

**ORGANISATIONAL LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHALLENGES AND  
CONSTRAINTS OF THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF BLACKS IN SOUTH  
AFRICAN PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS**

**by**

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## Abstract

In recent years, it has become clear that a lot of corporate collapse can be traced down to poor leadership. As more and more black executives are climbing the corporate ladder, it is becoming all the more necessary to explore how their effective leadership development can occur with private organisations in South Africa. There are many challenges and constraints associated with the leadership development of these executives. This can be expected as they are entering an environment which has been largely white-dominated. As a result they find themselves facing the challenges of succeeding amidst negative perceptions they have experienced from their superiors and subtle pressures from subordinates. Therefore, it can only be expected that if organisations are to maintain a competitive advantage they need to understand how to effectively develop this new breed of leaders. Hence, the researcher has used a qualitative approach to investigate the complexities of the experiences of black executives in private organisations. In terms of the theoretical framework, the research focuses on some of the new approaches to leadership. It was discovered that leadership development is essentially a process that goes beyond mere training sessions, and largely involves the relationships one has within the organisation. This involves relationships with superiors, peers, and subordinates. The research indicates that if these relationships are managed effectively, leadership development is enhanced. Whilst the role of formal training programs appeared somewhat downplayed, it was clear that these programs had a strong role in terms of their psychological impact on participants. They certainly affected their perception of the organisation and their own self-efficacy. The research, therefore illustrates how there are a variety of individual and organisational attributes that form a basis for effective leadership development of blacks in private organisations. The researcher argues that if these are implemented, organisational well-being is enhanced.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Literature review**

### **1.1. Introduction**

#### **1.1.1. What is leadership?**

From the outset it is important to have an understanding of what leadership is and what it entails. Marshall (1991) points out that unless we get this fundamental understanding right we may be building a lot of leadership training and skills on faulty foundations, cluttering up leaders with methods and procedures that have little or nothing to do with their function.

Finding one specific definition of leadership is a very complex task as studies on this topic are varied and there is no generally accepted definition (Bass, 1985). However, whilst there is no single correct definition, defining the concept helps to ensure effective communication of the subject. In the 1950's, renowned leadership theorist, Stogdill, captured what is considered an accurate definition of leadership: "...the process of influencing the activities of an organised group in efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement" (Stogdill, 1974, p.11). This definition of leadership highlights that leadership is primarily to do with influence and hence the ability to create followership. As the old Chinese proverb states, "If anyone thinks they are leading but has no-one following them, they are merely taking a walk". Hence, any study on leadership will need to take into account how such influence is developed and an exploration needs to be made of the interaction between the influencers and those influenced. The second aspect this definition points out is that of goal-setting. This highlights how a primary function of leadership is the visionary aspect. When one speaks of setting goals and working towards them, one is dealing with the future; as Napoleon Bonaparte said, "Leaders are dealers in hope". Hence, a large portion of leadership involves dealing with the actualisation of what was previously unseen. From an extensive investigation into leadership in South Africa in 1983, Schilbach (in Gerber, Nel and Van Dyke, 1996, p.343) defined the concept

as follows, "Leadership is an interpersonal process through which a leader directs the activities of individuals or groups towards the purposeful pursuance of given objectives within a particular situation by means of communication". This definition highlights an important aspect of leadership; that is that it is essentially a process. Understanding leadership from a process-oriented perspective is essential when exploring the different dynamics within an organisation.

A more contemporary definition is provided by Kotter (1988, p.5), "the process of moving a group (or groups) in some direction through mostly non-coercive means". Kotter (1988) further suggests that effective leadership is defined as "leadership which produces movement in the long-term best interest of the group(s)". Maxwell (1993) outlines a misunderstanding of what leadership is by highlighting how most people define leadership as the ability to achieve a position, not to get followed. Therefore they pursue a position, rank or title and upon attaining it think they have become a leader. This type of thinking creates two problems: Those who possess the 'status' of a leader often experience the frustration of few followers, and those who lack the proper titles may not see themselves as leaders and therefore do not develop their leadership skills.

### 1.1.2. Management and leadership

Gerber et al. (1996) identify the main differences between leadership and management by demonstrating that a manager is a person who exercises the daily management functions of planning, leading, organising and controlling as a result of a formal position of authority held in the organisation. On the other hand, a leader is any person capable of persuading other people (followers) to strive for certain goals (formal or informal), irrespective of position (Robbins, 1996). Kotter (1990) takes the concept further by illustrating how management and leadership can be distinguished from each other along four factors which seem to be crucial facets of business success. The first is 'creating an agenda', where managers are seen to plan and budget, leaders establish direction. In terms of 'developing a human network for achieving the agenda', the second factor, managers are concerned with organising and staffing while leaders are concerned with aligning people with future visions. The third factor distinguishes between the way in which managers and leaders 'execute the agenda'. Managers execute through problem-solving and controlling whilst

leaders motivate and inspire followers. In terms of the final factor, 'outcomes', managers are seen to produce a degree of predictability and order, while leaders often produce useful change. Marshall (1991) sums it up by stating that you can have a leader who is also a good manager, or a manager who is a leader, but the two functions are quite different and must not be confused. This research focuses on the qualities of leaders mentioned above, and explores what enhances these qualities and what inhibits them.

### 1.1.3. Leadership development

Because management and leadership require skills which are essentially different from each other, it goes without saying that the process by which leaders are developed will also differ from the process by which managers are developed. Leadership development can be conceived of as a process of acquiring successively more complex maps and other necessary competencies over time. However, there can be innate limits on these competencies that can be developed through education and experience (Bass,1990). There will, however, always be a link between management and leadership because leadership development in the managerial context has also been defined as the process through which individuals learn, grow and improve their abilities to perform professional management tasks (Latham, 1988). The need for leadership development is fast becoming apparent in the current South African context, especially in the private sector, which is characterised by unique challenges such as the maintenance of competitive advantage in a turbulent business environment. If it is ultimately a case of maintaining a high level of deliverables, organisations cannot help but invest into those who are responsible for such output; their human resource. Therefore it is important to explore what the current challenges and constraints are for organisational leaders in order to develop appropriate leadership development programmes for South African organisations. The most successful organisations are those that invest in the development of their people (Human, 1990) and the effectiveness in improving leadership performance will depend firstly on identifying what needs improvement (Bass, 1990). In order to find out this information one needs to explore what the perceptions of the leaders are towards the current leadership development strategies. An exploration of where the gaps lie in the different training programs becomes essential. In order for this to occur, there has to be an understanding of the experiences of black executives, who are growing rapidly in number, hence the rationale for the current research.

#### 1.1.4. A rationale

The underdevelopment of individuals - of human resources - is a direct reflection on inadequate leadership (Boon, 1996). Gerber et al (1996) capture the importance of leadership in South Africa by stating that never before has South Africa had such a great need for effective leadership, in the country as a whole, in the government at all levels, in all economic sectors and in many other groupings. Leadership ultimately determines the quality of life of all citizens and the country depends on sound leadership. Hence, the discussion of the need for leadership development in private organisations lies in the context of a broader leadership vacuum in all sectors of South African society. This means that in exploring perceptions of leadership development in an organisation, one cannot avoid hearing of broader societal issues. Brand Pretorius (1996), Chairman and Chief Executive of McCarthy Motor Holdings, suggests that effective leadership is the critical success factor for future growth and prosperity in South Africa. This seems apparent when one becomes aware of the effect or influence that top management has on the rest of the organisation.

Public policy will always have an effect on business. The primary role of business is business but due to the current situation it is impossible to ignore political issues (Searle, 1989). Hence, when we study leadership development of blacks, one cannot avoid taking into consideration the broader political climate in which these organisations are situated. In the economy there is a grave shortage of skilled workers and management. Hofmeyer (1989) found that the main challenges managers have been facing are human resource related: industrial relations challenges; need for higher productivity; skills shortage; training; race relations and black advancement. The immediate implication would be that these issues should be addressed more directly in South African courses on human resource management and Organisational behaviour. Thami Mazwai (1990) states that the choice South African businessmen are confronted with is between 'development or destruction of the strongest economy on the continent'. Non-discriminatory leadership development has been identified as an important means to achieve that goal. It has been suggested in the past that South African managers have a pronounced short-term horizon, considering human resource issues secondary to technical issues. However, more recently Khumalo (1995) stated that the most urgent challenge facing South Africa's contemporary human resource practitioners is the need to take people management to the

epicentre of the national economic effort. With so much transformation intent around, what is it that causes it not to work and whose fault is it when it fails? (Bergh, 1995). With all this in mind, one sees the necessity to explore and re-evaluate how corporate leaders are being developed in South African private organisations.

#### 1.1.5. Current approaches to leadership

If one is going to explore the notion of leadership development it is important to do so based on the understanding of the new approaches to leadership that are currently developing, as these have been the emphasis of current leadership development programs. Kreitner and Kinicki (1998) point out how new perspectives of leadership theory have emerged over the past 15 years, variously referred to as “charismatic”, “heroic”, “transformational” or “visionary” leadership. They describe them as competing but related perspectives of leadership and go on to differentiate between these new approaches and the previous ones: The new perspectives differ from the previous leadership theories which are largely transactional. Transactional leadership focuses on the interpersonal transactions between managers and employees. Leaders are seen as engaging in behaviours that maintain a quality interaction between themselves and followers. The two underlying characteristics of transactional leadership are that, firstly, leaders use contingent rewards to motivate employees and secondly, leaders exert corrective action only when subordinates fail to obtain performance goals. In contrast, the new approaches to leadership emphasise “symbolic leader behaviour, visionary and inspirational messages, non-verbal communication, appeal to ideological values, intellectual stimulation of followers by the leader, display of confidence in self and followers, and leader expectations for follower self-sacrifice and for performance beyond the call of duty.” Hence, these approaches are said to be able to produce significant organisational change and results because they ‘transform’ employees to pursue organisational goals in lieu of self-interests.

Robbins (1996) points out that one common theme in the latest approaches to leadership, is that they tend to de-emphasize theoretical complexity and to look at leadership more in the way in which the average layperson views it. This is beneficial, as it means that experts in leadership are able to apply their know-how of the leadership development process without necessarily knowing a vast amount about the technical content of the business. It also means that employees will find it much

easier to understand their own leadership development. As the global environment has become more competitive and dynamic, so top managers throughout the world have realised the need to make changes in their way of operating if their organisations are to survive (Kotter, 1990). As a result many new leadership studies have taken place in recent years. Renowned leadership theorists such as Burns (1978), Bass (1990), Avolio, Waldman and Yammarino (1991), to name but a few, have completed extensive leadership research and as a result a new theory, transformational leadership, has been identified as the most appropriate for contemporary organisations. It addresses the inherent limitations of previous theories in that it provides an holistic view of leadership, as well as a set of universally accepted principles which, if employed, should result in the improved effectiveness of the organisation. It has been known as the 'full-range leadership approach' as it is seen to develop leaders and followers to heightened levels of potential. Based on unique personality characteristics, the leader behaves in a manner which attempts to influence followers to achieve objectives (Ristow, 1997).

Also central to transformational leadership is the fact that the behaviour exhibited by the leader focuses not only on tangible inducements, but more on developing the followers to transcend their own self interests for the good of the group (Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership therefore integrates the Trait, behavioural and situational approaches to leadership, resulting in a more universal approach to the subject. Transformational leadership has four generally accepted main components commonly known as the Four I's of Transformational leadership: 1. idealised influence; idealised attributes and behaviours 2. Inspirational motivation 3. Intellectual stimulation 4. Individualised consideration. As a result researchers such as Bass (1994), Havenga (1995), Dorfling and Engelbrecht (1994) have recognised and argue for the implementation of the transformational leadership theory in South Africa. The transformational leader is said to have influence in every direction - downward with subordinates, laterally with colleagues, upward with superiors, and outward with clients and customers. Thus the leader can change the culture of the organisation (Berry, 1998).

## **1.2. Leadership education and training**

### 1.2.1. A rationale for leadership training

One of the ways in which organisations are attempting to develop leaders is through leadership training workshops. Whilst leadership development is essentially a process, these programs seem to play a large role as a kind of catalyst in the leadership development process. Bass (1990) outlines how training for leadership in any organisation can happen in a variety of ways: on or near a job; coaching by supervisors; training as understudies; planned transfers; special trainee positions or project assignments. Off the job there are workshops, role-playing, simulation games, computer-assisted interaction. Human (1990) points out that although it is true that there exists a body of knowledge applicable to all organisational types, it is also true that no single management development agent, course or even product is value-neutral. He continues saying that our culture, lecturing style, ourselves and the course contents are rich with ideological and value assumptions. Therefore those who design leadership development programmes need to take into consideration issues concerning their own environment. Hence, a good understanding of the nature of the business and the people one is training becomes paramount.

### 1.2.2. The training process

The effectiveness of leadership development programmes in improving leadership performance depends first on identifying what needs improvement and then on demonstrating or helping the trainee discover how to change his or her perceptions, cognitions, attitudes and behaviour. Before any kind of training can occur, the gap between where the organisation is and where it plans to be in terms of its human capacity, needs to be explored. If this does not occur, individuals may be trained in areas they are already competent in, and as result become demotivated by the purposelessness of the training. Latham (1988) illustrates how it is important to identify training needs through organisational analysis. This means that training needs must be linked to corporate strategy. It is the ethical responsibility of the organisation to provide training resulting in a reduction of the obsolescence of employees. The training process needs to be constructed in the same context as the business plan. This is necessary, as the organisation wants to see that through the process it will still maintain a competitive advantage. Training needs tend to differ in accordance to different groups of people. Berryman-Fink (1985) conducted a study on male and female manager's views of communication and training needs of women. It was found that women needed training in assertiveness, confidence building, public speaking and dealing with males. Males needed training in

listening, verbal skills, non-verbal communication, empathy and sensitivity. This research also explores these differing training needs for men and women.

### 1.2.3. Some training models

Latham (1988) outlines how Bandura's (1986) social learning theory can be used in leadership education. Bandura's theory illustrates that people who judge themselves low in self-efficacy have difficulty in coping with environmental demands. They dwell on their personal deficiencies. They imagine potential difficulties as more formidable than they really are. People with high self-efficacy focus their attention and effort on the demands of the situation. Self efficacy is increased when experiences fail to validate fears and when skills acquired allow mastery over situations once felt as threatening. Only as people increase their ability to predict and manage perceived threats do they develop a robust self-assurance that enables them to master subsequent challenges. Self-efficacy can be increased with extrinsic rewards, but as involvement and skills increase, social, symbolic and self-evaluative rewards become incentives and the need for extrinsic reinforcers is reduced. Self-efficacy can also be increased by goal-setting (a basis to judge one's performance); the idea is to give the person difficult goals which are attainable. It is also useful to have training in strategies for making the environment responsive and coping with hostile environments.

Vroom (1997) outlines how behavioural changes require a process of self-discovery and insight by each individual manager. One method of stimulating this process is providing participants with a picture of their leadership style. This picture includes a comparison of one's style with that of others and the situational factors that influence one's willingness to share power with others. When they compare results with each other this can occur in autonomous groups reducing dependency on trainers.

Latham (1988) also outlines a number of other theories used in leadership education. *The leader member exchange (LMX) model* states that interdependence between managers and subordinates is necessary for both the offer and the acceptance of opportunities of growth on the job. The LMX model of leadership was seen as useful by its originators as they believed that the previous theories of leadership were based on an incorrect assumption that the leader behaviour is characterised by a stable or average leadership style. In other words, these models assume a leader treats all

subordinates in about the same way. The LMX model is therefore useful in the South African context where there are a lot of in-group/outgroup dynamics due to polarisation.

In *double loop learning* leaders are trained to overcome the need to defend against embarrassment or threat, at individual, small group, inter-group or organisational level. This is seen as preventing learning and unproductive. Kaplan et al (1985) show how *Job Simulation* is useful as it avoids reliance on questionnaires and appropriates the natural setting. These models are also useful in that, in a guided environment, they give the proteges the opportunity to reflect on their own behaviour. As they see their own behaviour in relation to the idealised attributes, there is greater motivation to change.

### **1.3. Leadership development of blacks and women in the South African context**

#### **1.3.1. Leadership development and race relations**

The ingroup/outgroup theory explains some of the issues about race relations in South African organisations. Tajfel (1978) suggested that when members of a group interact with members of another group, they compare themselves on a number of valued dimensions with this other group. These inter-group social comparisons will lead group members to search for certain characteristics of their own group that will allow them to differentiate themselves favourably from the outgroup. Skin colour and accent are an example of this (Vrij & Winkel, 1994). Vrij and Winkel (1994) point out that speech style and spoken fluency between ethnic groups are much neglected as a way of explaining negative assessment of ethnic groups. As this is an issue of relevance in South Africa, one can see why it is important for organisations to ensure that they have a culture which embraces people beyond skin colour and accent. Such an embracement can help to create different informal groups within the organisation. Dealing with such ingroup/outgroup dynamics becomes significant because, inevitably some of the groups will have more 'power' than the others and this power will be based on a common characteristic such as skin colour or accent. Because leadership development is influenced by such power dynamics, those who are not in such in-groups may have their leadership development affected.

Race relations can also lead to informal groups within the organisations. These groups have differing power, hence this ultimately affects leadership development. Richard Day (cited in Human, 1990) states that enabling black people and women to achieve their economic aspirations through non-discriminatory employee development programmes has been identified as a crucial component of long-term economic development in South Africa. He also maintains that the attitudes of white male managers towards the abilities of black people and women are a major determinant of the effectiveness of leadership development programmes aimed at black people and women. Day (cited in Human, 1990) adds that the success of leadership development of previously excluded groups depends on the group, who for the most part, still believe that they are more capable because they are white and male. He also found that in terms of inherent capabilities and an equitable climate white male MBA students are more positive in their attitudes towards white women than black people: The latter were still regarded as less assertive and objective than women, less able to contribute to overall organisational goals, less self confident, less competitive, less mathematically inclined and less capable of developing managerial skills. Black people competing with whites for access to some organisations are at a disadvantage, not only because they are not white but also because they are generally perceived as deficient in many of the qualities regarded as necessary for good performance (Human, 1988). Kanter (1977) found that in American organisations, low performance of minorities was partly due to pressure and the dominant group exaggerating difference according to stereotypes. Previous empirical research suggests that many white male managers in South African organisations regard women as less capable than white males, and black people as inherently less capable (Human & Allie, 1988). This is significant as it is white males that are predominantly in positions of power in organisations, and hence, their perceptions of their subordinates have strong repercussions on their leadership development.

Iron and Moore (1985) also found that in the banking industry in the United States a number of structural factors had an impact on blacks in organisations; such as blacks not knowing what is going on in the organisation because they were not part of the network and the inability to get a mentor. In addition, as a result of a United States based exploration of racism and sexism in the workplace, Fernandez (1981) pointed out that there is a strong perception that minorities in America are excluded from informal work groups. Hence, to the extent that organisational structures and practices follow models based solely on how white men develop, women and minorities are

disadvantaged (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1997). It therefore becomes paramount that leadership development endeavours are a reflection of all of the needs, characteristics and issues of the proteges that are being developed. It also becomes necessary for the organisational culture to be such that it is inclusive as opposed to catering only for the dominant group.

Part of leadership development in South Africa will be proactively managing diversity. If blacks do not resolve conflicts that involve themselves or their area, they are likely to be blamed for the conflict (Dickens & Dickens, 1982). Therefore, blacks need skills at managing racism and at managing their own rage over the racism they encounter (Cox & Nkomo, 1986).

### 1.3.2. Leadership development and women

Berry (1998) points out how people still perceive women as not having the capacities for leadership. However, a recent review has shown that overall women leaders are as effective as men (Eagley, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). Male and female group members who show masculine gender role characteristics are more likely to emerge as leaders of the group (Goktepe & Schneier, 1989; Kent & Moss, 1994). Powell and Butterfield (1989) highlight another view which is that because there are only a few women in organisations it is male-dominated and females have to adapt or die. However, Watson (1988) points out that "acting like a man" can only help so much; the woman manager who attempts to succeed by taking on masculine attributes must show enough power to be taken seriously but not enough to violate our cultural stereotypes about aggressive females. Watson (1988) also found that some masculine traits such as dominance do not work as well for females as they do for males. This seems to imply that men and women are judged as more effective when they are in-role and less effective when they occupy positions that were defined for the opposite sex (Eagley et al., 1995). Research that shows a difference in standards of leadership due to the gender of the leader suggests that leaders are being evaluated by an implicit theory, where the difference between male and female leaders would be expected to have less to do with behavioural differences than how people think male and female leaders should behave (Berry, 1998). Hence, one of the current challenges for leadership development strategies is to consider some of the issues facing black women, which are often a combination of sexism and racism.

## 1.4. Elements of leadership development

#### 1.4.1. Leadership development and change

With the numerous changes occurring in this country, adapting to change will be instrumental in South Africa, as Manning (1997, p.197) points out:

South African firms, without exception will have to radically change their view of people, the way they employ them, and the way they tap into their potential. South African managers need to wake up fast to the new realities, and to their own shortcomings.

This is so because of the vast changes occurring in the demographics of organisations and also in the restructuring of the workplace due to technology and down-sizing. Leaders are agents of change - people whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership therefore occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group (Bass, 1990). If leadership development is to occur, it seems as if employees need to be given the power to bring about change. A lack of this may be due to what Charlton (1992) describes as perceived powerlessness to bring change. Charlton (1992) adds that, alternatively, the 'expandable pie' concept of power, giving power to get power, leads to greater reciprocity of influence. The leader and the follower are willing to be mutually influenced by one another (Charlton, 1992).

Picken and Dess (1997) have emphasised the powerful influence of organisational culture on the activities of organisations and their performance. They add that in a variety of ways it is the leaders who carry the organisational culture. Powerful organisational cultures do not remain in place without strong commitment - both words and deeds, by leaders throughout the organisation (Picken & Dess, 1997). A characteristic of an organisation with longevity is that it has a leadership which is sensitive to the environment and can act upon change (De Geus & Ariel, 1996). Bearing in mind the vast shortage of such leaders in South Africa, Mol (1990) suggests that there are many people in leadership positions but very few leaders. Hence, it is not an issue of not having enough managers within organisations, but it is more an issue of having a lot of managers who are underdeveloped in terms of leadership. Changes in the business environment today have resulted in an increasing need for leadership in more jobs and have resulted in the increase in the challenges faced by leadership (Kotter, 1988). Often subordinates have been blamed for organisational failure, yet all forms of corporate collapse have deep roots in the hidden imperfections and deficiencies of corporate leaders (Freemantle, 1992).

If leaders are to change their organisations, a central aspect of this is to change the organisation's culture. When one speaks of changing a culture it appears impossible, but although national cultures change only very slowly if at all; organisational cultures may be consciously changed. (Hofstede, 1997). This can come about by leaders having the ability to challenge and change the perceptions of their employees. Feelings and perceptions of change are a function of the culture, structure, informal relationships of an organisation and how it relates to its environment (Kaplan, 1994). Therefore it is this socio-cultural context that will influence individual perceptions of leadership development in a changing environment. These perceptions will in turn have implications for South African organisations' approach to leadership development. Perceptions of leaders are important as subordinates are more likely to model their own leadership style on that of their superiors if they perceive their immediate supervisors to be successful and competent (Bass, 1990). Hence, any study of change and development in an organisation has to do also with the study of perceptions of leaders and employees, concerning the continual changes they experience in their relationships.

A growing issue of concern in South Africa is the high number of technological changes and their educational implications. The adage that knowledge is power has particular relevance for supervisors faced with new technologies. To the extent that first level supervisors lack the technological expertise to make credible pronouncements about the usefulness or appropriateness of a new technology, they may lose some of their credibility and power in their work groups (Vecchio & Zelesny, 1997). Therefore, leadership development and training amidst such turbulence becomes all the more necessary.

#### 1.4.2. Leadership development and relationships with superiors

An extensive industry wide study found that between 75 - 90% of the successful manager's time was spent on interpersonal activities. Managers preferred an active, hands-on orientation reacting to the initiatives and needs of others whilst motivating people in a relatively unstructured way. (Kotter, 1988). This points toward the notion that relationships with one's superiors are a key factor in one's leadership development within an organisation. Hofmeyer (1989) points out that too many

advancement programmes consist of training programmes which candidates are asked to attend, yet most of what a person learns at work is on the job, particularly from a superior. The key to any developmental program is the support and attitude of the line manager, who has the power to crush or empower trainees - the problem has been that as many as 80% of managers see people as incompetent and therefore evoke a self-fulfilling prophecy of responding to this incompetence (Hall, 1990). Many companies have found out the hard way that an essential critical success criteria underpinning equal opportunity is the visible support of top management (Charlton, 1992). The relationship between superiors and subordinates is also significant in that motivation to learn leadership skills is influenced by bosses' extent of promoting and supporting training activities (Yukl, 1998 ). Relationships between superiors and subordinates also need to focus on bottom-line issues, and for this reason Casimir and Keats (1996) outline how it is well documented that most cultural groups prefer a leader who successfully addresses both group productivity and harmony. Hence, leadership development strategies need not only focus on people development whilst forsaking the maintenance of a competitive advantage in terms of deliverables. This is necessary as any leader finds fulfilment in high productivity. Therefore, a dichotomy need not be created between harmony and productivity, and leaders need to communicate this. Hence, a major element in superior's relationship with subordinates involves enhancing their ability to be productive

It is important to note that the relationship between subordinates and superiors is something which subordinates can proactively manage. Gabarro and Kotter (1997) state that managing your boss requires an understanding of the boss and his or her context, as well as your own situation. At minimum one needs to appreciate one's boss' goals, pressures (especially from his or her own boss and others at the same level), strengths and weaknesses, and blind spots. In addition to this Berry (1998) also points out that despite the fact that there has always been a focus on the influence a leader has on a group, upward influence from the group can change the leader's behaviour and help members accomplish goals. Thacker and Wayne (1995) found that neither ingratiation nor assertiveness by subordinates in organisations were effective, but rational persuasion did contribute to an impression of promotability. Deluga and Perry (1991) found that there was a difference in tactics used by in-group and out-group. The in-group members were more likely to report that their influence attempts were effective, they were less likely to use coalition forming, assertiveness, and appeals to higher authority. This notion of in-group and out-group membership (where the in-group

refers to those closer to the superiors) seems to affect leadership development considerably. The notion of upward influence becomes significant especially when one is attempting to be proactive about one's promotion or when one's development is being blocked by one's immediate boss. Hui (1990) states that although Hofstede's (1980) conceptualisation of the individualism - collectivism framework is useful in that it provides a simple way of classifying cultures - it mistakenly assumes that collectivists treat most people alike. Hence, even in a collectivist culture one can find in-groups and out-groups as subordinates are not all treated alike by superiors. Hui (1990) argues that collectivism is target specific in that members of collectivistic cultures favour certain in-groups such as family and friends. One could argue that this dynamic is very evident amongst individuals in Third World Africa. Therefore, there may be implications in terms of the relationships black leaders have with subordinates. Collectivists belong to a small number of stable in-groups that play a central role in their lives, whereas individualists belong to many in-groups that exert little influence on their lives. When in-group goals and personal goals clash, in-group goals take precedence over personal goals for collectivists but not for individualists. If what Hui (1990) proposes is true, then there would be significant implications for leadership development in organisations where there are in-groups and out-groups based on race. The group which the leaders who have the influence to promote belong to becomes an issue of importance.

The social exchange within the in-group dyad between leader and subordinate allows the subordinate to assume more responsibility and in return receive more recognition and support from the leader. The leader benefits from the members work and receives the member's loyalty and respect. In-group exchange can result in greater overall performance and worker satisfaction with leader. Subordinates who are extravert and have attitudes similar to the leader's are likely to be in the in-group (Phillips & Bedeian, 1994). Subordinates also have an influence on leaders in that they may have a leader prototype in the form of specific characteristics which have developed over their experiences of what a leader ought to be like. Leaders who are in their supervisor's out-group may find it difficult to access and provide sufficient special rewards and benefits to their in-groups so as to succeed in their attempts at implementing new technology (Vecchio & Zelensy, 1997). Hence, one's leadership development is influenced to a large extent by whether one is in the superior's in-group or out-group.

Another major aspect in subordinate/superior relationships is that of participation versus direction. Yukl (1998) points out that one of the difficulties bosses face is in trying to find a balance between being overprotective and giving autonomy. Some subordinates feel that bosses do not give them the authority to accomplish the responsibilities which have been given. Superiors, at times may believe they are delegating when it is seen as abdication by subordinates (Bass, 1990). Participation has been seen to be problematic when it is pushed for even when it is not needed; this is seen as time wasting (Wright, 1984). Some bosses risk participative decision-making only when a high quality solution is not needed; this can also be viewed negatively by subordinates (Bass,1990). Self-confidence and a personal sense of identity are likely to have a strong effect on a leader's tendencies to be directive or participative (Bass & Barrett, 1981). If the power of leaders is suddenly increased in an experiment, the amount the leaders can be directive is also increased, and, in fact, the leaders do tend to increase their directiveness (Shiflett, 1973). It was also found that highly authoritarian personalities wanted powerful, prestigious leaders who would strongly direct them (Bass, 1990). Yukl (1998) also illustrates how many bosses fail to do the things necessary to facilitate subordinates development of leadership skills. Leadership development is hindered if the following occur: bosses are preoccupied with immediate crises or their own career advancement; bosses are insecure because they see subordinates as potential competitors; if they see mistakes as personal failures as opposed to learning experiences; Freemantle (1992) adds that passive resistance occurs when bosses become immersed in their own thing. Boon (1996) outlines how the guidance of a respected colleague is often easier to accept than that of senior leaders or managers which may be regarded as suspect. Therefore, it is quite clear that this superior/subordinate relationship needs to be managed well as there has already been a history of adversarial relationships in the workplace in South Africa.

#### 1.4.3. Leadership development and responsibility

The first leadership challenge for all human beings is to lead themselves (Boon, 1996). Courage is something that people respect and because they respect it, they listen to and are guided by the behaviour of courageous people (Boon, 1996). Block (1993) supports the notion that subordinates

are responsible for their own development proposing that one of the cornerstones of partnership is joint accountability. He states that bosses are no longer responsible for the morale, learning, or career of their subordinates. They resign their care-taking role towards their subordinates. If people want the freedom that partnership offers, the price of that freedom is to take personal accountability for the success and failure of our (the organisation's) unit and our community. As Robert Goizueta, chairman of the Coca Cola Company explains:

We obviously have little control over global trends, currency fluctuations and devaluations, natural disasters, political upheavals, social unrest, bad weather or schizophrenic stock markets. We do, however, have complete control over our own behaviour (Manning, 1997, p.9).

A sense of responsibility seems to be a characteristic of effective leaders. Berry (1998) points out how new studies which have been carried out (focussing on the leader's initiative, responsibility, task orientation and need for achievement) have found that leaders are different from group members in a number of ways. Leaders were found to be more persuasive and more willing to accept the consequences of their decisions (Bass, 1981). Berry (1998) suggests that the different effect similar programs have is possibly due to the manner of construction of the programs, suggesting that the models should also suggest what not to do and not only what to do. It seems as if part of developing a sense of responsibility lies in creating an environment where leaders do not parent adults. Charlton (1992) states how leadership involves a paradigm shift from viewing employees as children to creating adult expectations in an environment which offers meaningful work and involvement as the way to access human potential.

Singer (1991) quotes research where low performing students had almost no sense of their own future. Their future was strictly short-term and they believed the ability to shape it was in the hands of fate. On the other hand successful students had a much greater personal sense of control over their future. They thought in time horizons of 5-10 years ahead. Interestingly, I.Q. and family background were not indicators of success. The key differentiator was a profound and positive vision of their future. Again, there is a sense of taking responsibility.

#### 1.4.4. Leadership development and learning

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) summarise recent thinking by pointing out that leadership competence can be learnt, but the question is the willingness of the people to learn to become adaptable. It seems as if a central part of leadership development is learning and creating an environment where others learn. Senge (1991) states that a leader adopts the active role of teacher and creates a learning culture. This process of learning has been described by South African executives in Kelly's (1986) research. Participants in this research commented that:

I had to learn to be more sensitive in my dealings with people.

I learnt that you can't play around with people as if they're pawns. If somehow a trust relationship breaks, you can't easily fix it.

Being self-taught, I'm a very hands-on manager. I had to learn to allow them people to do it their own way. I had to learn to allow them to make their own mistakes.

Leaders face the challenge of being able to continue to receive negative feedback from their colleagues despite their rise in status. It is also a challenge for them to avoid becoming isolated from below. Leadership development helps rising executives become conscious of such tensions, otherwise their rising status may inhibit continued learning (Kaplan, Drath & Kofodimos, 1985). Bryson and Kelly (1978) state that ideally one should learn to be a leader by receiving appropriate feedback while serving as a leader; one should be promoted to higher levels of leadership responsibilities because of one's past performance as a leader and one's promise of future performance. Education for leadership occurs in the context of the current stage of development in which the leader is found (Bass, 1990).

#### 1.4.5. Leadership development and power

In recent years, researchers have outlined the importance of power analysis which recognises the reciprocal and mutually transformative dimensions of power interaction even in situations of considerable inequality. It also entails attention to the way many institutions are organised around professional expertise and information resources, and challenged by assertions of communal authority, or moral appeal by dispossessed and powerless groups. Because leadership has to do with "power-bases", studying leadership development necessitates the exploration of power dynamics.

A key role of leaders appears to be the ability to share power, and in so doing, empower subordinates. This seems to occur partly through continuous interaction with one's subordinates. Several key insights emerged from some South African research by Gail Kelly on the skills necessary for CEO's success and the process whereby these can be cultivated. The most significant of these relates to the importance, from the CEO's point of view, of being in touch with one's people - of being able to communicate with them, empower them and draw them in behind one. Another important factor was the ability to not only cope with change but also to initiate change.

Charlton (1992) points out that the acid test of leadership is the presence of empowered people in organisations. Empowerment in turn depends on the belief that 'I can begin to create my own future'. This in turn presupposes an internal locus of control which places responsibility squarely on 'my shoulders' rather than externalising responsibility for change and blaming others - both below and above you in the organisation. This also comes about largely through interaction, as Charlton (1992) argues that the primary reason for loss of credibility amongst leadership is that it is insensitive to its constituents. Ian Macrae of Eskom (cited in Charlton, 1992) believes that a critical ingredient in his own leadership ability was 'support from my superior who expressed confidence in me and space to fulfil my responsibilities'. Research into effective managerial competencies in South Africa by Lapinsky (1990) points out the importance of effective feedback to subordinates, while at the same time allowing individuals to take personal responsibility for making changes and testing their effectiveness. An example from Lapinsky's (1990) research illustrates this empowerment process:

I took on her development and I encouraged her to develop her job. I regraded the job and it came out as far bigger job than the traditional job. She is now an integral part of the business...I have started looking at giving people additional responsibilities. I am growing their jobs within international and local standards. The carrot I am offering them is to develop within their jobs with clear standards of performance. The benefit is obviously also to the business.

## **1.5. Leadership development and cultural contexts**

### 1.5.1. Contextualisation of leadership development

To assume that outsiders can develop a country using so-called modern management techniques and theories has proven deplorable arrogance (Hofstede, 1997). Hofstede (1997), speaking of an article published in 1980 entitled, "Do American Theories Apply abroad?" argued, with empirical support, that generally accepted American theories like those of Maslow, Herzberg, McClelland, Vroom, McGregor, Likert, Blake and Mouton may not, or only very partly, apply outside the borders of their country of origin. Hofstede (1997) goes on to outline some differences between major cultures which have resulted in differences in organisational cultures and hence approaches to leadership:

It seems as if different nations vary in their values and hence also differ in what is held in high regard. This also then influences who people will look up to as leader. Hofstede (1997) gives a number of examples to outline such differences: In the United States, managers are cultural heroes yet in Germany, engineers are; hence in Germany there is not even an emphasis on business management schools but rather on the production role and apprenticeships. In Japan there is a permanent worker group, which is paid according to seniority as opposed to position. They are therefore controlled more by peer group decisions as opposed to the manager. On the other hand the United States culture profile is reflected in the American management theories which emphasise market processes, focus on managers as opposed to workers (such as in Japan), and emphasise the individual.

In France there is a resistance to the idea of the matrix organisation. Individuals such as the great French thinker, Fayol, could not understand Frederick Taylor's (the father of scientific management) denial of the unity of command principle and the notion that an employee could report to two different bosses. On the other hand, the Dutch place a very high emphasis on consensus whilst in the United States leadership is often associated with assertiveness. Hence in Holland leadership presupposes modesty (despite at times time consuming ritual consultations and the pretence of such modesty). Leadership strategies will also differ in overseas Chinese firms, which tend to be family owned, where there is centralised decision-making. The size is kept small by assumed lack of loyalty of non-family members.

Hofstede (1997) argues that, at best, one can hope for a dialogue between equals with the locals, in which the Western partner acts as the expert in Western technology and the local partner as the expert in local culture, habits and feelings. Hofmeyer (cited in Human,1990) adds to this by pointing out how the educational component of leadership development differs from country to country and needs to be adapted to the South African context by focussing on management of the change process; how change takes place and how it is resisted. It is essential that transformation processes are either South African originated or South African customised amidst the exposure to a whole variety of imported leadership development materials (Bergh, 1995). Unfortunately, training and learning options have, for some time now, become fairly standard, creating a comfort zone of conventional wisdom where programmes are selected simply because they have been shown to work (Eagley, 1995). Hui comments on the relationship between the effective sustainability of leadership styles and socio-cultural context (cited in Brislin, 1990). Thus, he argues that different contexts will necessitate different leadership styles and different approaches to leadership development. Mitchell and Foa (cited in Bass,1990) found that an understanding of the local cultural context becomes important as leaders have been rated more effective when they have been trained in the norms of the followers. Unless leaders' perceptions of the challenges they face are addressed, only symptoms of current leadership problems will be treated and not the underlying problems (Human & Bowmaker-Falconer, 1992). If nothing else, the general lack of success in economic development of other countries should be sufficient argument to doubt the validity of Western management theories in non-Western environments. (Hofstede, 1997).

Berry (1998) outlines how it is important for an overseas company to learn about what a host country's people think about leadership. For example in Puerto Rico, turnover of staff increased because participative management was seen as a sign of mismanagement (Marrow, 1964). More recently, in a study by Ejiogu (1983) set in Nigeria, it was found that employees did not find participation that important but performed better under more directive and autocratic supervisors. Hence, one's individual values and culture influence the nature of one's leadership development.

Casimir and Keats (1996) discuss the following insights on multi-cultural leadership: Leaders who value having close relations with subordinates could be expected to employ a leadership style different from that of leaders who do not value this. Subordinates from different cultures prefer

different leadership styles because they expect different things from their leader. In Australia, Chinese middle managers may have a perception of leadership which is somewhat collectivist and may sit awkwardly with Australian individualistic values. Chinese middle managers appeared to value a high level of maintenance because of their high need for harmony. Other researchers also suggested that the transferability of the Japanese leadership development model to Singapore is neither feasible nor desirable. Singaporeans are highly competitive and individualistic. This works against the Japanese values of “groupism”. Because Singaporeans are consistently looking for opportunities to better themselves, they are highly mobile, making voluntary turnover rates high and the emphasis on group values low. Hence, if leadership development processes are to be effectively implemented, organisations need to be aware of the prevailing cultural context in which they are located. Therefore, this research explores the dynamics of leadership development in light of the uniqueness of the broader South African context. Boon (1996) postulates that there is an “African Way” for leadership to occur: In the process of interactive leadership, one works hard at breaking down barriers between people and between classes. This is physically reflected in ‘umhlanganos’ (meetings) where each person, regardless of rank, has the same opportunity to contribute their opinion, and to encourage or even stimulate discipline of an individual or the group (Boon,1996). While this may seem advantageous, proposing a new idea that does not originate from one’s group may be viewed as selfish in a relatively collectivist culture (Hornstein, 1986). In one study, individuals who were strongly bicultural (that is who understand and respond favourably to two different cultures) showed more leadership behaviour in mixed cultural groups than those who were low on this attribute (Garza, Romero, Cox & Ramirez, 1982). This strength would be significant for a lot of black executives of whom most, if not all, have been exposed to more than one culture.

#### 1.5.2. Differences in leader/follower dynamics

Leaders from different cultures exhibit noticeably different behavioural patterns (Tayeb, 1988). Casimir and Keats (1996) provide the argument that people pursue different goals for different reasons therefore leaders from different cultures might favour certain leadership practices because such practices may be perceived as indicators of certain desirable qualities. For example in some cultures the prevalent view is that most situations require a leader who is decisive and powerful while in other cultures it may be a consultative leader who is required. Similarly, subordinates from different cultures may be used to acting a certain way because such behaviour are seen as indicators

of certain desirable personal qualities (e.g. avoiding disagreement with one's leader can be seen as a sign of respect by some but servility by others).

### 1.5.3. A comparison with Zimbabwe

A useful area to explore when looking at cultural contexts is whether the leadership development issues facing South African private organisations are unique to South Africa or are there any patterns which have already been experienced by a country which has had a similar historical legacy. For this reason, Zimbabwe makes a useful point of comparison. In a study on the redressing of racial and gender imbalances in the Zimbabwean labour market, Brigid Strachan (1993) outlines a variety of prevailing attitudes amongst executives which are very similar to those in South Africa:

In terms of leadership development, the first positions to be Africanised in Zimbabwe were labour relations, public relations and marketing. This is because these were seen to be the interface between management and labour, and management and the community. In production, finance and general administration, black advancement has been slower, partly due to the fact that these positions lead to top management and are concerned with overall control and functioning of the company (Strachan, 1993). This can be compared to issues of current concern in South Africa, such as glass ceilings where blacks and women find themselves in positions where there is no scope for promotion, and no power to bring organisational change. This marginalisation within organisations is difficult to address as blacks are sometimes put into marketing, labour relations, and marketing departments because of their language skills. Hence, it becomes difficult to draw the line between marginalisation of certain departments and the genuine utilisation of the expertise of a particular group. Nevertheless, a common site in both Zimbabwe and South Africa has been ethnically homogenous departments within organisations.

Strachan (1993) goes on to describe how, after 1980 many whites were incorporated into the private sector from the army, the civil service and the police without appropriate "experience" although the private sector maintained that they were "skilled and experienced administrators". Such white appointees did sometimes become obstacles to change, often not educated with progressive or

new management practices. Currently in South Africa, leaders, as change agents, also face the challenge of those who block change through not embracing new practices, yet still being in the organisations due to “experience”. Hence, there appears to be a similar conflict between ‘the old school’ and ‘the new school’.

Black managers in Zimbabwe expressed the view that there was a lack of appreciation and understanding of African culture, and a common assumption that everything to do with ‘white’ culture is right. However, it was also evident that there was a “company” culture, which black management often underestimated the importance of absorbing if they wished to succeed in the organisation. There is a similar catch 22 situation that is present in South Africa today, where blacks want their cultures recognised and yet at the same time are aspiring to conform to organisational cultures which tend to be white dominated) in order to gain promotion. This is a tension which black people pursuing leadership face today.

Organisational commitment was also seen as a premise for recruitment and promotion in Zimbabwe. Strachan (1993) found that with the emigration of some 50% of the white population many vacancies were created. Whilst initially these were filled by whites, this is no longer the case. Many young whites are leaving Zimbabwe believing there is no future for them due to their racial group. New recruits are therefore in the majority black as many companies prefer to train young blacks whom they know will stay in the country, rather than whites who may gain experience and leave.

One of the areas where Zimbabwe differs from South Africa is in the government’s caution in black advancement in the Private Sector. Government did not want to accelerate the flight of skilled whites and black advancement in the private sector would create a black middle class which was contradictory to the development of socialism. Hence, for the first few years after independence there was rapid advancement for whites who filled the vacancies that became available due to emigration. However, currently, in South Africa, there is a growing black middle class and no indication that government is displeased with this. This means that the nature of government intervention in the advancement of blacks in private organisations differs, despite the fact that there has been concern about ‘white flight’ in both countries.

Hence, it is useful for South Africa to take into consideration what has occurred in surrounding countries, as this will help in understanding the nature of leadership development in private organisations, and also serve as warnings not to make similar mistakes.

## **1.6. Creating a culture for leadership development**

Yukl (1998) outlines a number of factors which influence the degree to which there will be a culture of leadership development in organisations. These are: the prevailing attitudes and values about development; the degree to which individual learning is regarded as highly important for organisational effectiveness; the use of symbols and slogans that embody values such as experimentation, flexibility, adaptation, self-development, continuous learning and innovation.

Kotter (1997) points out that leaders almost always have had opportunities during their twenties and thirties to actually try to lead, to take a risk, and to learn from both triumph and failures. Such learning seems essential in developing a wide range of leadership skills and perspectives. Kotter (1997) outlines the following as being important for creating an atmosphere for leadership development:

- a lengthy general management course
- strong informal networks needed to support multiple leadership initiatives
- the creation of challenging opportunities for relatively young employees (for many organisations decentralisation is the key).
- encouraging managers to participate in these activities. Well-led businesses tend to recognise and reward people who successfully develop leaders.
- institutionalising a leadership-centred culture is the ultimate act of leadership.

An organisational culture with mentorship as an integral part of it has also been found to be helpful for leadership development. Mentors may also benefit from the mentoring experience because it is likely to increase their job satisfaction and help them develop their own leadership skills. Turban and

Dougherty (1994) found that proteges were more likely to initiate mentoring relationships and get more mentoring if they had high emotional stability, internal locus of control orientation, and self-monitoring. This culture of leadership development which involves mentoring needs to be communicated by top management, as Gail Kelly's (1986) research found that CEOs had superb communication skills both on interpersonal and organisational levels.

Some examples of this are comments such as:

I make myself available to my executives immediately for business and private needs.

My days are totally unstructured - they involve a few meetings and appointments and a lot of walking about and chatting to people at all levels. I believe in heavy networking.

I spend the greatest portion of my day moving around and talking to people, we are a great company for visible management.

Hence, it is only through such interaction that a culture of mentoring and, ultimately, leadership development can be developed.

### **1.7. Implementation strategies**

Charlton (1992) outlines some implementation strategies which can be carried out

1. To start developing, reorganising and rewarding leadership as part of a broad educational strategy.
2. To make human skills and people management an integral part of every university or post matric learning process.
3. Trainers, educators, line managers, professionals of any persuasion need to commit themselves to become competent trainers of leadership (with standards of excellence maintained).
4. To conduct extensive research that focuses on a broader leadership sample together with researching the leaders role in empowerment, equal opportunity, culture and motivation - in a way that lends itself to practical application
5. To make use of leadership development programs that are tried-and-tested and shared, particularly in a Third World context.
6. To establish centres of learning for leadership, catering for a variety of students from political, business, cultural, religious and even sporting organisations - with a commitment to follow-up and

implementation of competencies.

In addition to outlining research findings on major aspects of leadership development, this literature review has illustrated that it is essential to have an understanding of leadership development processes in different cultural contexts, specifically in the South African context. The literature review has outlined some major differences in how leadership development is perceived across cultures. The literature review has made it clear that South African organisations have key features about them as a result of the country's broader legacy of apartheid. Some major factors influencing leadership development have been described. These have included the relationships between subordinates and superiors. Such relationships have elements in them that can either enhance or inhibit the process of leadership development. The literature review has also outlined some individual attributes which help to create a culture of leadership development. This includes a variety of skills, such as effective communication and sharing of power. The importance of training programs was also mentioned, and the role of a variety of training models was highlighted. As a result of this literature review, there should be a clearer notion of the difference between management and leadership and the nature of leadership development, in that it is ultimately a process as opposed to a variety of programs. It was also argued that there is a growing need for leadership development and understanding the new approaches to leadership was seen as part of the solution. For there to be any effective leadership development an exploration needs to be carried out on the issues mentioned above. Hence, this research explores some of the status quo in leadership development, in an attempt to highlight some of the strengths and weaknesses of this process in South African. The following chapter outlines how the current research was carried out.

## Chapter 2

### Methodology

#### 2.1. Research Question

This study aims to explore black organisational leaders' perceptions of the challenges and constraints of leadership development in the South African context. It includes the following sub-questions.

1. What are the capabilities and vulnerabilities associated with the current leadership development processes?
2. As black leaders have been developed how has this affected their perception of themselves, their relationships and their organisations.

#### **2.2. The qualitative paradigm**

Operating in a qualitative paradigm has been found to be useful when complex hypotheses are involved (Bass, 1990). The researcher found it useful using qualitative methods as this research explored complex dynamics of human behaviour, as signified by the depth of the research questions. Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth and Keil (1988) found in their research on project leaders that the use of qualitative methods also makes room to illustrate a wider array of contextual variables. Such variables are grounded in people's experiences and, therefore, are more accessible to leaders and researchers alike (Bass, 1990).

In addition to this, the search for meaning and significance in the behaviours of leaders and their followers, as well as related events, is aided by qualitative research (Van Maanen, 1979). The actions of people can be explained in terms of the total context in which they occur instead of the isolated or manipulated elements within the situation (Smith, 1975).

Whilst a lot of qualitative research begins with deductions from theory (Orpen, 1987), this research depends more on analytic inductions. Thus, movement is a circular process involving the search for and collection of specific data, the development of crude hypothesis, and then the examination of the data (or new data) to see how well the inferred hypotheses fit the data (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). In this research, the crude hypotheses were developed implicitly through the different categorisations in the coding as shown below. Orpen (1987) argues that more of such qualitative study is needed and is likely to find its way into the study of leadership as the limitations of quantitative methods in dealing with organisational complexities become increasingly apparent. In addition to this, McCall and Lombardo (1978) advocated more leadership research using ethnographic methods of unstatistical naturalists to detect the subtleties and nuances involved in the leadership process. Greater attention needs to be paid to unconscious motives that affect the leaders' and followers' perspectives (Bass, 1990). Often, qualitative research can deal better with the art and craft in leadership than can the more objective quantitative analysis (ibid, 1990).

### **2.3. Sampling**

For the purpose of this research four participants were selected from three different private organisations in an urban area. The four participants provided a fair range of views on the issue as well as staying within the scope of an exploratory study. Participants were selected using a criterion-based convenience sampling approach. The criteria for selection were that they were organisational leaders in top or middle management. The additional fourth participant headed an organisation in Zimbabwe and provided a useful benchmark for comparison. This was useful to provide data on a neighbouring country which has experienced a similar process of transition. Two of the participants were from the same organisation and of different gender; this also enriched the data in that comparisons could be made between them along gender lines. Participants were from three different private organisations so that the data would become richer with different experiences of the individuals, and there was the opportunity to explore how the industries differed, as this would perhaps affect leadership development. All the participants were black, to explore how changes in policy and resultant changes in private sector business have had an effect on black leadership development. All participants were informed of the details and aims of the research, and their informed consent was obtained for their participation.

#### **2.4. Data collection.**

Each participant was interviewed individually with the aim of obtaining an in-depth exploration of their perceptions of challenges and constraints of leadership development in South Africa. Each interview was conducted in three phases similar to Seidman's (1991) approach (see Appendix 1). The first phase accessed the participants' own leadership development path, that is the participant reconstructed the constitutive events in their past (Seidman, 1991). The second phase of the interview addressed the current challenges faced by the participant, in relation to leadership development. In the final phase of the interview participants were asked to reflect on their own experiences and current challenges and constraints expressed in the earlier phases. In these interviews participants were asked specific questions using an interview guide (see appendix 1) developed from the research questions and the literature review. From these in-depth interviews one could see how the participant's experience interacted with powerful social and organisational forces that pervaded the contexts in which they live and work (Seidman, 1991). The interviews were conducted in English. Only one of the interviews was audio taped. The other participants felt more comfortable without a tape-recorder, hence the researcher took notes instead.

Seidman's (1991) three-interview approach was not used entirely as the researcher did not conduct three separate interviews for each participant, but instead merged them into one long one. This was for a number of reasons: Firstly, the participants were giving up part of their working-time, therefore the interviews could not be unnecessarily prolonged. In addition to this, the participants did not rigidly keep to the different phases set out by the researcher, and for this reason it was not essential that there were three different interviews.

#### **2.5. Data analysis**

The transcribed interviews were analysed by looking for common themes and examining their inter-relatedness. Patton's (1990) method of content analysis was used. This involved articulating coherent themes and patterns in the data, and identifying excerpts from the interviews as examples of the underlying concept. For example, a code which surfaced was *affirmation*, as shown in the

example below. This was then linked to other related codes, such as *recognition from the boss*. Together these would begin to create a theme which could be called *recognition*.

The researcher read through the transcriptions while writing comments (memos) in the margins indicating what could be done with different parts of the data (Patton, 1990). Open coding was used. This means the researcher located themes and assigned initial codes or labels in a first attempt to condense the mass of data into categories (Patton, 1990). The researcher was open to creating new themes and to changing these initial codes in subsequent analyses. The themes were at a low level of abstraction and came from the researcher's initial question, terms used in literature, terms used by members in the social setting, or new thoughts stimulated by the data. For example, the researcher would recognise how affirmation and recognition would relate to promotion and so a new theme would emerge concerning how training programs were not just a source of intellectual stimulation but also of affirmation. *Affirmation* would then also be linked to other themes which were emerging, such as *job satisfaction*. Hence, new themes would emerge as they were linked up to each other. Some codes would surface under a variety of themes. For example, the code *mentorship/coaching* would fall under the theme of *leadership development and women* and also *new approaches to leadership*. Open coding also extended to analytic notes or memos that the researcher wrote to himself.

After open coding the researcher made a list of themes. This helped him see the emerging themes at a glance. It stimulated the researcher to find themes in future open-coding. The researcher used the list to build a universe of all themes in the study, which he was open to recognise, sort, combine, discard or extend for further analysis (Neuman, 1997). Making such a list of themes helped the researcher when it came to comparing the lists across the transcriptions and seeing which ones could be merged into the same theme.

Axial coding occurred during the second pass through the data. In this phase of the analysis the researcher focused more on the initially coded themes than on the actual data. During axial coding the researcher asked about causes and consequences of the participants' behaviour and attitudes. Conditions and interactions in their relationships were looked at. The researcher also looked for categories which clustered together.

Selective coding occurred during the third pass through the data. It involved scanning the data and previous codes. The researcher looked selectively for cases that illustrate themes and made comparisons and contrasts. This can be seen in the discussion section of the thesis, where the researcher also made comparisons with literature. At this stage the researcher looked for certain cases in the data which confirmed what the literature may have suggested. For example, the researcher explored the data to see if there were any confirmations for the use of transformational leadership. The researcher also recognised specific themes identified in earlier coding and elaborated more than one major theme. Themes based specifically on the research questions were also given special attention whilst recognising the other themes which emerged. Therefore, there was a focus on race-related issues and relationships within the organisations. As a result of such selective coding, major themes ultimately guided the researcher’s process of analysis. Ultimately, the researcher read through the data a number of times, completing different processes of analysis on each pass through the data.

An example of the open-coding process is provided below. The example is presented so that the researcher's question is provided. This is followed by the participant’s response with the code in italics above.

~~In what ways, if any, do you see yourself as an agent of change in your organisation?~~

*Uniqueness*

I’m the only black female who’s a grade G. I’m the top black female here but that

*Perception (others of self)*

says nothing because I’m nowhere. I might be seen by others as an agent of change

*Gender dynamics*

because its always been males . Other people in the plant when I started were excited to see a black female. But I have to feel I’m in a worthwhile position. I don’t

*Race relations*

feel my job counts. The person I was told is a racist said our department is

*Affirmation*

*Responsibility*

worthwhile. Its not my responsibility as an individual to prove this. X (her boss)

*boss’ inadequacies*

should say to Y (general manager), “Why do you want to see the minutes?”. I have

*mentorship/coaching*

no role model except outside the region. In terms of organisational culture; I don't

*isolation*

*Affirmation*

feel I have a role. I don't feel I'm part of this company. My department is used.

*Duration/commitment*

Maybe if I were to stay longer then I could say this is the organisational culture.

*Agent of change/influence*

There's not much I feel I can do on my own. It could be limited. The general

*Boss' inadequacies*

*Link with boss*

*Team*

manager sees the negative aspects of my boss and then thinks we are all like that.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Results**

The results will be presented in the following way: Firstly, there will be an outline of leadership qualities which have been described by the participants. This will be followed by the training component of leadership development and how the experience of training has an impact on different organisational aspects such as promotion. Leadership development will also be outlined describing participants' experience of broader socio-political and global contexts. Relationships within the organisation and their impact on leadership development will also be described. This will include race relations and interactions with superiors and subordinates. Finally, the participants' perception of leadership qualities is also illustrated in the results. As job satisfaction and motivation contribute to leadership development this chapter also contains a section which outlines the participants sense of motivation and job satisfaction and how this contributes to their leadership development.

#### **3.1. Leadership qualities**

There were certain qualities which were outlined as strengths of leaders that the participants knew. These were: people leadership skills; analytic minds; human competence; technical competence; strategic visionary ability; being a resource allocator; creating leaders for tomorrow; recognising and rewarding good performance; and disciplining poor performance.

One of the participants stated that good leaders were those who did not mind getting their own hands dirty; they are not autocratic; they put themselves in your shoes; they care about why you have done things differently; they don't have to fear their position being in jeopardy. Another participant highlighted that if you are a good leader, your authority will never be compromised or challenged because your subordinate is looking at you for leadership.

The leaders interviewed seemed to have a strong internal locus of control as they spoke of being responsible for their leadership development. This was evident in the meaning they attached to their

promotions. A participant said “I feel I deserved it. It was long over due.” Another participant outlined that for him, promotion involves talking to his boss and telling him the skills he has and how he feels he is being underutilised. He added that

For me, promotion is not a surprise.....in almost all my promotions I actually triggered the process of getting a promotion by convincing my boss that I could handle the tasks that were one level above the level I was occupying at the time ...If an individual comes to me and tells me that his contribution has not been recognised , I'll say ‘Go back and sell yourself.....If you don't do that, don't expect anybody to pull you up....sell your successes.’

This sense of having a strong internal locus of control was re-emphasised as one of the participants pointed out that “you're in charge when you take charge. It's very important. Promotions don't count. It's taking charge.” A leader was seen as having a power base, and how s/he used the power base was important. The power base could be knowledge, position, a system, or being a parent. One of the participants expressed that “by age alone people look up to me for leadership.”

The notion of a leader's threshold for particular experiences such as pain or embarrassment was seen as a source of leadership strength. It was also pointed out that a leader overcompensates by having a good understanding of the environment and then manipulating it. One of the leaders pointed out that a lot of them could have been better leaders earlier if they had paced themselves and planned their own career development. A strength of a leader which the participants highlighted was the ability to withstand those things which can be used against him or her such as age, qualifications, and colour. One of the participants pointed out that “the true test of leadership is like a shoot through a rock.” Self-sufficiency was seen as a strength of one of the leaders, as she pointed out that if her boss leaves she could “fend for herself”.

One of the leaders described how his job involves creating leaders and the environment for them to develop. It was also stated by one of the participants that it is important to understand those coming up in the organisation. The morale of the people in the organisation and the ability to motivate one's subordinates was seen as an important leadership quality. The participants had a strong sense that leaders can be developed as opposed to only having born leaders.

One of the participants heading an organisation pointed out the importance for him to be seen at functions such as employees' weddings. In this way, identification with one's organisational culture was seen as a leadership quality. One of the leaders stated that as a leader

you have to accept that you're the representation of that organisation's aspirations, vision...you stand for the organisation. People expect you to change those things in the organisation you don't represent. You have to embody the culture of the organisation. You're a symbol of the organisation.

One of the participants saw himself as a key figure who will ensure that the right culture is maintained. He saw it as his responsibility to ensure that his followers know what the culture is and that they not only conform to the cultural requirements of the company but influence others to do so.

A central aspect in leadership qualities was the notion of vision. One of the participants stated: "I create the vision. I communicate the culture and the vision and create structures that support that vision." The participants also expressed the importance of rising beyond mediocrity. One of them said, "I am a person who goes beyond the limits of my expected outputs to deliver more, over and above what my customers require."

Being multifaceted was seen as a necessary quality for future leaders. One of the participants pointed out that "Some people here have been developed to accept the multi-disciplinary requirements of business. We no longer want somebody who only knows science - we want somebody who understands finance, engineering, human resources, marketing. Those are the people that we'll develop to become our future general managers and M.Ds."

The leadership deficiencies stated were the following: myopia (lack of global thinking); low understanding of human potential; a negative perception of Africa; a poor sense of service excellence; the inability to give one's department direction.

It was pointed out that some managers have no leadership skills. They frighten, threaten and treat "family men like children." One of the participants pointed out that there were a lot of managers in

her organisation who feared their position being in jeopardy and this would influence their leadership style. This can be contrasted with the sense of resolve and security which another participant expressed describing his own leadership skills: “I say guys, we want to get there - what can we do to get there? Irrespective of whether the person was below me, above me, or by my side. So it doesn’t make any difference - I still use the same tactics to lead.”

Another deficiency was that of lipservice. When describing the organisational culture one of the participants pointed out that it is just preached but very few live up to it. Some leaders were also seen as lacking in interaction with particular departments resulting in their isolation. For example, one of the participants felt that there was not much interaction with the general manager, who does not come to the departmental functions. This was also expressed in that managers do not know or understand those on the shop-floor, as they do not take time to listen to them. This can be linked to the importance of having a sincere care for one’s subordinates. One of the leaders described how Ian Smith (former Rhodesian prime minister) stated recently that Mandela was a true statesman yet “the rest of us aren’t statesmen. We have no generosity of heart”. Another leadership weakness stated was when top management assumed that all the members of a department were as inadequate as the head of that department. Again, this is linked to a lack of individualised interest in one’s subordinates.

## **3.2. Education, Training and skills development**

### **3.2.1. Emphasis on personal training and development**

The leaders interviewed seemed to place a strong emphasis on their personal training and development. Education was seen as source of strength for promotion. One commented, “...then I got tired and I needed some extra energy to see me into the next level of business, so I decided to go back to university”. It was pointed out that after going on a particular management development program one feels good about oneself. Organisational support was seen as an important factor for one’s training. One of the participants stated that “My organisation gives me the support I need in terms of allowing me time to attend the leadership workshops”. This support includes resources, finances, and more importantly, opportunities to engage in training.

### **3.2.2. Training and promotion**

The ability to sell one's skills was seen as important. Part of initiating a promotion was seen as having the ability to tell one's boss of the skills one has and how one is being underutilised. In this regard, merely being trained was not seen as enough. In a sense, one has to sell the results of one's training.

This was also seen in leadership's plea for local knowledge from their subordinates. A participant said, "Share with us your knowledge and skills!" Skills were therefore seen as useful in their practical application.

Going on particular training courses was seen as giving one the opportunity to be transferred to other departments from a department which one is dissatisfied with. It was also pointed out that one develops leadership qualities and then the promotion is a confirmation of this. Leadership was not seen as being merely to do with position, as one of the participants mentioned that his secretary is a leader because she takes charge and overcompensates by having a good understanding of the environment.

### **3.2.3. Training gaps**

It was pointed out that there is a training gap on a number of levels.

One of the participants said...

The worst level is not the senior management in terms of skills, it's the shop floor guys. Those guys were employed after they had done standard five or six... they don't have the required skills for problem solving. There's no logic in the way they think and it becomes difficult...so yes, skills shortage on the shop-floor, terrible, bad news.

The introduction of Adult Basic Education and Training into one of the organisations was seen as useful in that it would develop shop-floor workers by giving them basic skills. Corporate social responsibility endeavours have been carried out with the aim of increasing the skills base, hence addressing the imbalance of the past.

It was pointed out by a participant that at middle management level there are a group of people who

have been in the field for 15 to 20 years and have been promoted over the years. However, they have not got university degrees and know their job only up to a certain level. He added:

If you bring something new they struggle. They are therefore used for training purposes as they have experience, but with the new technologies, there is a need for graduates with the latest know-how. Recruiting these people would be appropriate to lead the organisation into the next millennium.

It seems as if there were also gaps amongst those in leadership positions as it was stated that “we are taking people who already occupy leadership positions but don’t have the leadership skills, or need enhancement of their leadership skills.” One of the respondents felt there was a skills shortage with regards to herself. This skills shortage was linked to not having a career development plan on arrival in the organisation. It was also pointed out that most of the managers (who had been in exile) were not skilled as leaders.

#### **3.2.4. Skills needed for leadership**

It was pointed out that the current challenges in South Africa call for new leadership skills in tune with current times. One of the participants said “it is easy for people to be historic and think they are effective.” The multi-disciplinary nature of leadership development was also seen as important. A participant stated that “we no longer want somebody who only knows science. We want somebody who understands finance, engineering, human resources, marketing. Those are the people that we’ll develop to become our future general managers and managing directors.”

Skills necessary for leadership were differentiated from other skills. One of the participants said, “I can’t do, I have to get results through others. I don’t write deals for the company, I guide people to do so. I don’t produce results but I’m judged by them.” Another participant outlined a variety of skills that he saw as necessary for leaders amidst the rigorous training they go through:

Vision and understanding, the big picture, the ability to translate the vision into user-friendly language that his followers can understand.

Leaders need to have the ability to identify the training needs of the people and then apply the

required learning solutions to close the gaps in employees

Leaders need to motivate; to make their followers feel important; recognising and rewarding good performance and non-tolerance of poor performance

Amidst all the emphasis on leadership skills it was pointed out that ultimately the leader needs to be able to add value to the organisation. This was seen when a participant pointed out that,

My critical role is to deliver to the business through the mobilisation of the people that follow me. The main emphasis in the organisation is profitability through optimisation of process, manpower, machinery etc

### **3.2.5. Leadership development and training content**

Different types of training for leaders were mentioned, both in-house and outside the organisation. Technikons have also played a role in offering courses geared towards leadership development. Formal presentations dealing with issues such as the difference between a leader and a manager, role-plays and case studies were also used. Through these programs leaders gained skills in staff development, financial control budgeting; human resource skills such as recruitment, hiring and firing, competence acquisition process and workplace assessment.

A participant also stated that a great deal of leadership development occurs outside formal settings. For example, transferable skills that have been developed through experience were also mentioned. These were listening skills, communication skills, and empathy which were seen as coming through interaction. A participant explained how “there is a lot to learn without going into a class-room or a formal workshop. And I’m sure I’m a better person and I understand people better.” Other transferable skills mentioned by participants were computer skills, project management, organisation of functions, and learning to deal with all types of people from grass roots level to government officials.

Leadership development was described as an all-embracing concept that goes further than training. Whilst training was seen as technical, leadership development was perceived as behavioural and

focuses on the intangible. In addition to this, leadership development was seen as long-term whilst training is short-term. In addition to this an organisational culture where leadership development is emphasised was also seen as helpful. One of the organisations was described as having a culture which will eliminate poor performers whilst supporting the high-fliers. It was seen as a learning organisation which strives to achieve the highest level of innovation. It was also found that training was limited by whether one was allowed time off for further training. One of the participants pointed out that her efficiency was being used against her, as she stated that if she was to leave her department for four weeks it would fall apart.

The programs experienced by one of the participants were described as following a training cycle. Parts of the cycle included:

1. Needs identification (what behaviour changes are needed etc.).
2. Analysis of the organisation today and tomorrow (does the organisation need it? Do we have the people internally who are capable of being developed in that form or outside? Can we run it ourselves or outsource?)
3. Appointing a development agent: the development agent designs the development processes, restructures the organisation to make room for this development.
4. Implementation of programs
5. Evaluation of the effectiveness (review quarterly etc.).

The participant stated that the programs need to be made part of the performance management system and the career development package. He added that most South African organisations do not have a systematic form of getting training needs. The identification of training needs was seen to be *warped* because whites are ahead of blacks already.

### **3.3. Contextualisation of leadership development**

#### **3.3.1. Global thinking**

The participants seemed to be motivated to be up to date with international standards. One of the participants illustrated his enjoyment of an aspect of his job by stating that “this was an exciting field

because we were dealing with the implementation of world class manufacturing and it kept me abreast with the latest developments in the manufacturing sector”. There also seemed to be a strong emphasis on getting international exposure. One of the participants spoke of how her boss recently had the option to go to France on business or to do the management development program; he chose to go to France.

A large part of the challenge for the participants’ organisations and hence the participants themselves, was to measure up with international standards. One of them pointed out:

If we achieve that, then we’ll be along the same levels as the Japanese who don’t need supervision or management. That’s the ultimate goal and I find it a challenge.

The organisation bench-marking with those companies abroad that are successful seemed to have a strong impact on leadership development. One participant commented:

We were looking at how first world companies were being managed and that’s when I started acquiring leadership skills because we were dealing with the leadership styles of those international companies that are successful.

As the economy in South Africa was seen to be struggling, one of the participants argued that, “we have gone a step further by investing outside South Africa....So we are trying to take our eggs out of one basket and spreading them.” This meant the necessity of shifting to a global paradigm. Global competitiveness was seen as a catalyst for organisational change.

At the same time one of the participants described his experience in working for a US multinational company in South Africa: It had high demands alien to the African environment “along with a tinge of arrogance. Everything from a policy manual. No room for creativity or diversity from the manual...indoctrination. Comply or you are out.” One’s leadership initiative was seen as being thwarted in such an environment as leadership was not seen as being akin to creativity. The multinational was seen to be here in South Africa to create top positions for Americans and locals were operatives, where one cannot lead much but only execute the leader’s decisions.

### **3.3.2. Origin of training programs**

One of the participants suggested that the ultimate goal of training programs is the same whether locally or abroad:

There was concern when we attended one of the programs that it was based on the American environment, American style and American language...I think it was just a matter of failing to apply the principles not the specifics.

However, other participants seemed to think that training programs had the weakness of being too Eurocentric, based on a Eurocentric personality as opposed to the African culture. One of the participants stated that they were

Based on the premise that every worker is a European personality. A direct transplant of United States culture...A lot of management training is given by whites who've never lived with a black and therefore have no conception of how a black thinks except a gardener. Therefore it becomes condescending because it is too basic; and boring because it is based on giving something to people who know nothing.

### **3.3.3. Socio-political environment**

It was seen as necessary to be aware of the current socio-political climate of South Africa. One of the participants described his organisation as having already had a vision before the advent of the New South Africa. He pointed out that it is important to be close to people who matter, especially the government. It was also seen as important to play one's part in addressing the imbalances of the past, such as developing creches in rural areas and supporting small businesses. One of the participants pointed out that the government of the day is black and because of that as a black person she can relate to members of it; this was seen as an advantage.

The South African government has also encouraged workplace forums where dialogue could take place between management and workers, but while such moves were seen as appropriate for the local environment it was pointed out that multi-national organisations in South Africa are not as union oriented. This meant that one could not implement that which was legal and local. Hence, one of the participants said, "I wasn't in a position to challenge that...My experience told me I was not going to change an American ethos".

### **3.3.4. Local knowledge**

Local knowledge about the unique South African work environment was also seen by participants as important. It was also mentioned that a lot of what we call success is American, for example, the balance sheet and capitalism. One participant went on to illustrate how it is current thinking which drives business and yet Africa has no strong ideas, and hence has been looked down on. There are no books on African management. Yet, stemming from America, the impact of the business strategist, Michael Potter's Competitive strategy theories was mentioned with regards to influential strong ideas. Different nations' strong ideas were pointed out by a participant: The American philosophy was 'go west' which had a strong emphasis on individualism; in Germany it is administration, a kind of perfectionist approach where nothing is carried out unless its well researched; and Japan has a communal orientation. Despite these comments about international approaches, the participant stated that "we are not succeeding as corporate leaders because we have not given ourselves sufficient time to reinterpret concepts to our own local environment."

### **3.4. Race relations**

Being black was seen as advantageous when it came to dealing with the government. A participant pointed out that "the government of the day is black. We know and can relate to them." However, when it came to corporate social responsibility it was said that people do not see the need to give, "especially the blacks".

One of the respondents described how she was not given a job description when she got into the

organisation. She had arranged to get it from the Human Resources person by herself. She attributed this to the fact that she is black, or if not, because “they don’t care about the job”. Race was also seen as something an individual needs to deal with and manage. A participant expressed how “its not a problem. If they don’t like me it’s their problem. I went to a private school and dealt with it”. In addition to this there was also an element of seeing racism as problematic only in so far as it affects others, hence the participant added: (The situation is fine) As long as he’s pretending and I don’t feel it and see it”.

One of the participants felt that despite being able to do a better job than him, she would never be considered for a promotion to her boss’ position because she is not just a female, but a black one. She stated that it is a man’s world. She pointed out that she is demotivated because there is no room for growth between middle and top management for black females. She suggested that perhaps it is because of the nature of the particular industry she is working in. In addition to this she illustrated how being the top black female at her branch does not mean anything because “I’m nowhere...its always been males”. She outlined how when she started to work for the organisation, there was excitement amongst the shop-floor workers because of the arrival of a black female who may represent their interests. Although she pointed out that she felt her job did not count, she stated that the person she was told was racist happens to be the one who finds her department worthwhile. In other words, there was incongruence between what she was told about the individual and her personal experience. She also pointed out how she has not got a role model, except for outside the region. Hence, there appears to be either a shortage of role models for black females, or poor mentoring strategies.

One of the participants pointed out that he is too far at the top of the organisation for anyone to discriminate against him racially. He pointed out that he plays a major role in creating policy to make sure there is no discrimination. Another participant stated that discrimination is eliminated from his organisation because of the rigorous selection process where only those without prejudice are hired. He also pointed out that his organisation

is one of the first companies that has created the right environment for respect and dignity and it’s driven from the top down, from the M.D. who says, if anyone fails to treat any other employee equally – it’s immediate dismissal irrespective of your level..

### **3.5. Relationships with superiors and subordinates**

#### **3.5.1. Autonomy (self-management)**

There seemed to be a strong desire for the participants to have autonomy from superiors. One of the participants felt that what she does is not appreciated. She pointed out that overall her boss does not make her feel valuable or important and only complements her occasionally. As a result, this lack of affirmation affects the level of autonomy she experienced. A lot of the behaviour of the superior's posture toward subordinates seemed to be influenced by his relationship with his own boss. For example, it was pointed out that superiors tend to threaten you because they have been threatened by their boss. Hence, it is likely that the level of autonomy experienced by subordinates was also influenced by the pressures existing in the boss' relationship with his superiors. The perceptions one had of their superior's expectations also affected the level of autonomy one operated in. One of the participants explained that "You tend to shy away because you see that they think you know what you're doing and you don't want to show them that you don't." Therefore, there was the sense that working by oneself autonomously was valued more than doing the right thing. The participant chose to hide her lack of knowledge than reveal it. Being able to "fend for myself" was seen as a leadership strength. It was also highlighted that one could tell the difference between delegation that comes from the desire to develop someone and delegation that stems from the boss' laziness. When the latter occurred it does not motivate but "makes me cheeky and frustrated". Hence, the motivation behind employees being given autonomy becomes all the more significant. Conflict also arose from a boss having a sequential approach to carrying out tasks. These were situations where an individual wanted to move onto a different task but the boss required that something else be finished, even though the individual believes that one never finishes the task. Hence, one's autonomy was affected in the area of task completion. There was a perceived lack of flexibility in the sequence which one chose to carry out one's work. One of the participants compared his current job to previous ones, pointing out that today he can make his own decisions, in terms of who his supplier is, negotiating purchasing prices, determining process times, and level of automation. He described his job as more challenging and found fulfilment in the fact that his decisions are more linked to the final profitability of the business.

The participants are also encouraging autonomy amongst subordinates where there is a focus on people development and empowerment through job enrichment. One of the participants described his organisation as moving from dictating to supporting and mentorship. Another participant expressed how being given autonomy by his boss created an environment which was supportive for attuning the minds of the managers that were to report to him. He also expressed how he was not only given responsibility but the authority to carry out that responsibility. His boss, the head of the organisation, was only available for emergencies.

### **3.5.2. Superiors' inadequacies**

The participants could identify a variety of their superiors' own abilities as leaders. For example, one of the participants could differentiate between her boss as a person and as a leader. She stated that "(my boss) is a good person but lacks management skills. He can't give us direction. I can do a better job than him". The participant expressed how she wished she had a different boss. It was also pointed out that when her boss lacks direction she also ends up lacking direction. The participant expressed how she felt that her boss limits himself in his own development and therefore his subordinates are limited. She also expressed and gave suggestions of how her boss should and can challenge his boss in a way he has not been doing. In addition to this it was felt that when the general manager sees the negative aspects of her boss he then thinks the whole department is like that. Another point of frustration was when one's boss runs away from certain challenges because they bring attention to the department. She also pointed out the tendency to not want to expose a "black brother". In other words, she did not want to highlight her bosses weaknesses to the other superiors as this would be being a "sell-out".

There was also disagreement with superiors about the timing of promotion. This meant that there was conflict arising from different ideas as to when an individual should go on a management development program. Promotion was seen as satisfying as it is a sign of recognition from superiors, showing their awareness of one's outputs and successes. Such experience of promotion gives one courage.

One of the participants pointed out that in terms of his relationship with peers, there is no conflict

because they complement each other's strengths and weaknesses. He pointed out that "The way we operate is such that, that peer of mine will still need my strengths for him to succeed". He stated that he had not actually experienced any disregard of authority from peers or subordinates.

### **3.5.3. Relationships with subordinates**

The participants seemed to want a break in the mindset that there is a dichotomy between workers and managers. One of them argued that "You want to change the mindset that you are at the top so you know everything. One of the participants expressed his satisfaction with the team approach and the manner in which one gets a lot of support from one's subordinates through working as a team. He expressed how this involves setting goals as a team and motivating the team. He added that he would find it difficult working as a specialist like he used to; he is more comfortable working with people.

One of the challenging aspects of dealing with subordinates was playing the role of mediator when there has been conflict between subordinates. Another challenge involved dealing with a subordinate who had acted beyond his sphere of authority during an emergency situation. On the other hand, there was a sense in which the teams were self-managed to some extent. A participant argued that "we no longer need to say to the guys you have done wrong because they can pick it up for themselves - they know the parameters; they can measure their own performance."

One of the weaknesses which the participants expressed about themselves as leaders was that they do not know what the problems of the workers are which impact on their work problems such as absenteeism.

I don't think there is any leader who has gone through that process of catching a taxi, going to spend the night in the 'western' areas and waking up at 6 am, walking to the taxi rank and coming to work. We don't know. It's a whole world that we don't know. That's a weakness. ... Once we understand those conditions, we will understand them better. That's an area of opportunity.

One of the participants pointed out how he got feedback from subordinates saying that he tended at times to approach them with a preconceived idea. His response to this was that it was reasonable as he was trying to bring transformation.

So you can't go for democracy when you know the direction. We know where we want to be. Once these people become mature then I'll be more democratic.

He pointed out that this applies to certain change-related aspects, as opposed to other aspects such as performance reviews where he is open and democratic. Therefore, it appears as if some leaders were seen as being inadequate by subordinates because of a lack of understanding on the part of subordinates, that democracy cannot be applied at all times. On the other hand, it could be a case of superiors having another weakness in that they have an espoused participative culture yet the participation is limited to trivial issues.

### **3.6. Leadership development and change**

One of the participants felt that one's ability to act upon change was dependent on the type of department one worked in.. For example, the employees in marketing and sales were perceived as being in a better position to respond to change. One of the participants pointed out that she may be perceived as an agent of change by the virtue of the fact that there have always been men working in her industry. However, she did not see herself as an agent of change, due to her being both black and female. She seemed to express the sense that she was not able to change much by oneself; a need for co-operation from others. She added that there is "not much I feel I can do on my own. It could be limited".

One of the things said about leaders was that people expect them (leaders) to change those things in the organisation they do not represent or stand for. Leaders were therefore seen as agents of organisational change. One of the participants illustrated how at a course in London a Dutch leader had stated, describing the organisational culture in Holland, that "it is very important in Holland to be

one of the boys. The difference between leaders and boys is to know when to change what you are doing.” One of the deficiencies of leaders that was pointed out was the inability to make up one’s mind fast enough whether to change direction.

One of the participants pointed out the need for leaders in South Africa to embrace the current racial changes taking place in the workplace. He pointed out that a lot of these leaders are retrogressive in terms of change and their change management skills are low. He commented that “All their decisions are based on precedent while the world around them is changing.”

It was also mentioned that real change must be wholesome as opposed to piece-meal. This was said in the context of how one of the organisations brought about change by having a new leadership, for example a new board was created. This need for deep change was also seen when one of the participants stated that in problem-solving the aim is to find out from the team what the root cause is. He added that transformation management has been purely designed for the purposes of adapting training to the South African context. One of the participants saw himself as an “architect of change” by planning the objectives, execution, necessary resources, supportive structures, review and implementation of the change.

One of the challenges mentioned by a participant was the process of taking his team of seventy through a transformation to a place of empowerment. A change occurring in one of the organisations was described as the transformation from being managers to becoming leaders. He stated that his role was to change the old management style to the new leadership approach, and in so doing was directly involved in that change process as a change agent. A sense of fulfilment seemed to come from being a change agent. One of the participants exclaimed: “It’s an exciting part of the business; to transform, to see change happening.” It was also mentioned that it is not easy to change mindsets and that people have a tendency to go back into their comfort zones. One of the ways this is managed is to make those that resist change very uncomfortable; making it difficult for them when they move back to their comfort zones. This was said to be bearing fruit. One of the reasons given for people going back to their comfort zones is the fact that they felt their old approach worked anyway. The participant pointed out that his organisation has no choice but to change in view of global competitiveness. He pointed out that the final action taken with regards to those who block

the process of change is to remove them. This can be done by redeployment to environments outside South Africa where there is no need for change currently due to low competitiveness and technology in those regions. The ability to change mindsets was linked to having strong leadership skills. A participant pointed out that “there must be very strong leadership skills in terms of changing the mindsets of my subordinates.” He went on to mention that he was seen as undemocratic by his subordinates when it came to change related aspects, in that he did not consult them before change related implementation.

There was also a willingness to experience individual change. One of the participants stated that “when my colleagues are not happy with my management style or my leadership style I always say, ‘Guys, tear me to pieces, tell me where I am wrong.’ It helps me to grow as well and to learn”.

### **3.7. Job satisfaction and motivation**

It was evident that the participants found training and education to be a source of motivation. This was seen in one of the things said by a participant: “I got tired and needed some extra energy to see me through to the next level in business, so I decided to go back to university”. Being a learning organisation impacted on the motivation of the leaders. One of the participants expressed: “I think that’s the driving factor....that there’s never an end to learning. Learning does not end.”

Another source of motivation was when dealing with latest technologies. One of the participants expressed that the field in which he was working was exciting in that it kept him abreast with the latest technologies in the manufacturing sector. One of the participants expressed his dissatisfaction with the mediocre, saying “I am a person who never gets satisfied with just doing enough.” One of the weaknesses observed amongst leaders was poor world-class performance and service excellence.

Recognition from one’s superiors brought a sense of job satisfaction. Getting a promotion brought about a sense of fulfilment that one is getting the rewards of one’s efforts. In addition to this satisfaction and motivation was derived from producing results. One of the participants described their current job as more exciting than previous jobs because he is operating at a much higher level

“in terms of getting results out.” The fact that his current job is more linked to the profitability of the business makes it more challenging.

The participants also played the role of motivating their team. One of the participants illustrated how he motivates his subordinates: “Right, what do we want to achieve as a team.....who is the champion? Who has got the passion?” One of the participants stated that his main challenge was empowerment and motivation of subordinates. The aim has been to make the job exciting for every employee, so as to avoid absenteeism and false illnesses. The challenge has been to make employees look forward to coming to work so that when they come they produce their best. The ability to motivate a person was described as being part of the “latest know-how.”

The participants also had a strong team orientation in that there was a lot of satisfaction gained from getting results through people as opposed to working individually. There was also a sense of satisfaction in the role of being a leader. One of the participants stated: “I wouldn’t trade it. I wouldn’t like to be led.” On the other hand, one of the participants pointed out how some of the managers in her organisation were content because they are getting good packages but she felt there is more needed and it is the company’s responsibility to give them skills.

Demotivation also came as a result of not believing one can be promoted because of inherent qualities such as being black and female. Demotivation was also the result of having tasks delegated to one when one’s boss was apathetic as opposed to the boss’ desire to develop. Another participant mentioned that a source of fulfilment was when he was given both authority and responsibility.

The manner in which one was initiated into the organisation was seen as significant. One of the participants who had been in the organisation for a few years pointed out how she never got the opportunity to know the company. This was also coupled with the fact that her department was not the core competency of the business, hence her sense of value to the organisation is diminished. She stated that “we need to fit ourselves in with other departments...it makes you count”. Hence, feeling that one added value and belonged to the organisation increased motivation.

There was also dissatisfaction with the fact that one could not motivate for one's own management development but needed one's boss to do so. This was problematic if one's boss was unwilling. Hence, there was a decrease in motivation due to not having any perceived control over one's own development.

Role ambiguity also contributed to job-dissatisfaction. One of the participants commented: "I don't feel I have a role. I don't feel I'm part of this company. Our department is used." A feeling of being redundant was also associated with demotivation. There was also a difference between job satisfaction as perceived by others and the actual job satisfaction experienced. In terms of the travelling opportunities one of the participants gets when people ask her/him people ask, " 'Aren't you happy?' she says, 'There's more than that'".

This results section has outlined the perspectives of the participants on a variety of issues. It is important to now explore how these findings relate to the literature and to analyse what the implications of these perspectives are. This will be covered in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

As one looks closely at the results of this research, it becomes apparent that a study of leadership development can be divided into three major areas of focus: Firstly, the *individual attributes* that are necessary for one to go through the leadership development process successfully. Some of these individual attributes that emerged and were seen as contributing to leadership development were the strong emphasis on the participants' individual development, training and education. The participants had a strong learning culture and in addition to this took responsibility for their own development.

They were also individuals who had learnt to manage racism in on their own.

They had a strong sense of taking responsibility for their own future.

The second major area involves the *relationships* these participants have with their superiors, peers and subordinates. Their relationship with their immediate boss was significant and central to their leadership development. This relationship had either a positive or negative effect on them. In addition to this there was also a clear indication that the participants valued affirmation and recognition from their bosses. Their promotion experiences were an indication to them of such recognition. The participants clearly appreciated being given autonomy and the scope to lead. There was also a strong emphasis on new leadership approaches, such as coaching and mentoring. In a sense, it is these relationships that link the individual with the organisation and largely influence one's experience of organisational life.

Finally, there are a number of *organisational characteristics* that help to create a culture that breeds leaders. There was a strong desire to feel that one belonged to the organisation and was adding value to it. There was a clear sense of differentiation between management and other black workers, yet they were influenced by the perceptions of these other workers. Therefore it was

evident that the organisations still operated on quite a hierarchical system. The general dichotomy between managers and workers was seen as problematic, in that managers were seen as not knowing their workers at all. The main gap in organisational training programs was in their lack of application to the South African context. There was also a desire for authenticity to be present in one's organisation, where there was no incongruence between espoused values and actual values.

This research will be discussed with these different areas of focus in mind, showing how each of these areas interact with the others as one would expect to find in any system. One may expect that the emphasis of this research would be specifically on the different training courses the leaders have attended. However, what has emerged from this research has given a clear indication that leadership development is a process one goes through, mainly on-the-job. Therefore, this discussion will focus on different elements of leadership development, which are essentially process-oriented.

## **4. 1. Individual attributes**

### **4.1.1. Managing race and gender relations**

The research focuses on the leadership development of black people. It is necessary to explore and note the degree to which their being black was significant to them, if it was. It is also important to explore the degree to which they were able to manage racism. As the literature review outlines, black people need skills of managing racism and managing their own rage over the racism they encounter. In this research being black was seen as an advantage in some scenarios and a disadvantage in others. There was a sense of being able to relate to the government and others in "power" and yet being both black and female was seen as a hindrance to one's development. Therefore where being black was a disadvantage was in areas involving an attempt to have a sense of belonging in a predominantly white organisation. The fact that the legislation had changed concerning racial issues in South Africa seemed to also influence the participants. There was a sense that even though one may find it difficult in an organisation the participants had the broader backing of the legislation and political power.

The participants seemed to perceive racial issues in terms of regulations and policy. This was seen in how, when asked about racism, they would talk about discriminatory practices. The literature review points out how Day (cited in Human, 1990) states that the success of leadership development of

previously excluded groups depends on the group who for the most part, still believe that they are more capable because they are white and male. However, this research has illustrated that with the leadership development of more and more black people, this scenario is changing. This was seen in how leadership development was perceived as being stunted by black superiors. In addition to this one of the participants mentioned how he was too far up in the organisation to be discriminated against and added that he is involved in creating policies to ensure that there is no discrimination. One then has to ask whether there was no concern for subtle racism; which does not necessarily result in discrimination but can lead to ingroup/outgroup dynamics where individuals become isolated, albeit informally. Hence, one wonders whether it is an organisation which has experienced racial reconciliation or whether it is merely a matter of integration. Perhaps there was a lack of confidence in whether real reconciliation would occur. This can be seen in one of the comments made where the participant stated that the racism was not an issue as long as she does not feel it or see it. The top management seem to have a major role in ensuring that there is no discrimination. For example, the managing director had the power to dismiss immediately. In this way they become a symbol for a culture which does not entertain racism. This confirms what one of the participants pointed out that it is up to the leader to eliminate from the organisation that which s/he does not represent.

A lot of the racial awareness of the participants was fuelled by the expectations other black people had of the participants. This was seen in one of the participant's description of when she first arrived at the organisation and the shop floor workers were anticipating change because of her being in that position as a black female. This sense of group identity was also seen in leaders' relationships with their bosses. For example, when one of the participants mentioned that one does not want to expose one's black brother. There appears to be a lot of group loyalty as such a statement may mean that her promotion was not as important to her as maintaining the dignity of her bosses. This may reflect elements of a collectivist culture where one tends toward group loyalty before individual interests. The literature review outlines how Hui (1990) argues that for collectivists, when in-group goals clash with personal goals, the in-group goals take precedence over personal goals. Hence, the affiliation and loyalty to the group of black people seems to have both positive and negative effects on one's leadership development. On the one hand group loyalty can be counterproductive and manipulative, whilst on the other hand the group can act as a support to motivate one as an agent of change. It is

therefore quite interesting to note the tension one can go through, where one's boss is in one's in-group due to a common ethnicity but then in an out-group due to his level in the organisation. One then needs to explore which constructs create a larger sense of distance, the difference in level, the gender or ethnic difference. It is quite significant that gender was seen as more of a concern than race by the female participant. This was seen in how this participant mentioned that it was a man's world. She did not say "Its white people's world." She mentioned that this may have been due to the nature of the industry. Hence, the leadership development of women seems to be very much dependent on the nature of the industry and the stereotypical perceptions of the roles played by managers in those industries. When she joined the organisation individuals at lower levels saw her as a change agent due to her being the only black female at that level. It is significant to note that race and gender were perceived as reasons to expect change as opposed to other factors such as personality or education.

It was mentioned that there were a number of managers who were quite satisfied with their good packages and yet not as interested in developing their skills. At the same time it was mentioned that the managers, especially the blacks, did not seem to see the need to give, when it came to corporate social responsibility. There was therefore a sense of black managers feeling their job was a reward, of not just working for the organisation but also due to the nation's past, the organisation owed them something. This is a similar phenomenon to what was found in Zimbabwe after independence, where black employees wanted 'a piece of the cake'. This attitude may also be prevalent because the blacks have felt that it was more difficult to get to where they are than their white colleagues and hence, they feel they are more deserving, and their need to be recognised for the hard work becomes stronger. When they do not receive recognition it may result in abdication of all desire to bring about organisational change as their organisational commitment decreases. This was reflected in one of the participants, who left his job and another who stated how she had given up. Hence, it seems as if one's confidence in bringing about change in an organisation influences one's commitment to the organisation and hence the staff turnover. This really goes without saying, as one is more likely to remain in an organisation if one knows that there is the possibility of changing what one is dissatisfied with.

It seems to be important that top management is aware of what is being said informally within the

organisation so that it can address certain outlooks which new potential leaders embrace. The example that springs to mind is when a participant mentioned how the individual she was told was racist was the very person who supported her department. Therefore, it seems as though two messages were being sent to her. Such relationships with superiors are key for the championing of her leadership development and certain labels attached to these can hinder her perception of them. It is important, therefore, that those directly involved in leadership development inform incumbents to be wary concerning what they are told about other employees unless of course they see it for themselves.

One of the leaders also mentioned how the identification of training needs was somewhat warped as whites were already ahead of blacks. When training occurs this would need to be taken into consideration without perpetuating any polarisation by training them separately. With regards to this, Charlton (1992) suggests in the literature review that learning is effective when the whole management team attends courses together. Whilst a lot of her relationships seemed to be all right, one of the participants pointed out that she thinks that if she is not promoted it is because she is a black female. Therefore, it seems as though there is still an environment where, although there is no overt discrimination there are certain standard reasons which are still given for perceived glass ceilings. The challenge which becomes apparent, is what type of leadership style she must adopt in a male-dominated organisation. Watson (1988) suggests that “acting like a man” can only help so much; the woman manager who attempts to succeed by taking on masculine attributes must show enough power to be taken seriously, but not enough to violate our cultural stereotypes about aggressive females.

#### **4.1.2. Autonomy**

In the literature review Yukl (1998) points out how one of the difficulties bosses face is in trying to find a balance between being overprotective and giving autonomy. Yukl (1998) adds that some subordinates feel that bosses do not give them the authority to accomplish the responsibilities which they have been given. The tensions around the question of autonomy therefore have an impact on an individuals’ tasks and hence his/her leadership development. There were a number of tensions

around the notion of autonomy. The leaders appreciated being given the scope to make decisions and carry out their leadership role. This was in areas such as determining prices and other areas involving decision-making. However, there was awareness that often superiors can delegate out of laziness. Hence, the kind of autonomy which was appreciated was that which was integrated into one's job, where it was clear that the superior was doing it for the subordinates developmental purposes as opposed to just being lazy. In the literature review, Bass (1990) outlines how superiors, at times may believe they are delegating when it is seen as abdication by subordinates.

Other tensions which lie in the area of autonomy are when it involves spheres of authority. In the example outlined by a participant, one of the employees under him purchased certain material for emergency safety purposes, yet it was beyond his authority. In a case like this superiors wants to encourage autonomy and yet certain rules are placed there not to be broken. Organisational leaders have to develop skills of judgement to know how to act in such cases.

#### **4.1.3. Organisational commitment:**

The organisational commitment of the participants seemed to be linked to how much the organisation had invested into their development. There was a sense in the participants of doing more than the required amount of work. Having the organisation invest in one's development seemed to say more to the participants than just valuing their contribution but it said something about valuing the participants as people. As a result, such affirmation appears to have increased the participants' organisational commitment. Much can be said about this considering how highly in demand black executives are. Leadership development strategies seemed to have an effect of enhancing organisational commitment. The participant who did not get the opportunity to go on a management development program spoke of how she was thinking of leaving the organisation. One of the participants appreciated being given both authority and responsibility. What seems to be lacking in the managers who become complacent with their good packages, is that they have responsibility but no authority. Or they are unaware of their authority; or choose not to use it for some reason or another. This was seen when one of the participants mentioned that the organisation does not need her department; it uses them - Her boss not having authority. She also mentioned how she felt her boss needs to challenge his boss on some issues but does not as he does not want to draw attention to the department - Her boss not exercising his authority. It appears as if the combination of

increased responsibility and authority results in a growth in organisational commitment. Being isolated from the rest of the organisation clearly affected one's sense of commitment to the organisation and hence one's leadership development. Hence, one of the strategies used for scope for development would be to try to move to another department. This glass-ceiling effect (where there is no scope for promotion mainly due to race or gender) in some departments resulted in one of the participants saying that even though she could do a better job than her boss she would never get his position. This factor may imply that organisations with more interdepartmental manoeuvrability solve the problem of isolation (as many members of the organisation would have worked in a variety of departments) and those with potential for leadership within an organisation are not overlooked.

#### **4.1.4. Individual responsibility**

Bandura (1986) as outlined in the literature review, states that only as people increase their ability to predict and manage perceived threats do they develop a robust self-assurance that enables them to master subsequent challenges. This sense of being able to shape one's future seemed apparent in the participants. They seemed to take responsibility for their own development. This meant that they were self-motivated individuals. This was reflected in a variety of ways. Firstly, the manner in which they approached promotion reflected this. The fact that promotion was seen as something planned, not a surprise - something well deserved, seems to suggest that they had a personal leadership development strategy. In order for this to work, all parties need to play their part, as one of the participants pointed out that she was not given a career development plan when she entered the organisation. Hence she stated that she did not know her role and was demotivated. It seems as if the employees' exposure to the whole organisation has an impact on organisational commitment and hence on the sense of responsibility. This implies that being given a career development plan can motivate the leaders and also helps to avoid role ambiguity at the different job levels one goes through. The role ambiguity then affects motivation levels as it is difficult to measure whether or not one has been successful without knowing what is expected of one. Despite the emphasis on taking responsibility for one's promotions, the leaders appreciated affirmation from their bosses. One of them pointed out how her boss rarely complimented her. Such affirmation was therefore a source of motivation. The leaders wanted to feel that they add value to the organisation and are hence

appreciated. This kind of affirmation would enhance organisational commitment. The fact that the participant saw promotion as a symbol of recognition from one's superiors illustrates that interest in promotion goes beyond monetary gain but fulfils that need for recognition. One's leadership development would no longer just involve one's competencies on the job, but one becomes individually responsible for communicating these strengths to one's superiors.

## **4.2. Relationships**

Block (1993) supports the notion that subordinates are responsible for their own development proposing that one of the cornerstones of partnership is joint accountability. He states that bosses are no longer responsible for the morale, learning, or career of their subordinates. They resign their care taking role. If people want the freedom that partnership offers, the price of that freedom is to take personal accountability for the success and failure of our unit and our community. This was evident in the current research where the leaders proposed a move to leadership approaches which instilled a sense of partnership, through job enrichment and teamwork with line managers. The leaders showed their disapproval of scenarios where bosses attempt to parent adults. Leadership involves a paradigm shift from viewing employees as children to creating adult expectations in an environment which offers meaningful work and involvement as the way to access human potential (Charlton, 1992). Powerlessness creates organisational systems where political skills become essential and 'covering yourself' and 'passing the buck' become the preferred style for handling interdepartmental differences (Bennis, 1984). An element of this was present in the research, where one of the participants perceived her boss as not wanting to bring attention to the department and hence not challenging the status quo when it was appropriate to do so. This may have been due to perceived powerlessness to bring change. Alternatively, the 'expandable pie' concept of power giving power to get power leads to greater reciprocity of influence. The leader and the follower are willing to be mutually influenced by one another (Charlton, 1992). For example, in this research, the boss would see that allowing his subordinate to go on a management development program would benefit him and in so doing enhance his leadership by displaying his ability to develop another leader. Therefore it seems that followers will need to be aware of this dynamic so that they do not perpetuate the practice of enabling their bosses to have a care-taking role. It seems as if where there

is a leadership development culture the subordinates will help their immediate boss to lead well. The team approaches suggested in the research create an environment where each team becomes personally accountable for its success or failure. At the same time this can be contrasted with the head of an organisation who stated that he did not produce results but was judged by them. This seems to suggest the importance of creating an environment where it is not only the leader who is judged by the results but individuals within the organisation, if indeed, they are being developed into leadership. This breeds a culture of personal accountability in the leadership development process.

As the literature review outlines, the motivation to learn leadership skills is influenced by the bosses' extent of promoting and supporting training activities (Yukl, 1998 ). The key to any developmental program is the support and attitude of the line manager, who has the power to crush or empower trainees - the problem has been that a large amount of managers see people as incompetent, resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy (Hall, 1990). Many companies have found out the hard way that an essential critical success criteria underpinning equal opportunity is the visible support of top management (Charlton, 1992). Any program that does not address these issues is simply empowering people to leave the organisation. Again, one of the participants was dissatisfied and thinking of leaving partly because her department was not receiving visible support from the general manager, and as a result she felt isolated.

### **4.3.Organisational attributes**

#### **4.3.1. On-the-job training**

An extensive industry wide study found that between 75 - 90% of the successful manager's time was spent on interpersonal activities. Managers preferred an active, 'hands on' orientation reacting to the initiatives and needs of others whilst motivating people in a relatively unstructured way. (Kotter,1988). Hofmeyer (1989) points out that too many advancement programmes consist of training programmes which candidates are asked to attend, yet most of what a person learns at work is on the job, particularly from a superior. This idea can be linked with a comment made in the research that a lot of learning takes place in informal settings such that the experience curve becomes more significant than the learning curve. One may then ask the question, 'What's the point of having training programs?' Whilst they play their part in education, it seems that they have a deeper effect in

terms of their perceived benefits. This is in terms of their motivating effect; giving one a sense of well-being; the self-efficacy increases and the research also seemed to show that there is an increase in organisational commitment as a result of one's development being invested into. Hence, whilst a lot is said about the content of leadership programs, it seems as though their effect on the candidate goes far beyond that and is largely dependent on their symbolic value.

#### **4.3.2. A learning organisation**

Amongst the participants there was a strong sense of leadership development being almost synonymous with continuous learning. The participants seemed to have a strong desire to keep learning. Whilst it may be true that the training programs were linked to promotion, there was a genuine need for both intellectual stimulation and technical development. The type of learning emphasised had to do with the more human skills as opposed to technical. As a lot of these were gained through experience, the experience curve for these black executives was steep. This may also be due to the fact that they were going into predominantly white organisations. The programs, hence, had a symbolic role, in that being invited to attend them affirmed the leaders, however, a lot of the real learning seemed to take place on the job. This is because the competencies mentioned which were seen as important seemed to be people skills which are largely learnt on the job.

There were some individuals in the workplace who do not become leaders, who refused to embrace a learning culture. For example, those of whom it was said by one participant, "If you bring something new they struggle". Part of developing a learning culture seems to involve the removal of those who are not willing to learn, and hence, those who will block change. There was mention of deployment, which supports this notion. The change which comes in is one which involves the whole system. For example, in one of the organisations the board was changed. This can only happen when one is dealing with an organisation where building a learning culture is deemed more important than maintaining the jobs of those who have been in the organisation for long but are blocking change.

The learning required of the leaders was also pervasive in that it needed to cover a variety of areas. It was said that the future managing directors would need to have a multi-disciplinary approach. This would mean that those being developed for leadership would have greater manoeuvrability and

supports the notion that such exposure enhances leadership development. Part of developing a learning culture would involve global awareness, as there was a strong emphasis on keeping abreast with the latest technologies. Hence, the standard of excellence should not be based on one's immediate environment but on the global context. Part of being a leader therefore was reflected in a break away from a myopic outlook on life. This is reflected in the manner in which developing countries are for globalisation. For example, one of the participants mentioned how he was shifting a bank in Zimbabwe from seeing itself as a Zimbabwean bank to seeing itself as a bank operating in a Zimbabwean environment. Hence, for the leaders to maintain a global perspective they need to first have a conceptual understanding of their organisations' broader purpose. This needs to take place during initiation. One of the participants pointed out that his organisation was now investing abroad; this means that global awareness is now important for leaders within the organisation not just for competitive reasons but also for broader stakeholder interests. This appears to be a new finding in terms of leadership development in developing countries, where there is currently a whole "world" to be continuously learning about, as globalisation continues.

While there were the positive aspects of globalisation, there were times when the researcher would get a sense of the perpetuation of a South African culture of 'The best is always out there.' This was seen in aspiring to reach the same levels as the Japanese. Whilst this may be a useful benchmark, it should not necessitate aspiring to use the same leadership styles as the Japanese, as they are dealing with a different group of people. It was quite clear from literature that styles of leadership will need to differ as it is sensitive to contexts followers find themselves in. In the literature review, Hofstede (1997) described how cultural heroes differ from country to country. It appears as if bearing this in mind helps one to be aware that follower perception of leadership differs from country to country and that leaders need to be sensitive to this. Therefore, part of the learning for organisational leaders involves the exploration of South African organisations can contextualise what they know about effective leadership development. One also needs to explore why the west and the Japanese may have been successful as it may not be necessarily because of its leadership styles. There may be numerous other economic factors. One of the ironies in this research was the strong emphasis on globalisation whilst at the same time having a strong desire to see the build up of African 'strong ideas'. This tension ran throughout the discussions and is a tension which needs to be managed in all leadership development strategies.

When speaking of the latest 'know how' the leaders were not only speaking of technical solutions but also certain people skills. A lot of importance was placed on what were seen as modern approaches to leadership and human relations. They appeared to look down on what was seen as archaic. Autocratic managerial styles were associated with being archaic. Therefore there was a strong motivation to see that their organisations would not be archaic but experience the latest developments on both technical issues and human ones. It was interesting to observe this because a lot of the team and coaching emphases are actually approaches to leadership development which have always been there but perhaps are new to these organisational environments.

One of the reasons why some potential leaders are not released by their superiors to go on leadership workshops is because the organisations still values its deliverables more than learning. If this were not the case then organisations would plan these workshops around employees work deadlines, as opposed to saying that they cannot leave for a few weeks because of deadlines. This type of planning can also come about in the form of career development strategies for the individual. Part of having a learning culture necessitates leaders who have long-term thinking as opposed to short-term, and hence see the value of such learning.

There were strong suggestions through this research that training is more effective when it takes into consideration the people who are being trained. Despite their appreciation of training workshops, the leaders seemed to all react differently to their training experiences. This may have been due to their different experiences of racism. For example, one of them did not see it as much of a problem when some examples used were Eurocentric, whilst another participant seemed to find it belittling. Hence, the workshops, if not attuned to the candidates can negate their purpose. They can become empowering or disempowering depending on the message they communicate. In addition, the literature review describes how black people competing with whites for access to some organisations are at a disadvantage, not only because they are not white but also because they are generally perceived as deficient in many of the qualities regarded as necessary for good performance (Human, 1988). Therefore, these stereotypes affect that self-efficacy black employees have when attending training programs, hence, the learning which takes place in the organisation is thwarted. Kanter (1977) found that in American organisations, low performance of minorities was partly due

to pressure and the dominant group exaggerating difference according to stereotypes.

One of the participants mentioned that those who give some management training have no conception of how a black person thinks except the few unskilled workers they have been exposed to. As a result, the training programs become condescending and boring. This statement shows that one of the frustrations of these leaders is feeling belittled by some of the training, hence the importance of having culturally diverse groups when training occurs. The fact that the participant mentioned a “black” way of thinking goes to show that there is not yet the perception of a shared culture in South Africa, even amongst top management. There seemed to be some resentment towards these courses and white people in general, for grouping blacks as a generalised “other” which is known only through stereotypes. Hence part of the struggle of the leadership development of blacks was continuously having to challenge stereotypes about themselves. This becomes a difficult tension, where one is attempting to distinguish oneself from the stereotypes one has been labelled with whilst at the same time not wanting to be perceived as being aloof, by the black people at lower levels.

When an organisation embraces a learning culture a variety of things occur: The leaders become more authentic because they are willing to have their mistakes pointed out by peers or subordinates, and learn from them. One of the participants pointed out his posture in terms of learning from his peers: “Guys, tear me to pieces, tell me where I am wrong? It helps me grow and learn”. It also creates an environment where superiors are willing to learn from subordinates by asking them questions. This desire to integrate local knowledge into their knowledge base affirms the subordinates and gives them more confidence, enhancing their leadership development.

Senge (1991) states that a leader adopts the active role of teacher and creates a learning culture.

One of the ways in which the leaders suggested this happens is through appreciating the local knowledge of their subordinates and giving them the room to manage themselves. Self-managed teams therefore seem to have the effect of breaking the external locus of control associated with learning where the workers assume the answer is “out there somewhere.” As a result of such a learning culture there is opportunity for growth within the team as its members discover where they compensate for each other and hence can maximize on the available human resources. Lifelong

learning is a fundamental vehicle for leadership. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) summarise recent thinking by pointing out that leadership competence can be learnt, but question the willingness of people to learn to become adaptable.

As the literature review outlines, several key insights emerged from some South African research by Gail Kelly on the skills necessary for CEO's success and the process whereby these can be cultivated. The most significant of these relates to the importance, from the CEO's point of view, of being in touch with one's people - of being able to communicate with them, empower them and draw them in behind one. Another important factor was the ability to not only cope with change but also to initiate change. Therefore, a learning culture is very much dependent on the CEO's example and the networks of relationships within the organisation. The network of relationships also has the potential to support a learning culture by being a channel for the free flow of ideas. This means the organisation becomes a community of learning, as long as there is "boundarylessness" in the free flow of ideas.

In addition to this, Charlton (1992) points out that the acid test of leadership is the presence of empowered people in organisations. Empowerment in turn depends on the belief that 'I can begin to create my own future'. This in turn presupposes an internal locus of control which places responsibility squarely on one's shoulders as opposed to externalising responsibility for change and blaming both superiors and subordinates.

Neal Chapman (cited in Charlton, 1992), from Southern Life points out that the polarisation of communities in South Africa has been so marked that we have tended to live in our own compartments. Consequently we need to go out to different communities and understand other people's worlds. Linde (1999) shares his experience of taking some executives to a township for lunch (eating South African traditional food) and the shocked silence some of them had as they pondered on how they did not realise the living conditions of their workers.

This experience was supposed to have the effect of creating better understanding of subordinates and helping to bridge the polarisation. One of the participants pointed out that gaining such an understanding of the workers would help in solving absenteeism problems. Leaders have failed to

instil meaning, trust and empowerment in their followers, because they are out of touch with themselves and the people they serve. The primary reason then for a loss of credibility is leadership that is insensitive to its constituents (Charlton, 1992).

Flexibility of leadership style is dependent on diagnosing the developmental level and needs of people with respect to specific tasks and responsibilities. This is an important factor in the relationships between leaders and their subordinates. It also prevents the problem of leaving alone those who need to be directed, and harassing people who are competent, when delegation should be applied (Blanchard, 1991). While autonomy was seen in a positive light, it was clear that the participants felt it was important how autonomy was instilled and what it was communicating. Therefore, when autonomy is communicated effectively, the relationship between the superior and subordinates is enhanced.

Charlton (1992) states that if we do not add value to an organisations human resources then we do not deserve to be taken seriously. This, in turn, necessitates getting close to line managers to find out what “goods” need to be delivered. Charlton (1992) also points out that leadership training is most effective when the entire management team attend a course together. Coupled with this, it is also vital that the organisation adopt ownership of any leadership development - through a train the trainer process which is then cascaded down the organisation. Perhaps it may be appropriate to suggest that one of the benefits of the entire management team attending the course is that it reinforces the concept of a learning culture; where the courses are not for a “chosen few” but leadership development is seen as benefiting the organisation as a whole. This then encourages the reciprocity of power sharing and teamwork. The organisation then develops a culture of life-long learning as opposed to learning only for the short-term goal of getting a promotion.

Part of being a learning organisation is the investment into education programs for employees. The literature review has highlighted a variety of models which can be used in view of the challenges and constraints experienced by leaders in organisations. Latham (1988) outlines a number of other theories used in leadership education. *The leader member exchange (LMX) model* can be used to enhance a sense of interdependence between managers and subordinates to bring about

opportunities of growth on the job. The LMX model of leadership was seen as useful by its originators as they believed that the previous theories of leadership were based on an incorrect assumption that the leader behaviour is characterised by a stable or average leadership style. In other words, these models assume a leader treats all subordinates in about the same way. The LMX model is therefore useful in the South African context where there are lot of ingroup/outgroup dynamics due to polarisation. One participant described how she appreciated her boss as a person but not as a boss. This implies that there is a different dynamic at work when it comes to work related issues as opposed to personal. The LMX model will be useful to explore the dynamic nature of this relationship. It would also be useful in exploring the nature of this participant's boss' relationship with his superior, and how this impacts on his relationship with his subordinates.

*Double loop learning* can help leaders when it comes to issues of transparency and authenticity. Here they are trained to overcome the need to defend against embarrassment or threat, at individual, small group, inter-group or organisational level. This is seen as preventing learning and unproductive.

Argryris and Schon (1978) state that this approach shows people the discrepancy between their organisational leaders' espoused theories and their actions. This is useful in view of the fact that participants felt that a lot of what was called organisational culture was merely lip-service. These models are also useful in that, in a guided environment, they give the proteges the opportunity to reflect on their own behaviour. As they see their own behaviour in relation to the idealised attributes, there is greater motivation to change.

#### **4.3.3. Organisational culture**

The literature review outlines elements of an organisational culture that influence the degree to which leadership development occurs. These include: the prevailing attitudes and values about development the degree to which individual learning is regarded as highly important for organisational effectiveness; the use of symbols and slogans that embody values such as experimentation, flexibility, adaptation, self-development, continuous learning and innovation (Yukl,1998).

In order for the leaders to be developed, it seemed as if they had to embrace a large part of the corporate culture. There was also an informal part of this culture, such as going to employees

weddings, mentioned by one of the participants. According to one of the participants, the general manager did not attend her departmental functions. Whilst some of these may not have been directly work-related, this contributed to the feeling of isolation of the department and hence, the participant. This would affect her leadership development. When a department is not involved in the core competence of the business and becomes isolated it may be due to an organisational culture which focuses only on deliverables. There seemed to be such a situation in this organisation where perhaps the general manager was not managing “generally” but more involved in general management only over those departments which are directly related to the profit made by the branch. Therefore, in order to enhance leadership development throughout the organisation, the general manager needs to have a corporate mindset which embraces all the departments; understanding and affirming their value. This will aid when it comes to initiating, communicating or changing the organisational culture.

A tension which became apparent in the research was the fact that leaders were ultimately interested in deliverables yet at the same time needed people through which they could get these results. One of the participants said that he is no longer “doing” but the results he gets are through others, yet he is still ultimately judged by their work. The leaders had to therefore be developed in such a manner that they were not so people oriented that they lost sight of what their ultimate goal was, and at the same time not so goal-oriented that they forget that they were only as successful as their ability to mobilize and work with people. The need for such balance is also something which cannot be avoided throughout the leadership development process. Sometimes one can get the feeling that the people are there only to be used by the organisation to produce profit. In that vein, the employees really become human “resources” in the real sense. However, this seems to have an impact on the employees’ sense of value to the organisation. Whilst on the one hand they find fulfilment in knowing that they are adding value to the organisation (monetary), they also need to know that they are valued as individuals who contribute to the corporate culture beyond merely the profits they make. This can be seen in how the leaders could sometimes feel like used puppets. Therefore, when leadership development becomes a commitment to develop a leader as an individual beyond their current contribution, organisational commitment can be enhanced as the leader feels more valuable and less used. This seems to be an important issue in the leadership development where individuals can easily feel they are accepted in terms of their contribution but not in terms of being incorporated into the corporate culture. This may be due to a number of factors. For example, when it comes to

some change issues there seemed to be limitations placed in terms of the autonomy allowed. One of the participants mentioned how he was seen by his subordinates as being too prescriptive when it came certain change related issues. He pointed out that he would give them more autonomy on issues such as their own performance appraisal. Therefore, when one observes such a scenario it spells out a number of things; perhaps autonomy can be lip-service, in that subordinates are made to feel they are free to make their own decisions only on issues which are not really seen as important - and on issues only they can really reflect on, such as their own importance. On the other hand, there may be a genuine case of setting boundaries as to how far autonomy goes. In the same vein at managerial level there may be a place for the argument that the black managers can bring change and have autonomy within their job description but not in the realm of the organisational culture. It is in this organisational culture where the values of the organisation are made or changed, often in informal settings. If the black leaders and some departments are excluded from this informal interaction it affects their ability to bring about change in the culture of the organisation.

#### **4.3.4. A team-oriented organisation**

There is a strong argument in this research for having what happens at shop-floor level also happening at the top; the team approach. It was interesting how one of the participants pointed out that there was an advantage of working as a managerial team, in that their skills would complement each other to the point where it would reduce conflict as they needed each other. At shop floor level there was also this team approach. Hence there becomes an organisational culture built around teamwork. This removes counterproductive competitiveness within the organisation. It was also important for one to have a boss who champions one's leadership development. For example one of the participants mentioned how his boss attuned the managers who would report to him (the participant) to his leadership. Whilst the team approach is useful and embraces elements of the African way of relating, there can be some disadvantages: One of the participants mentioned that she could not bring about change by herself. Whilst this may be true, it appears as if at times there can be a tendency for Africans to hide behind a team, and only act when they have got team support. This means that change will only occur when the group concurs with it and it can perpetuate a culture which fears going 'against the grain'. One of the participants went "against the grain" and points out that he left an organisation he had been working for as he realised that he could not change an American ethos; hence there are limitations to individuals bringing about change in the corporate

culture. Again, as Hofstede (1997) points out, one finds that the culture of each organisation seems strongly entrenched into the broader culture of where the organisation originated from. For example, the American multi-national organisation reflected an American ethos which was not easy to remove. It becomes difficult to implement South African leadership development strategies in an environment which is resistant in this manner, where so much is already prescribed. Such organisations attempting to transpose an American ethos into Africa would need to become sensitive to the fact that the majority of their employees are from a local environment even if their senior management is from abroad.

What can also enhance the team approach is when a boss and the subordinate have shared values. In one of the scenarios described by a participant, tension would develop as the boss would want certain projects to be completed before the subordinate could start on another; whilst the subordinate (the participant) saw the situation differently. It would be important for them to discuss what values they shared and didn't share and see how they could bridge certain gaps. It was also useful that the participant understood some of the pressures her boss faced from his boss, and hence could attempt to manage her boss in that regard. This illustrates that one's leadership development will always be linked to top management as it is not merely a case of one's relationship with one's immediate boss but also one's boss' relationship with his boss. Hence, the organisation needs to be seen as a system with inter-related elements which can all affect each other as opposed seeing everything in isolation.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

#### **Organisations breeding leaders**

Organisations that aim to develop their leaders will need to develop a thorough understanding of the challenges and constraints of the leadership development of black people. Coupled with this there will need to be a shift in terms of how they see black executives in private organisations. This research certainly highlighted that black leaders in organisations are no longer settling for just operational tasks, where in effect they are only executing someone else's decisions. There was also a sense of fulfilment found in breaking from a culture of silence to a culture where one challenges one's boss. Hence, it seems as if there will also be a growing need for the space to allow for upward influence. These leaders were not satisfied with mere symbolic roles but wanted to be genuine change agents. This was seen in the way in which one of the participants mentioned that being the top black female at her branch did not mean anything in real terms. Leaders are therefore developed as their superiors become more willing to share power with them. The leaders need to be trained in how to bring about change, as one of the participants was confident about her job-related competencies, but not her ability to bring about structural change. In addition to this, it also seems quite clear from this research that there was a relationship between their embracing their leadership role and their job satisfaction. The participant who did not really see herself as a leader was not fulfilled in her job.

There was also a clear indication that organisations that breed leaders have individuals like these who value being mentored. One of the participants pointed out that she did not have a role model except for outside the region. This means that in developing leadership development strategies one would need to explore how to integrate such mentoring and perhaps how to have more links with other regions for these purposes. In such a mentoring environment the leaders are allowed to make

mistakes. It has been said that knowledge come through our successes yet wisdom comes through our mistakes. Many leaders find it a challenge to allow their successors to make mistakes, yet this is the very thing which brings wisdom, and hence enhances their leadership ability. This can be illustrated by a scenario described by one of the participants where she pointed out that “you tend to shy away because you see that they think you know what you are doing and you don’t want to show them that you don’t.” In an organisation that breeds leaders there is freedom to make mistakes and no pressure to appear perfect, or to try to conform to the superior’s misguided expectations. In this environment there is an authenticity in both those being developed and the developers, which allows for such transparency about inadequacies.

Where some leaders have become isolated due to their boss’s inadequacy or neglect of their department, this can be avoided if the top management begins to manage-by-walking-about (MBWA). Such practices display an interest in each department and will make potential leaders more visible beyond the limitations of their current immediate boss. Organisations that breed leaders also focus on the intangibles long-term issues. It was clear from the research that leaders found fulfilment in producing results. But where does that leave those leaders whose successes would only be realised in five years? Therefore, if leaders are to be developed throughout the organisation strategies have to be formulated to evaluated their performance, despite the difficulties associated with this. Part of leadership development training should therefore explore how to deal with unseen results. One of the participants mentioned how success, for this part of the world, has become American (for example, the balance sheet). Perhaps, questioning the way in which success is measured in an organisation will result in rewarding those who also produce results, albeit that they are unseen.

Organisations that breed leaders need to develop leaders who are courageous in their ability to deal with tough people-oriented situations. For example one of the participants described a challenging scenario as being one involving mediation of a dispute which was due to a personality clash. Another difficult task is when one is acting as a change agent and has to confront those who are resisting change, even if this may be subtle resistance. One of the participants stated that the truest test of leadership is like a shoot through a rock. Part of leadership development therefore is to build an environment which encourages the leaders to take responsibility for their own emotions and

attitudes, and hence their own development. This means that the emphasis, as one participant illustrated, is no longer promotion, but leadership, which inevitably gets recognised in the form of promotion.

These leaders cannot be motivated by just a good package; they are different in this regard. It was clear that they differ from their subordinates, for example people would think one of the participants would be happy because of her travelling opportunities, yet she stated that there was more to her work than that was also meaningful to her. In developing these leaders it is important to explore the factors that give them job satisfaction and motivate them, beyond receiving good packages. The challenge is therefore to find ways of creating a shift from managers being merely satisfied with their packages to a place where there is a high level of organisational commitment. The key seems to lie in two areas. Firstly, the organisation working on past grievances which if left undealt with, can create an environment of “I deserve this whether I perform or not”. Secondly, even at managerial level, there needs to be a break away from an adversarial relationship with top management by the black managers being well integrated into the organisation’s culture and hence taking ownership of the organisation’s values. This can only occur if they play a role in creating those values. As one of the participants stated, top management needs to know their subordinates so that they are aware of what motivates each one. Leaders were also described as having a power-base. Organisations that breed leaders encourage them to have an awareness of this power-base so that they can be aware of their leadership strength. It also becomes important for them to be aware of the power-bases of others as this would enhance their teamwork.

The generally accepted elements of transformational leadership mentioned in the literature review can be applied to the leadership development of blacks in private organisations. For example, *individualised attention* is important as it was clear from the research that each of the participants had unique experiences, despite being black. Their experiences were dependent upon aspects such as their bosses’ perceptions of their department and their relationships with their subordinates. For leaders to be developed effectively they need to be given individual attention as each have a unique experience of the organisation. The importance of *intellectual stimulation* becomes apparent when one considers the strong need the participants had for learning and the manner in which this was a source of motivation. The participants seemed to lack *inspiration motivation* from superiors. This

was apparent where the participants did not have role models. There was a strong indication that the leaders wanted superiors who had transformational leadership qualities. Where this was lacking, there was demotivation and lack of job satisfaction. *Idealised influence* also featured in that the leaders had certain ideals they clear about and aspired towards. However, there was not much mention of seeing such influence in leaders above them. Therefore, it appears as if these black leaders are somewhat transformational, but face the challenge of being pioneers as black executives.

While this research has the limitation of a very small sample, it is useful in allowing for an in-depth exploration of a variety of dynamics involved in the leadership development process. The research is therefore useful as a springboard for further exploration of issues which surfaced which were beyond the domains of the current study. These issues can be used to develop questionnaires for quantitative research which will have a much larger sample size. Another limitation was that the researcher did not re-interview the participants at a later stage to perhaps verify some of their statements. This would have been useful as what is said concerning leadership development can often be sensitive to one's experiences on the particular day that one is interviewed at work. A difficulty with leadership as a subject is that it is very broad, nevertheless, this means that a variety of related issues have stemmed, which will be useful in enhancing leadership development processes.

If these factors mentioned above and in the rest of this research are taken onto consideration and implemented, there is no reason why South African private organisations cannot be a place of both harmony and high competence on the global market. The leadership development of blacks in private organisations is an issue which cannot be forced upon organisations, but one trusts that CEOs in this nation will take the first step of making the simple decision: We are going to be an organisation that breeds leaders!

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## APPENDIX 1

### Interview Guide

#### Phase 1:

Place of birth and growing up

Age bracket or age (30-40) (40-50) (50-60)

What are the types of jobs you have had up to this point?

Describe an incidence where you were promoted. What was it like in comparison to others?

How would your current working environment compare with previous ones; in terms of organisational structure and your own job description?

#### Phase 2:

What do you understand by the concept 'leadership' in an organisation?

As a leader, what challenges do you face in the work that you do?

What are the strengths of leaders you have been working with in this organisation?

What are the deficiencies of leaders you have been working with in your organisation?

It has been said that there are many people in leadership positions yet very few leaders. Can you comment on this with regards to your organisation?

What do you understand by the concept 'leadership development'?

How does the leadership development process take place in your organisation?

How have you experienced this?

Describe the leadership development programs that you have been exposed to.

How do they suit the South African context?

What are the selection criteria for them?

Are there any gaps you have come across in the programs?

#### Phase 3:

What competencies have you acquired through the variety of leadership development programs you have gone through?

What are the issues you face with regards to your own leadership development?

Is there discrimination?

Are there glass ceilings?

What transferable skills have you acquired through experience, with regards to leadership?

In what ways, if any, do you see yourself as an agent of change in your organisation?

'Organisational culture'. What do you understand by this term? Can you summarise this in your organisation?

What do you feel about your role as a leader in your organisation?

How comfortable are you in this role? Describe your relationship with superiors and subordinates.