of influence through a formal position and formal mandate, which at times may be met with resistance, respondents are of the opinion that the informal leader has a more natural and genuine way of influencing and communicating within the work group and with management. This natural and genuine way of influencing is derived from referent power and expert power and is deemed to be natural and genuine because it is not enforced by the informal leader on the members of the work group, but rather because it is an outcome of the members depending on the informal guidance when required.

Notwithstanding the strong leadership characteristics of both formal and informal leaders and the very different roles that are played by each respectively, respondents concur that within the same work group informal leaders and formal leaders can co-exist. This is supported by Kirk and Shutte (2004), who are of the opinion that formal leadership and informal leadership can paradoxically co-exist, but only when leadership is conceived from the pretext of the attribution role of relations within a group.

Respondents pointed out that the informal leaders within work groups, through a process of further education and training, have taken up formal leadership positions within the organisation. However, it appears from respondents replies that most informal leaders are not interested to become part of the hierarchy. However one respondent alluded to that to be seen as a leader within the work group, albeit an informal leader does not require any formal positions or titles. He commented, "... true leaders would naturally take on a leadership role within the group – they would therefore not seek out a formal leadership position just to hold a title."

Respondents also posit that informal leaders are not interested in the pressure that the responsibility of formal leadership brings and prefer to remain where they are. In addition, the respondents intimate that many informal leaders would not necessarily become official leaders due to the key difference that formal leaders generally had a certain level of education while

informal leaders had more experience and skills, which had been developed over time. It was felt by the respondents that formal education was a key criterion for formal leadership.

The study has not identified any key differences between the characteristics or role of formal leaders and informal leaders. It corroborates the characteristics and role of informal leaders to correspond with those of formal leaders as identified in the literature.

6.5.1 The Characteristics of Informal Leaders

Taking a holistic view of the various opinions, thoughts and schools around leadership as found in the literature review, a summary of the salient characteristics of and the roles played by formal leaders has been developed and highlighted in Table XII below. Similarly, a summary of salient characteristics of and roles played by informal leaders has been identified from the data and included in the same Table XII below. The above-mentioned information has been juxtaposed in order to gain insight into the primary goal. Table XII consists of two sections, which are presented separate from each other. Section A addresses the characteristics of formal leaders and informal leaders whilst Section B looks at the roles of formal leaders and informal leaders respectively.

From the literature, eighteen characteristics of formal leaders have been identified and listed. From the data collected from the respondents, thirteen characteristics of informal leaders have been identified and listed too. It is evident from the data that between the two sets of characteristics there are common denominators and non-common denominators. The common denominators are the characteristics that are identified as the same for both formal and informal leaders. The non-common denominators are characteristics that are peculiar the formal leader and peculiar to the informal leader respectively.

In Section A of Table XII the common denominators are listed first, followed by the non-common denominators. In total fourteen common denominators have been identified and respectively fourteen and thirteen non-common denominators for formal leaders and informal leaders. A discussion and interpretation of both common and non-common denominators follow below Table XII – Section A.

Table XII: Section A – Characteristics of Formal Leaders and Informal Leaders

SECTION A	
Characteristics of Leaders as per the Literature Review	The Characteristics of Informal Leaders as per the Study
Common Denominators	
1. Influential because of inherent qualities as well as power gained through position 2. Caring and empathic 3. Excellent communicators and listeners 4. Effective negotiators 5. Transparent and trustworthy 6. Coaching capacity 7. Emotional balance 8. Ethical 9. Role model 10. Empowering People 11. Commitment 12. Decision maker 13. Motivator 14. Both Non-authoritative leadership and authoritative leadership style	1. Influential due to inherent qualities 2. Supportive 3. Excellent communicator and listener 4. Effective negotiators 5. Transparent and trustworthy 6. Coaching capacity 7. High level of emotional intelligence 8. High ethics 9. Role model for colleagues 10. Empower people 11. Commitment 12. Decision maker 13. Motivator 14. Non-authoritative leadership style
Non-common Denominators	
1. Innovator and Originator 2. Strategic mind set – long term view 3. Visionary approach to work 4. Willingness to risk failure 5. Self-control and level-headedness 6. Self aware 7. Intelligence 8. Self-confidence 9. Persuasive 10. Goal orientated	1. Very experienced in their respective fields (knowledgeable) 2. High level of skill and/or specialised skill 3. Maturity in age 4. Relationship oriented 5. Participative and democratic 6. Shows interest in colleagues all of the time 7. People skills 8. Cross cultural sensitivity 9. Humility and honesty 10. Inspirational

11. Extraversion	11. Positive demeanor
12. Objectivity	12. Tenacious
13. Integrity	13. Authenticity
14. Responsible	

Common Denominators

In spite of the various roles and characteristics identified above between formal and informal leaders, the common denominator of both to ‘influence the behaviour’ of the collective in achieving a common goal is analogous with the generally accepted view of contemporary leadership definitions, which makes it a process within a group context and involves goal attainment (Northouse, 2001). Also, see Table II: Definitions of Leadership in Chapter 3 – Leadership.

The commonality of the identified characteristics suggests that informal leaders have inherent leadership qualities that should make these individuals in working groups noticeable to management and within the human resources management system. It is certainly recognised by the members of work groups as fifteen of the sixteen respondents identified an informal leader within their work group. In addition to identifying an informal leader within the group, respondents also identified colleagues over and above the informal leader as having leadership qualities. Although not the focus of this study, the reason why no cognisance is given to these informal leaders by the organisation’s hierarchy is not clear as these employees in their role as informal leaders could be viewed as emerging leaders. The responses to the questions regarding whether the informal leader ever showed interest or desire to become part of the formal hierarchy (Questions 21 and 23 of the Questionnaire) are ambiguous and no inference can be drawn from them. It suffices to point out that one of the characteristics of the non-common denominators - that of “Maturity in Age” - could be an underlying reason for the organisation not developing some of these informal leaders as a return on the investment in the human capital these individuals represent will not be realised because of the individual being close to retirement age.

Thirteen of the sixteen respondents were culturally from a non-westernised perspective; seven Black, five Coloured and one Indian. It appears from the commonality of fourteen characteristics of informal leaders with that of formal leaders – with these characteristics of formal leaders extracted from literature with a westernised foundation – that the basic tenets of leadership

within a westernised viewpoint and the basic tenets of leadership within an African viewpoint are the same. As suggested in the study, there are certain inherent characteristics that define a leader, and are therefore common to both formal and informal leaders. Characteristics such as having influence to get people to work together towards a common goal, the capacity to coach, thinking laterally, ability to provide advice and direction, playing a role model figure and being transparent and trustworthy to name a few define the skeleton of leadership.

Non-Common Denominators

Semantically the non-common denominators between formal and informal leaders imply the respective characteristics to be mutually exclusive. In the following schematic the respective non-common characteristics of formal and informal leaders (as listed in Table XII: Section A) above are further categorised and matrixed against the five components of Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence at work in leaders (Please refer to Table VIII: The Five Components of Emotionally Intelligence at Work in Chapter 3 – Leadership). The respective aforementioned characteristics of the formal leader as well as the informal leader are allocated under an act that meets a characteristic of Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence components. The number appearing behind every non-common denominator agrees with the listed number of the characteristic as per Table XII: Section A above and does not infer any ranking or weight. The characteristics not listed for the formal leader (Innovator and Originator (1), Strategic mind set – long term view (2) , Visionary approach to work (3), Willingness to risk failure (4), Intelligence (7) and Extraversion (11)) and the informal leader (Very experienced in their respective fields - knowledgeable (1), High level of skill and/or specialised skill (2) and Maturity in age (3)) are deemed to be inherent traits and not an act and therefore not allocated in the schematic below.

Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1998)		The Non-common Denominators as identified per Table XII: Section A	
Component	Characteristic	Formal Leaders	Informal Leaders
Self Awareness	• Self-confidence	• Self-confidence (7)	• Relationship oriented (4)
	• Realistic self-assessment	• Willingness to risk failure (4)	• Humility and honesty (9)
	• Self-depreciation		
	• Sense of humour	• Self-control and level-headedness (5)	

Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1998)		The Non-common Denominators as identified per Table XII: Section A	
Component	Characteristic	Formal Leaders	Informal Leaders
		• Self aware (6)	
Self-Regulation	• Trustworthiness and integrity • Comfort with ambiguity • Openness to change	• Willingness to risk failure (4) • Self-control and level-headedness (5) • Integrity (13)	• Relationship oriented (4) • People skills (7) • Humility and honesty (9) • Authenticity (13)
Motivation	• Strong drive to achieve • Optimism, even in the face of failure • Organisational commitment	• Goal orientated (10)	• Positive demeanor (11) • Tenacious (12)
Empathy	• Expertise in building and retaining talent • Cross-cultural sensitivity • Service to clients and customers	• Objectivity (12)	• Cross Cultural Sensitivity (8) • Participative and democratic (5) • Shows interest in colleagues all of the time (6) • People skills (7) • Inspirational (10)
Social Skill	• Effectiveness in leading change • Persuasive • Expertise in building and leading teams	• Persuasive (9)	• Participative and democratic (5) • Shows interest in colleagues all of the time (6) • People skills (7) • Inspirational (10)

According to Jago (1982) it is the leader's cognitive ability that will determine the characteristic possessed by the leader need to be used (Jago, 1982) and House, et al., (1997) concluded that the

cognitive and emotional orientation is one of the aspects that defines leadership across cultures. From this cognitive perspective, it is suggested that under the five components of Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence the non-common characteristics of formal and informal leaders will be subjective to the cognitive ability of the formal leader and informal leader. Therefore, within the context of Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence hallmarks, the non-common denominators are not mutually exclusive anymore. From this perspective, it is suggested that, except for the ones listed below, there is from what makes the leader to act (both formal and informal) congruence between the non-common characteristics of formal and informal leaders.

Formal Leaders	Informal Leaders
1. Innovator and Originator	1. Very experienced in their respective fields (knowledgeable)
2. Strategic mind set – long term view	2. High level of skill and or specialised skill
3. Visionary approach to work	3. Maturity in age
4. Intelligence	
5. Extraversion	
6. Responsible	

The three non-common characteristics of informal leaders are verified by the findings of Maxwell (1998) and Yukl (2002). Both Maxwell (1998) and Yukl (2002) found that an individual's knowledge, skills and experience are attributes causal to the individual being identified as an informal leader.

Conclusion

The literature is also specific to formal leaders being goal-oriented, achievement driven, committed, strategic in nature, persuasive and willing to risk failure for success. In addition formal leaders are persistent and play a role of maintaining a positive, focused attitude in pursuing goals, despite obstacles and failures. They have a long-term view and are able to organise short-term tasks according to long-term priorities. Formal leaders challenge the environment in order for the organisation to move forward and engage with employees to develop sound relationships and to ensure that commitment levels grow and the goals of the organisation are achieved.

The informal leader is generally supportive, a good communicator, is trusted by the group, is participative in nature and has high ethical values as well as displaying a great sense of humility. The informal leader plays a very influential role and as such gets the group to work together, plays the liaison role between management and the group and due to either age, experience or specific resources and skill has the ability to obtain group results that are sometimes achieved with more difficulty through the leadership of the formal hierarchical structure. Informal leaders play a pivotal role in conflict resolution within small groups that may be destructive to the work environment and as such can become the confidantes of the working group.

When comparing the characteristics of formal leaders as currently encapsulated in the literature to those of informal leaders as determined in this research, it is clear that there is no fundamental difference between the characteristics of formal leaders and the characteristics of informal leaders. The research has also not identified any characteristic that could be deemed to be new and additional to what is to be found in contemporary literature. In response to the primary goal and question of this research – to investigate the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to determine whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders – a position can be taken that there is indeed clear congruence to be found between the respective characteristics of both formal and informal. It also appears that the respective characteristics are universal to leadership, both formal and informal.

Even though it has been established that informal leadership characteristics are common to formal leadership characteristics, it is the situation and the environment the formal leaders or informal leaders are faced with that will determine which intrinsic or behavioural characteristic will be required to respond to and influence the situation being faced. Jago's (1982) suggestion that leadership is not merely personified in the doing, but more importantly in how it is executed, brings the role of the formal and informal leader to the fore.

The role that the formal and informal leader will play is therefore determined by the situation and the environment a leader is faced with and finds him- or herself in. Although the characteristics of leaders are meaningful in explaining leadership, it does not take situational and environmental factors into account (Horner, 1997). The dynamic environment in which organisations operate, incorporating the diversity of culture, social structures, economics, and demographics, specifically in South Africa, provide the challenge of whether leaders are

effective or not. These dynamics are the precursor for informal structures to emerge alongside the formal hierarchy.

6.5.2 The Role of Informal Leaders

Leadership is subjective. According to Calder (1977), leadership only exists in the perceptions of others, particularly followers or subordinates. Leadership is therefore not a viable scientific construct or variable, but a process by which people infer that real or imagined leadership qualities exists in others (Calder, 1977). Followers base their subjective conclusions of real or imagined leadership on whether the observed person's behaviour is distinctive, typical of how a leader is expected to act and whether the behaviour is consistent (Calder, 1977; Jago, 1982). It should be clear from the subjective interpretation of these three criteria, that their application would not have the same outcome among different people.

The subjectivity of leadership is substantiated by the respondents' views of who the informal leader in the work group is. The majority of the respondents (fifteen out of sixteen) indicated that the role of the informal leader is not specific, but changes all the time. The role is characteristic driven; it is the situation or circumstance the work group is faced with that will determine which characteristic of the informal leader will be required to influence that particular situation or circumstance. Although the majority of the respondents indicated that there is an informal leader within the work group, this mantle could change from one individual to another within the same work group depending on the circumstances and situation. It is obvious that this perception is due to subjectivity of the respondents.

Fifteen of the sixteen respondents opined that the role of the informal leader is dictated by the circumstances or situations the work group is faced with at various times. It is the circumstance or situation that will determine the role assumed by the informal leader. DuBrin (2001) views the role of leaders as an expected set of activities or behaviours stemming from the leader's job. He (DuBrin, 2001) contextualises the role a leader can play into any one, or a combination of, any of the following roles: figurehead, spokesperson, negotiator, coach, team builder, team player, technical problem solver, entrepreneur and strategic planner. Even though the informal leader does not engage in formal activities on behalf of the organisation, he or she still plays a role within a work group. If the role of formal leaders as identified in the literature is compared

to the role of informal leaders as identified in the study, no commonality can be found between any of the roles.

In Section B of Table XII below eight roles of formal leaders that have been extracted from the literature are juxtaposed against ten roles of informal leaders as identified from the responses of the respondents. These respective roles are then aligned against DuBrin's (2001) contextual roles of leadership, those of figurehead, spokesperson, negotiator, coach, team builder, team player, technical problem solver, entrepreneur and strategic planner. This enables commonality to be found under DuBrin's (2001) taxonomy.

Table XIII: Section B – Role of Formal Leaders and Informal Leaders

Role of Formal Leaders as per Literature	Role of Informal Leaders as identified per the Study Findings
1. Give guidance (comfortable with ambiguity and operate in environments of uncertainty and without guidelines if necessary)	1. Facilitator and gives guidance (play an important role in how the group works together and operates)
2. Motivator and figurehead (persistent and maintain a positive, focused attitude in pursuing goals, despite obstacles and failures)	2. Coach and motivator (using experience to influence and encourage the improvement of quality standards and working towards a common goal)
3. Strategist and planner (have a long-term view and able to organise short-term tasks according to long-term priorities)	3. Influencing (help and assist colleagues and others through either special skills or resources that are required by another person / group)
4. Facilitator and negotiator (discerning and astute politicians with a solid grasp of the organisation's power structures and know where and how to obtain support and resources if needed)	4. Team player and facilitator (performs tasks outside of the predefined scope of work instructions and tasks)
5. Mediator and problem solver (know how to defuse tension when the circumstances	5. Facilitator and mediator (assist in group decision making and take the lead in group meetings)

Role of Formal Leaders as per Literature	Role of Informal Leaders as identified per the Study Findings
warrant it)	6. Facilitator and mediator (encourage dialogue amongst members of the group)
6. Coach and team builder (engaging in order to gain employees' commitment with regard to organisational goals)	7. Mediator and problem Solver (approach and resolve conflict situations in a democratic manner acceptable to all)
7. Build organisational capabilities (challenge the environment in order to convince employees to set and maintain high standards and accept goals to make them extend themselves)	8. Listener (act as confidantes of group members)
8. Execute strategies (director and co-ordinator of activities of a group towards the accomplishment of a shared goal)	9. Facilitator and spokesperson (serve as liaisons between management and the group)
	10. Motivator and facilitator (play a teambuilding role)

The primary role of leadership is to influence people to achieve a common goal. Within DuBrin's contextual roles of leadership, this primary role of leadership bridges both formal and informal leadership and within these contextual roles commonality is found between the roles of formal leader and formal leader. Depending on the circumstances and the situation, the formal and informal leader will either assume the role of a figurehead, a spokesperson, a negotiator, a coach, a team builder, a team player, a technical problem solver, an entrepreneur and a strategic planner, or a combination of these.

With reference to the primary goal and question of this research – that is to investigate the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to determine whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders – there is justification to take a position that there is indeed correspondence between the respective roles of both formal and informal leaders.

6.5.3 Conclusion to the Characteristics and Role of Informal Leaders

It is evident that a better understanding of the characteristics and the role of the informal leader will enable management and leaders to harness the assistance of this individual to make groups more effective and assist management in the execution of its functions. A better understanding of informal leaders will also allow management to utilise the informal leaders to substitute and compliment the formal leader's weaknesses in the group. Productivity will be enhanced within the organisation and organisational behaviour within the local and global business context will improve too.

Given Csoka's (1998) theory that it appears that there is an inverse relationship between leading activities of managers and their hierarchical position within the organisation – the less senior the management position, the more leading the manager has to do. It is at these lower levels within the organisation and in the smaller working groups where the results of the work of an informal leader can really be noticed.

It is concluded that the role of the informal leader, by supporting the formal leader, within the small work groups is significant in ensuring colleagues work towards a common goal and the goal of the organisation. Further study outcomes suggest that formal and informal leaders can co-exist in groups; however in order for the relationship to bear fruit, maturity and trust are essential. The difference in roles and the complimentary characteristics of the two types of leaders is indicative of the fact that formal and informal leaders can work together and should not have adversarial roles.

The informal leader is successful in achieving high levels of cooperation, enthusiasm for change and motivation towards a common goal within working groups and due to the natural strengths of many of the informal leaders, it is crucial that influences are aligned with the goals and vision set out by the organisation's formal leadership.

6.5.4 The Cultural Context of Leadership

The secondary goal of the research is to determine whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups could be underpinned in the principles of Ubuntu and if consideration should be given to any cultural differences between leaders and followers by organisational hierarchies.

The literature review indicates that numerous researchers have established that leadership is influenced both socially and culturally (Pascale, 1990; House, 1993; Hodgetts and Luthans, 1997; Mullins, 1999; Schermerhorn, et al., 2000; Meyer and Boninelli, 2004 and Hellriegel, et al., 2004). Leadership cannot be exercised without taking cognisance of subordinates and followers' cultural foundations within organisations (Hellriegel, et al., 2004). A multicultural leader has also been identified to be effective if this leader can motivate people across race, gender, age, social attitudes and lifestyles (DuBrin, 2001). DuBrin (2001) further states that effectiveness of the leader can also be measured in the successful attainment of productivity, quality and satisfaction by the work group.

In view of the aforementioned and that leadership should also remain fundamental to the thinking, understanding, attitudes and behaviour of people and their institutions (Adler, 1997), ignoring the cultural background and foundation of employees within organisations will detrimentally affect the effectiveness of the leadership in organisations. Factors that also influence effectiveness are the external environment the organisation operates within (shaped by culture) and the organisational structure, culture and policy (Stoner, et al., 1995). Leadership style has to match the demand of different situations faced by a leader (Northouse, 2001). In addition a leader's diagnostic ability when faced with a situation is of critical importance (Hughes, et al., 2002). If the diagnostic ability of a leader is anchored against a Western-based leadership style and the situation faced is as the result of the dynamic between members from a largely African cultural background, it could lead to misunderstandings between leadership and followers and thereby impacting on the effectiveness of leadership in the organisation.

The literature review undoubtedly and unfortunately purveys a prejudice towards a Westernised industrialised culture and is based upon Westernised assumptions as found in most established theories of leadership – approximately 98% of the empirical evidence available have a typical American character (House and Aditya, 1997). This is supported by Swanepoel et al., (2003) who found that the majority of existing theories of leadership as well as the empirical evidence available have a distinctly North-American nature and character. With the cultural diversity that exists in the South African workplace and this against the background of apartheid, people working in organisations and work groups in the same organisation will have different agendas and an unequal distribution of power (Kirk and Shutte, 2004). Not taking cognisance of this will have a serious impact on how leadership is executed and experienced within the South African workplace.

Taking into account that most leadership and management studies ignore the perspectives of African and non-Westernised approaches to these principles (Cox and Nkomo, 1990; Nkomo, 1992; Prasad, 1997 and Prasad, 2006), the most important and relevant principles of Western management principles, Afrocentric management principles and those of Ubuntu management principles have been extracted from the literature and summarised in Table XIII below. It would appear that Westernised management principles are diametrically opposed to those of Afrocentric and Ubuntu management principles. This also evidenced in the differences in how Hofstede's (1998) cultural dimensions of uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity and long-term vs. short-term orientation are experienced between Afrikaners, Anglos and Africans (McFarlin and Coster, 1999). Simplistically this is mirrored in Descartes' view that because the individual can think, the individual therefore exists versus the Ubuntu view that the individual cannot exist on his or her own, but only through others; individualism versus communalism, or what is best for the individual versus what is best for the common interest.

Table XIV: Comparison of Management Principles between Westernised, Afrocentric and Ubuntu Principles

Westernised Management Principles	Afrocentric Management Principles	Ubuntu Management Principles
Individualism and Exclusivity	Communalism and Inclusivity	Communalism
Self-Orientated	Group-Orientated	Co-operative
Rational and Reasoned	Emotional and Intuitive	Solidarity
Achievement and Self-actualisation	Affiliation	Supportive
Competitive	Harmonistic	Respectfulness
Hierarchical Control	Humanistic Orientation	Collaborative
Decision making informed by power relations	Informal	Consideration
Self-Development	Consultative	Reconciliatory
	Approachable	Civility

This would suggest that the style of leadership to be adopted should take into account hard realities of concepts like inclusivity, collaboration and diversity. Cultural values and traditions

do influence the attitudes and behaviours of leaders (Hofstede, 1998) and if no cognisance is taken of the values, norms, and customs of African and non-Western countries problems could arise between the organisational leader and the employees (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002). Ignoring this - “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group of people or category of people in a nation from another” (Hofstede, 1993a: 89) – by leaders in South African organisations will be short-sighted for achieving effective leadership.

As defined by Schermerhorn, et al. (2009), informal leaders are individuals that have the ability to exercise influence over others through either special skills or resources that meet the needs of other persons. If the formal leader of a work group is from a different cultural background to that of the rest of the members of the work group, then the formal leader will be better within multi-national organisations to have a thorough grasp of the local cultures of the different countries in which their subsidiaries operate.

The concept of Ubuntu is an African view of the world, with life anchored in its own person, culture and society (Shutte, 1993). Respect for the dignity of others, group solidarity, collectivism, teamwork and supportiveness, interdependence and an expression of being together with a spirit of oneness and exclusivity, informality, respect and discipline, flexibility rather than stability, sharing, caring, empathy, warmth, tolerance and understanding are a summation of the key characteristics, values and practices of Ubuntu described by Mbigi (2005), Koka (1998) and Broodryk (2005). The basic quality of Ubuntu is the inner value and dignity of the human personality.

While literature states that the Western Culture is based on individualism, the African Cultural paradigm has its origin in the community, and all decision-making is in a consultative manner with the best interest of the collective at the forefront. A company guided by the Ubuntu philosophy would therefore be expected to inform and communicate with its employees and to be the mouthpiece in external communication. With decision-making being the foundation of leadership, an Ubuntu philosophy would require the analysis of the problem at hand, in consultation with others, and the guiding of the process until a resolution is taken through a process of consensus. The Ubuntu philosophy therefore definitely speaks to a bottom-up approach to leadership.

The literature supports that the Westernised-based view of the role of ignores the perspectives of African and non-Westernised approaches to leadership (Cox and Nkomo, 1990; Mohanty, 1984; Manning, 1996; Nkomo, 1992; Prasad, 1997 and Prasad, 2006. This results in limited application of these theories in developing nations. The cultural diversity of the South African workforce should be valued and used by management to the competitive advantage of the organisation. By empathising with the cultural background of subordinates, traditional white South African management will add to their repertoire of knowledge, which will be of benefit to the organisation's behaviour and performance.

In considering that the Ubuntu philosophy is considered to be an "African view of the world." The researcher is of the opinion that the concept of Ubuntu could certainly lend enormous support to the Western school of thought in order to develop a hybrid model and management system that is fit for and relevant to the African business environment. This would prove to be particularly useful within South Africa as it would assist the majority of managers and leaders to better manage the diversity within the workforce.

The alignment between Ubuntu and the democratic style of leadership can be seen through the participatory nature of both. Seemingly, latest trends in the development of management and leadership theories, for example as found in participative and democratic styles of leadership, within the Western paradigm would suggest that there is a shift away from the top-down approach to leadership. The values of Afrocentricism and Ubuntu, which build cohesiveness, dignity, solidarity, teamwork, supportiveness and interdependence within communities, are all outcomes now being promoted in Western management and leadership theories. Echoes of the Afrocentric and Ubuntu values are found in the participative leadership style approach as encapsulated in House's Path-Goal leadership model (House and Dessler, 1974) and in both Goleman's (2002) affiliative and democratic leadership styles.

Harvard Business School (2004) identified effective leaders to be caring and empathic with employees' needs, concerns and goals. This aligns itself with the Ubuntu principles (as identified in Table XIV above) of supportiveness, communalism, consideration, reconciliatory and civility. Furthermore, effective leaders should be comfortable with ambiguity and be prepared to operate in environments of uncertainty and without guidelines if necessary. The Afrocentric principal of an emotional and intuitive leader (also as per Table XIV above) would fit this requirement. Other factors identified with being an effective leader by Harvard Business School (2004) are that

leaders should be excellent communicators and listeners – this can be linked to the Afrocentric principles of being harmonistic and consultative and the Ubuntu principle of being collaborative, reconciliatory and civil; leaders should exert self-control and level-headedness when faced with turmoil and confusion – linked to the Afrocentric principle of being harmonistic and the Ubuntu principle of respectfulness; leaders should be engaging in order to gain employees' commitment with regard to organisational goals – linked to the Afrocentric principle of communalism and being consultative and the Ubuntu principle of communalism and being collaborative and leaders should be self-aware and be able to organise how their behaviour affects fellow employees – this is linked to the Afrocentric principle of being group orientated and harmonistic and the Ubuntu principle of civility and consideration.

Culture impacts the way in which all human beings interact, communicate and perform group activities. Cultural values and traditions can influence the attitudes and behaviour of people and leaders. A lack of sensitivity to these can have detrimental effects of an organisation as trust could be lost between manager/leaders and employees, communication could cease and motivation levels could drop. As such, leadership cannot be exercised effectively without taking cognizance of the cultural backgrounds of subordinates and fellow colleagues within the work place.

Acknowledging and managing cultural differences successfully in the organisation will have beneficial results for the organisation. On the other hand, if any gaps between the cultural backgrounds of leaders and subordinate are ignored, misunderstandings will develop and lead to a breakdown in the relationship between leader and follower. By acknowledging these differences Cross and White (1996) identified the following immediate benefits to the organisation if managed successfully:

- The quality of relationships between individual employees as well as management will improve
- The cultural similarities and differences between cultures in the organisation will be more easily understood
- Individual employees' emotions and minds will be more open to diversity

- Mutual respect and greater receptivity to diversity initiatives will be established
- Increased productivity will result
- Conflict between diverse groups of employees in the organisation will be reduced
- The effectiveness of managers in the organisation will increase
- Employee morale will improve
- Co-operation inside the organisation will improve
- Teamwork will be enhanced
- Problem solving skills will increase

Enough evidence from the literature has been presented to conclude that by ignoring the culture of the members of an organisation, the effectiveness of leadership within the organisation will be reduced. In addition, evidence from the literature with regards fundamental differences between the approach to Western leadership theories and those of Afrocentricism and Ubuntu principles were also presented. However, the trend from a top-down to bottom-up approach within the latest leadership theories being developed and adopted in the West would suggest that to reach a confluence between the Westernised principles and those of an Afrocentric and Ubuntu nature is not insurmountable.

It would be beneficial to organisations to recognise and acknowledge – even if it is political incorrect and unpalatable - that cultural differences do exist between whites and blacks in the organisation and it should be managed and lead accordingly. If whites from the older generation, especially the Baby Boomers (born approximately between 1943 and 1960), are in leadership positions in the organisation cognisance should be taken of their cultural background. They have been schooled against a Western upbringing and within the Apartheid milieu. There would be an obvious clash between a white manager schooled and trained within a Western paradigm who would be geared towards individualism and the Ubuntu approach that the individual should be subjugating his or her individuality in favour of communalism. It is therefore suggested that

leaders, and not only whites in these positions, could be more effective in their organisations if they were prepared to familiarise themselves with the different culture groupings within the organisation. An understanding of the African culture as represented by the majority of the population of South Africa would be essential. A thorough understanding of all members of the organisation of what drives Afrocentricism and Ubuntu is thus strongly recommended.

However, the study also indicates that informal leadership is not culture bound. Respondents believe that informal leadership is found in all cultures, but the way it is responded to could be culturally determined. A summary of the responses as to whether informal leaders vary between different cultures is provided:

- Different cultures deal with the term informal leadership differently. In the African culture, the informal leader is recognised as such and has a huge role to play; “there is no competition around his position”
- Leadership is about principles of good behaviour and good attitude, it does not matter what your colour is or what culture you are from
- Leadership is about personality and inherent qualities and not about culture
- Differences between cultures need to be reconciled before organisations can move forward
- Generally, white people are more rigid and strict whereas coloured or black people are more flexible; hence, coloured and black people are more acceptable to informal leaders. This refers to a Western approach to leadership focusing on the individual as opposed to the African perspective on leadership that seeks to satisfy the collective.
- There is no difference from a cultural perspective, but there is a communication barrier

6.6 Practical implications

The informal structure stems from the way that individuals organise themselves in social groups. The informal structure may be partially dependent on the formal structure, but it also incorporates elements of personal influence, social skills and various forms of leadership. Informal leaders have already earned credibility and respect from fellow colleagues, who regularly look to them for guidance in terms of skills, communication and decision-making. Informal leaders can therefore offer an organisation a source of competitive advantage. These

individuals have the ability when sharing their views to influence significantly the acceptance or rejection of new initiatives. Informal leaders therefore have a prevalent role to play in every conversation, every meeting, and every decision made in an organisation and it is therefore imperative that this strength and influence is steered to enhance the overall objectives of the organisation.

In responding to whether the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups as seen and experienced by their fellow employees and to determine whether there is any congruence to be found with the role and characteristics of formal leaders, it can be deduced that:

- Both formal and informal leaders have a common set of leadership characteristics; however, they make use of different powers in order to achieve the desired result. Formal leaders influence through powers gained from the hierarchical structure, whereas informal leaders do not make use of power but rather use authentic leadership styles in order to influence the group
- Both formal and informal leaders aspire to influence groups towards a common goal; however, the role in which the above is achieved differs greatly
- Over and above the inherent characteristics of leadership possessed by both formal and informal leaders, due to the different roles played by them, there are unique characteristics required by the formal and informal leader respectively

Because of the consultative, participative and group orientated manner in which the informal leader of South Africa operates, it can be suggested that the characteristics and the role of the informal leader are underpinned by the philosophy of Ubuntu. Conversely, looking at the outcomes of the study at hand, there is agreement between the respondents that informal leadership is not culture bound, however, the way in which it is responded to could be culturally determined. In a South African context and given the historical hierarchies of organisations within the country, it would not be naïve to suggest that informal leaders emerge because of cultural and social pressures, skill requirements and common associations.

Within the smaller working groups in organisations, where labour is represented largely by the majority of the South African population, a style of leadership, which can be related to, may be required. This will in turn facilitate getting the best out of the members of the work group. In

support of this leadership style, the informal leaders should be recognised to play an intermediary and liaison role between management and members of these groups. Once again, within the context of South Africa and South African organisations, there is certainly a great degree of alignment between the role and characteristics of the informal leaders and the philosophy of Ubuntu. If what is being suggested, implies that informal leaders are actively practicing the constructs of Ubuntu within the organisation, is this not a natural method of integrating the Western leadership style (practised by formal leadership) and the African leadership paradigm (practised by informal leadership)?

Merging the values of Afrocentricism, Ubuntu and Western leadership will allow South African managers to create a unique leadership style for South African and African organisations. Therefore, whether African management is addressed through Afrocentricism or Ubuntu, it leaves no doubt about the underlying importance instilled in the individual's contribution to the community or society, but never at a cost to the collective.

In today's dynamic and rapidly changing environment and where little can be taken as a constant, one sees the migration from an autocratic style of leadership to one that is more democratic, meaning a more open and collegial style of managing a group of individuals. The style is open to encouraging individuals to share ideas, where ideas and discussion move more freely between the groups, facilitation of conversation takes place and where synthesis of information provided by the group takes place in order to find the best possible decision for going forward. As unique as Ubuntu is, one starts to see areas of alignment between Ubuntu and the above mentioned leadership style.

6.7 Future Research

The reason why informal leaders are hesitant to follow a formal hierarchical career path within organisations should be investigated. It should be established whether it could be contributed to the lack of education or training (as alluded to by some of the respondents), altruistic reasons or ideological differences between the informal leader and that of the organisation.

This research of the role and characteristics were done from the perspective of the followers of informal leaders, an etic view. The outcome of this study is therefore based on the subjective view of the colleagues of the informal leader. To get a more objective view of what the role and

characteristics of informal leaders are, research should be undertaken to interview the identified informal leaders within formal structures, therefore getting an emic view of the role and characteristics of informal leaders; what do informal leaders perceive their characteristics to be and what role do they think they play within work groups.

Although the literature supports the position of the researcher that cultural differences could detrimentally influence effective leadership, there is also scope to research the researcher's experience and opinion that the apparent reluctance of white managers and leaders to embrace the political and cultural change that were experienced by them during the last fifteen years could be due these generation of managers and leaders being unfamiliar with and not understanding the underlying principles of the culture of the majority of the population.

6.8 Summary

The characteristics and role of informal leaders as identified in the study is based on the characteristics and role of informal leaders with a predominately Afrocentric culture and background and the characteristics and role of formal leaders are gleaned from research and literature with a Western perspective. The study found no fundamental differences between the characteristics and role of formal and informal leaders. The characteristics and role of leaders between different cultures appear to be the same. How the leadership is executed and experienced is influenced by the cultural background of the leader and the follower. Culture therefore has an influence on leadership.

Notwithstanding human capital being deemed an organisation's most valuable asset in today's business environment, it appears that there is a predisposition against changing the model in people management. A thorough understanding by leaders of the interaction between and interdependence of employees as human beings and the organisation as an employing entity is crucial to affect this high level of employee commitment (Swanepoel, et al., 2003). The demographics of the organisation's employees are the most important contributor to the individual and collective psychological make-up of its employees. If leaders do not understand the differences in the needs, desires, and goals of employees, leading them effectively will become futile.

This is reflected in the dynamic environment in which South African organisations operate. To incorporate the local diversity of culture, social structures, economics, and demographics in South Africa, provide special challenges to South African leaders. It would be prudent for South African leaders to embrace Afrocentric and Ubuntu leadership principles and not to only depend on the Western paradigm. Evidence in the literature supports this viewpoint. If no cognisance is taken of the values, norms, and customs of African and non-Western countries, problems could arise between the organisational leader and the employees.

Organisations have a mechanism within their midst to alleviate the potential problems that could arise from cultural differences. Informal leaders, especially if they are from the indigenous population, are schooled in the local customs and culture. Because of the study finding no differences between the role and characteristics of formal and informal leaders, the leadership qualities and capabilities of informal leaders should be embraced within management structures and used to assist the organisation in reaching its goals most effectively. The challenge obvious would be to do it in such a manner as not to antagonise the followers of the informal leaders in order to prevent the informal leaders being rejected as such because they are now deemed part of the organisations formal structures.

If organisations ignore the cultural backgrounds of its employees, it will be doing it at its own peril. Not acknowledging informal leaders and the role they could play within an organisation will compound their problems.

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Introduction and Request to OEM for Permission to do Research

603W3984
12 Wapadsberg Road
Queenstown
5319
2 November 2006

Mr
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Dear Sir

Masters Dissertation: The Role and Characteristics of Informal Leaders in Work Groups – South African Perspective

I am a student busy with my thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Masters in Business Administration at Rhodes Investec Business School, Rhodes University – Grahamstown. This dissertation attempts to research the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups.

The goals, performance, and effectiveness of groups have a direct affect on organisation's performance and behaviour. Some groups tend to be more effective than others are and this research will investigate one of the factors and determinants that contribute to effective group functioning, namely leadership, but not formal leadership as sanctioned by and through the organisation's hierarchical structures. There is a wide variety of literature and research on formal leadership, but a search of the literature reveals little beyond a few references to informal leadership in groups. The focus of this research will rather be on informal leadership within the work group and specifically on the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups.

Informal leadership needs to be considered as an element of group leadership. A better understanding of the characteristics and role of the informal leader will enable management to harness the assistance of this individual to make groups more effective and assist management in the execution of its functions. The better understanding of informal leaders will also allow management to utilise the informal leader to substitute and compliment the formal leader's weaknesses in the group.

The primary aim of the research will be to determine the characteristics of informal leaders and the role they play in groups. Secondary to this, do organisations acknowledge the concept of informal leaders and are informal leaders' roles utilised at all in the management process of groups. Understanding more about the characteristics and role of informal leaders in groups will contribute to leadership theory, as it will underscore any differences between the characteristics and role of formal leaders and informal leaders.

I am requesting your permission and support not only to do this research at your organisation, but also to use the organisational structure and work groups within your organisation as the population from which samples will be selected for the purpose of this research.

The programme and method of data collection for the purpose of the above is proposed as follows:

- Processing and completion of Confidentiality Documentation and any other documentation required by your organisation in order for the research to continue on site
- Documentation review to establish group structures, functions and leadership hierarchy throughout your organisation as well as organisational hierarchy
- Interview of appropriate senior Human Resources Personnel, or any other Personnel as identified by your organisation, to establish cognisance and roles/functions of informal leaders within groups in the Organisation
- The target population will be a combination of employees in positions of authority and responsibility as well as members from different groups in the organisations, but will be weighted in favour of group members. The sample of interviewees for the primary aim of this research will be purposively selected by referral for interviewing across four different categories of employees

- This method of selection will prevent the informal leader him/herself being selected, employees being sampled that are new to their positions or not familiar with the organisation or group and employees that could possibly have adversarial relationships with the informal leaders in groups – this bias could taint the responses to questions

Sample:

- o Senior/Middle Management – 1 (one) Operational Manager (**A**)
- o Middle/Lower Management – 2 (two) Supervisors, one (**B**) from the same Department as the Senior/Middle Manager (**A**) and the second one (**C**) from a different functional Department
- o Group Level
 - 4 Group Leaders – 2 (two) Group Leaders (**D**) from the same Department as the Operational Manager (**A**) and the other 2 (two) (**E**) from the same Department of the aforementioned Supervisor (**C**)
 - 8 (eight) Group Members – 4 (four) from different Groups within the Operational Manager's (**A**) Department and 4 (four) from the Department of the second identified Supervisor (**C**)

Transcriptions of interviews will be presented to interviewees within a week of the interview for approval and signature. At the same time, if required, clarification of any queries as a result of the transcription process will be resolved through follow up questions

All confidentiality requirements of your organisation will be complied with. Throughout the interview, survey process the identities of individual participants will remain confidential, and reports of research findings will not permit associating subjects or organisations or departments with specific responses. Findings from this research will form the basis for my dissertation and related presentations. The outcome and findings of the research will be available to your organisation.

Your cooperation in this endeavour will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Bennie Wienekus

Interview Sample Identification

SAMPLE NUMBER	NAME OF EMPLOYEE SELECTED	DEPARTMENT	DESIGNATION	SAMPLE ID	ACCEPTED/DECLINED
1				GA.0015	
2				GA.0010	
3				GA.0002	
4				GA.0007	
5				GA.0009	
6				GA.0013	
7				GA.0014	
8				GA.0008	
9				GA.0004	
10				GA.0020	
11				GA.0012	
12				GA.0001	
13				GA.0005	
14				GA.0019	
15				GA.0017	
16				GA.0018	
17				GA.0016	
18				GA.0003	
19				GA.0011	
20				GA.0006	

Informed Consent Agreement

Researcher: Bennie Wienekus

Telephone Numbers:

- o Office – 045 858 8020
- o Cell – 082 4520636

Faculty Sponsor: Mr Trevor Amos

Telephone Numbers:

- o Office – 046 603 8250

Introduction

You have been asked to provide information as part of a research study for the requirements for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Masters in Business Administration at Rhodes Investec Business School, Rhodes University – Grahamstown. Before you decide to participate in this study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study. I will be available to answer your questions and provide further explanations. If you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign this consent form. This process is known as informed consent. Your participation is voluntary. Even if you do agree to participate, you may discontinue at any time.

Purpose

This dissertation attempts to research the role and characteristics of informal leaders in work groups. Informal leadership needs to be considered as an element of group leadership. A better understanding of the characteristics and role of the informal leader will enable management to harness the assistance of this individual to make groups more effective and assist management in the execution of its functions. The better understanding of informal leaders will also allow management to utilise the informal leader to substitute and compliment the formal leader's weaknesses in the group. The aim of the research is *inter alia*:

- o Who are informal leaders in the organisation?
- o How do they end up being recognised as informal leaders?
- o Where do informal leaders' power and influence come from?
- o What do they do in groups?
- o How do they behave and perform their roles?

- o What are the characteristics of these informal leaders?
- o How do they exhibit these characteristics?
- o Does the organisation recognise informal leaders?
- o Does the organisation think informal leaders can play a role in the organisation?

Procedures

The research is to be conducted at the premises of the Manufacturing Division (.....) of The information required for the purpose of the research will be gathered through an interview. The interview questions are attached as an addendum to this document. The intent of the interview questions is to identify the concept of an informal leader in your work group and not the identity of the informal leader, if he or she does exist in your group. There is no expectation or obligation to identify any individual by name. Disclosing any identities by name will be treated as highly confidential and not disclosed to any third parties. The interview will be audio taped and transcribed with your consent and you are free to turn the tape recorder off at any time. The interviewer could be taking notes during the interview. You are entitled to read these notes.

You are free to respond to the questions in any way you deem fit. You do not have to answer all the questions and may refrain from responding to any question if you do not want to. All responses will be strictly confidential and you will not be identified in any of the transcripts. Any published writing stemming from this research will ensure participant confidentiality by neither identifying the participant name or location. Pseudonyms will be used to provide confidentiality. You will be presented with the transcription of the interview within one week of the interview for approval and acceptance. At this feedback session, if required, additional follow up questions could be posed to you. Once again, responding to the follow up questions will be voluntary and there would be no obligation on your part to answer the follow up questions. Once the data has been analysed and processed, the tapes will be destroyed.

I shall be assisted by Miss Alison Pope who will be responsible for the transcription of the interview. She is also fluent in Xhosa and will aid us with translation and interpretation, if required. You are free to object to her presence and her presence is entirely subject to your approval. If you require anyone else for translation and/or interpretation purposes you may say so.

Possible Risks

There is no risk to you, physically or work related, in making yourself available as an interviewee for the purpose of this study.

Possible Benefits

You will get the following benefits from this study:

- o Increase the understanding of informal leadership in your organisation
- o Identify the informal leadership roles and behaviours that should be encouraged and supported by senior management to increase the effectiveness of work groups in your organisation
- o Understand the role and impact of informal leaders in your organisation

Costs

There are no costs involved to you for participating in this study.

Compensation

You will receive compensation for taking part in this study.

Right to Withdraw

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to begin or withdraw from this study at any time during the proceedings.

Privacy of Research Records

Your interview transcription will be private. No one except from your immediate supervisor and the research team will know that you are part of this study. Individuals acting on Rhodes Investec Business School may review your interview. The copy of the transcription will not have any information that can link you to the study. Your transcription will be used for research purposes only.

Signatures

By signing the consent form, you agree that you have read this informed consent form, you understand what is involved, and you agree to take part in this study. You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this informed consent form. You will receive a copy of this consent form.

I am grateful for your cooperation and participation in this study. Please feel free to contact me regarding the study.

Bennie Wienekus

Participant (Print name)

Signature

Date

Research Statement

I certify that the research study has been explained to the above individual by me including the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks, and the potential benefits associated with participation in this research study. Any questions raised have been answered to the individual's satisfaction.

Bennie Wienekus

Date

Interview Sample Check List

ITEM	PROCEDURE	DATE	COMPLETED	OUTSTANDING	REASON
1	Private Setting for Interview Site				
2	Check availability of employee for interview				
3	Refreshments for participants				
4	Equipment - o Tape Recorder (One) - o Microphone (One) - o Back-up Voice Recorder (One) - o 15 x 90-minute Cassette Tapes per Interview - o Spare Batteries - o Field Notebook and Pens				
5	Interview Sample Identification List				
6	Interview Access Document (in duplicate)				
7	Informed Consent Document (in duplicate)				
8	Code and Identify Cassette				
9	Test recorders				
10	Commence Interview - o Establish rapport with interviewee - o Briefly describe the steps of the interview process(informed consent, in-depth interview process, questions and answers) - o Obtain informed consent - o Turn on tape recorder and verify its working - o Conduct the interview - o End the question-asking phase of the interview - o Give the participant opportunities to ask questions - o Reconfirm the participant's consent while the tape recorder is still on - o Turn off the tape recorder and thank the participant				
11	Check the tape to see if the interview was recorded. If it was not, expand notes immediately				
12	Punch out the re-record tab				
13	Ensure all materials are labeled with the sample ID code				
14	Debrief with assistant				
15	Assemble all materials and double-check all forms are completed				
16	Transcribe and expand notes within 24-hours if possible				
17	Get approval signature for transcription within five working days				
18	Do follow up questions				

Interview Protocol with Indication of Nature of Question

Title: THE CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE OF INFORMAL LEADERS IN WORK GROUPS.

Respondent's Sample ID:

Ethnicity:

Sex:

Age:

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewee Number:

Length of Interview:

Questions to Interviewees

Question Number	Question	Structure of Question	Nature of the Question
1.	How long have you been working for the company?	Structured	Quantitative
2.	How long have you been working in your workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
3.	What is your official job description designation?	Structured	Quantitative
4.	How long have you been in your current position?	Structured	Quantitative
5.	Are you familiar with your department's organisational diagram?	Structured	Quantitative
6.	Are you familiar with where your workgroup fits into the department organisational diagram?	Structured	Quantitative
7.	How many members are in your workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
8.	Who is officially in charge and responsible for your workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
9.	What is his/her official designation?	Structured	Quantitative
10.	How long has he/she been in the position	Structured	Quantitative
11.	Has the person that is currently in charge and responsible for your workgroup been appointed from within your workgroup or has the appointee to this position been appointed from a different workgroup or even department?	Unstructured	Quantitative
12.	Other than the formal Company hierarchical structure of your workgroup, would you be of the opinion that	Structured	Quantitative

Question Number	Question	Structure of Question	Nature of the Question
	there exists an informal hierarchical structure within your workgroup?		
13.	Are you familiar with the concept of 'leadership'?	Structured	Quantitative
14.	Are you of the opinion the person that is currently in charge and responsible for your workgroup is, other than leading the group because of the official Company sanctioning thereof, a leader in terms of your understanding of leadership?	Unstructured	Open-ended
15.	Would you consider that a workgroup may have an informal leader – a colleague that is not formally appointed by the Company, but informally recognised as such by the majority in the group – in addition to the formally Company appointed employee?	Unstructured	Open-ended
16.	Are you of the opinion that such an informal leader can co-exist within the structure of the workgroup and be of assistance to the formal leader of the group or could this role be, or should this role be adversarial?	Unstructured	Open-ended
17.	Are there any member / s in your workgroup, other than the person that is currently in charge and responsible for your workgroup, that you would consider to have leadership qualities?	Structured	Quantitative
18.	Would you deem this person to play a role of being the informal leader of the workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
19.	In your opinion, do you think that colleagues in your workgroup will agree with you that this person is considered the informal leader of the group?	Structured	Quantitative
20.	How long has this informal leader been part of your workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
21.	Has the informal leader ever shown any interest of desire to become the formally appointed leader to your workgroup or any other workgroup or any other position of formalised authority within the Company?	Structured	Quantitative
22.	How long has this informal leader been deemed the informal leader by the workgroup?	Structured	Quantitative
23.	Has the Company's hierarchy ever attempted to recruit the informal leader into any formal position within the Company?	Structured	Quantitative
24.	To your knowledge, has the informal leader ever changed, and if so, how often has it happened?	Unstructured	Open-ended
25.	Has there been a specific incidence or occurrence, which made this person stand out and make his/her presence felt?	Open-ended	In-depth
26.	Would you consider that coming to the fore by this person on the occasion referred to in the previous question, this person displayed a leadership role and qualities?	Unstructured	Open-ended

Question Number	Question	Structure of Question	Nature of the Question
27.	Other than acting as an informal leader for the group with reference to specific incidents or occurrences, has this person displayed the same role and qualities in general to help with task execution within the group, group decision –making and group performance?	Open-ended	In-depth
28.	Does the informal leader play any cross-functional role, especially in your perception of him/her as an informal leader of the group, outside the boundaries of your workgroup (e.g. liaising with other groups in the same department or even other departments)?	Unstructured	Open-ended
29.	Can you identify any other roles that the informal leader has played in your workgroup?	Open-ended	In-depth
30.	Do you belong to any informal or interest groups in the Company?	Structured	Quantitative
31.	Does the formal leader in your workgroup have any formal or informal leadership role in any of the groups identified in the previous question?	Structured	Quantitative
32.	In your opinion, what do you consider the attributes and characteristics of the informal leader in your workgroup that makes him the unofficial leader of the group?	Open-ended	In-depth
33.	Are you of the opinion that informal leaders should be recognised as such in the Company?	Unstructured	Open-ended
34.	If recognised by the Company, are you of the opinion that informal leaders can contribute to better performance of the Company for all stakeholders' points of view?	Unstructured	Open-ended
35.	Other than your responses to all of the above questions, is there anything else that you consider central to the concept of informal leaders within the Company?	Unstructured	Open-ended
36.	Do you think that the perception of informal leaders varies between different cultural groups?	Unstructured	Open-ended

Matrix Summary of Data Collected

Legend	
TM	Team Manager
Y	Yes
DwSd	Different workgroup, Same department
YaE	Yes and Expanded on Answer
NaE	NO and Expanded on Answer
N	No
DAM	Divisional Assembly Manager
MMD	Manager of Manufacturing Division

Legend	
Dd	Different Department
Np	Not asked
Na	Not answered
N/A	Not Applicable
IM	Industrial Manager
DM	Divisional Manager
Co	Coordinator
QCI	Quality Control Inspector

Legend	
Sd	Same Department
TC	Team Coordinator
MOM	Manufacturing Operations Manager
SL	Site Leader
Ao	Assembly Operator
Dn	Don not know
PM	Production Manager
Oo	From Outside the Organisation

Number of Valid Respondents in Sample: 16

De r	Sample ID																			
	GA.0001	GA.0002	GA.0003	GA.0004	GA.0005	GA.0006	GA.0007	GA.0008	GA.0009	GA.0010	GA.0011	GA.0012	GA.0013	GA.0014	GA.0015	GA.0016	GA.0017	GA.0018	GA.0019	GA.0020
	Sample Number																			
	12	3	18	9	13	20	4	8	5	2	19		11	6	7	1	17	15	16	14
	Response																			
1	11	10	S	12	33	S	6	12	16	25	S	6	18	13	22	12		5	13	25
2	3	4	a	8	2	a	2	10	3	3	a	4	4	4	N/A	12		5	10	7
3	TM	DAM	m	TC	TM	m	IM	QCI	DM	PM	m	Co	TM	TM	M	Co		Ao	Co	Co
4	3	0.42	p	1	23	p	2	11	3	5	p	4	8	5	3	6		5	11	7
5	Y	Y	l	Y	Y	l	Y	Y	Y	Y	l	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	R	Y	Y	Y
6	Y	Y	e	Y	Y	e	Y	Y	Y	Y	e	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	e	Y	Y	Y

Legend	
TM	Team Manager
Y	Yes
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N	No
DAM	Divisional Assembly Manager
MMD	Manager of Manufacturing Division

Legend	
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Np	Not asked
Na	Not answered
N/A	Not Applicable
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	Sample Number																				
	12	3	18	9	13	20	4	8	5	2	1 9		11	6	7	1	17	15	16	14	10
7	26	692 MM	I D D a n d S	25	29		324	24	49	306	I D a n d S	28	29	32	2500	18	f	28	32	18	
8	R	D MM		TM	R	I	DM	TM	DM	R			TM	PTM	TM	SL	TM	u	TM	TM	TM
9	TM	D		TM	TM	D	DM	TM	DM	PM			TM	PTM	TM	SL	TM	s	TM	TM	TM
10	3	3		0.75	2		0.5	11	3	3			3	4	4	1.5	6	e	5	20	4
11	d	Sd		a	Dd	Sd	a	Dd	Dn	Dd		DwSd		Dd	Dd	Dd	Oo	Dd Ya	d	Dn	Sd
12	YaE	YaE		Y	Y	n	YaE	Dn	NaE	YaE	n	N	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	E Ya	N	YaE	N	
13	YaE	YaE	d	YaE	YaE	d	YaE	YaE	Y	YaE	d	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	E	t	YaE	YaE	
14	YaE	Y		Y	Y		YaE	Y	Y	Y		YaE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y Ya	o	Y	Y	
15	Y	YaE	S	Y	YaE	S	YaE	YaE	Y	YaE	S	Y	YaE	Y	YaE	E		Y	YaE	Y	

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Sample Number																			
12	3	18	9	13	20	4	8	5	2	1 9	11	6	7	1	17	15	16	14	10
16	YaE	YaE	a	YaE	NaE	a	YaE	YaE	Y	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	Y
17	Y	Y	m	Y	YaE	m	Y	Y	Y	YaE	Y	Y	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	Y
18	YaE	YaE	p	YaE	Y	p	YaE	Y	Y	Y	Y	YaE	Y	YaE	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	Y
19	Y	NaE	l	Y	Y	l	Y	Y	Y	Y	YaE	Y	Y	YaE	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	Y
20	2	0.42	e	1	12	e	3	Dn	2	5	e	4	4	6	10	1	4	10	6
21	YaE	NaE		Y	NaE		YaE	N	N	YaE	YaE	Y	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	NaE
22	2	N	N	0.75	Na	N	0.5	11	2	5	N	4	4	6	10	1	2	Dn	6
23	YaE	Y	u	N	N	u	YaE	Y	N	Y	u	Dn	N	NaE	YaE	YaE	N	NaE	N
24	YaE	YaE	m	N	Y	m	Y	N	N	N	m	Y	N	N	YaE	YaE	N	N	YaE
25	YaE	N	b	YaE	YaE	b	YaE	YaE	N	YaE	b	YaE	YaE	YaE	Na	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE

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	Sample Number																				
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26	Y	N	e	Y	Y	e	Y	Y	N	Y	e	YaE	YaE	Y	YaE	E Y Ya E Na E N N N/A Opi nio n Ya E	c	Y	Na	Y	
27	YaE	Y	r	Y	YaE	r	Y	Y	Y	YaE	r	Y	Y	Y	YaE		r	YaE	YaE	YaE	
28	YaE	Y	n o t	Y	YaE	n o t	YaE	N	Y	Y	n o t	YaE	YaE	Y	Y	E N N N/A Opi nio n Ya E	i	N	Y	Y	
29	YaE	YaE		YaE	N		YaE	N	YeA	YeA		YaE	N	N	Y	YaE	N	p	YaE	YaE	YaE
30	N	N		Y	N		N	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	t	N	Y	Y
31	N/A	N/A		N	N/A		N/A	Y	N	N		N	N	Y	Y	Y	N		N/A	Y	N
32	Opini on	Opini on		Opini on	Opini on		Opini on	Opinio n	Opinio n	Opinio n		Opi nion	Opin ion	Opini on	Opini on	Opini on Ya E		Opin ion	Opini on	Opini on	
33	YaE	YaE	u	Y	YaE	u	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	u	Y	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE		Y	Y	YaE	

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Sample Number																			
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34	Y	YaE	s	Y	Y	s	Y	N	Y	Y	s	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
35	YaE	YaE	e	YaE	YaE	e	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	e	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE	YaE
36	Np	Np	d	NaE	NaE	d	Np	YaE	Np	Np	d	YaE	Np	NaE	Np	NaE	NaE	NaE	YaE