

AN ANALYSIS OF HOW LEADERSHIP HAS SHAPED THE CULTURE OF CUSTOMER CENTRICITY IN THE BRANCH OF A BANK

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ABSTRACT

Financial institutions are faced with increasing competition as there has been an increase in new entrants in the industry, therefore a battle of market share in banking is in progress. Digitization is fast changing how customers perceive value, customers have become spoilt for choice and thus banks have to implement strategies that will help them to increase their market share by keeping the customers they currently have and strategies that help them to acquire more customers. A strategy on its own will not support organizational goals, if it is not adopted by the executers – the employees on the ground. It is important for leaders to support the strategic goals of an organization by ensuring that the goals become a culture, a way of doing things in that organization.

This study is an analysis of how leadership shaped a culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank. The objectives of the study were to: (1) To describe the culture of customer centricity that was cultivated by the branch manager; (2) To analyse what the leader pays attention to, measures and controls on a regular basis, in support of a culture of customer centricity; (3) To analyse how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching in support of a culture of customer centricity; (4) To analyse whether - and if so how - the quality of the dyadic relations between the leader and her followers enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanisms on the culture of customer centricity; and (5) To analyse how the leader built high quality relations with her followers

The study took the form of a case study of a branch of a bank, where nine universal bankers and their former leader were interviewed. The data were then analysed using a deductive thematic analysis. The findings met all objectives of the study and the findings supported the propositions. The findings also discovered that reward and recognition contributed to the shaping of a culture of customer centricity.

In conclusion the limitations and delimitations of the study are acknowledged, and recommendations are made. The study contributes towards the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and demonstrates how high-quality leader member exchange (LMX) relations can be developed. Several recommendations are made for further studies on factors shaping a culture of customer centricity, and implications for management are considered.

Declaration

I declare that the Dissertation entitled, “An analysis of how leadership has shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank”, which I hereby submit for the degree, Master of Business Administration at Rhodes University, is my own work. I also declare that this dissertation has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Mandisa Mali

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Philippians 4:13

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and project overview

1.1 Introduction

“For an organizational culture to exist, there must be a group of people interacting with each other for the purpose of accomplishing a goal in their defined environment. An organization’s culture founder or leader simultaneously creates such a group and by the nature of his/her personality begins to shape the group’s culture” (Schein,1983, p.13). Schein (1983) is implying that leaders shape the culture of an organization, but what is not clear is *how* they do so.

Schein (1990) further identified three levels of culture, namely: artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions. This study focuses on Customer Centricity as an espoused value of the Bank being researched and is also one of the three strategic pillars for it to succeed in its strategy.

As this study is on how leadership has shaped the culture of an organisation, the focal point will be on leadership. According to Schein (2010), leaders shape the culture of an organisation through: *(1) primary embedding mechanisms of organizational culture and (2) secondary articulation and reinforcement mechanisms*. The two primary embedding mechanisms that will be analysed in this study are: (1) What leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis and (2) Deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching

Therefore, the study will illustrate how the mechanisms above that were used by the leader, have shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank.

1.2 Context

The bank under study is one of South Africa's top five banking institutions. Over the last three years, this bank has lost market share to other banks. Though the biggest in terms of branch network and ATM network, this particular bank continues to lose customers to competitor banks thus market share continues to drop year on year (Business Tech, 2019). At the beginning of 2017, the Head of Retail and Business Banking of the said bank launched a strategy, which is underpinned by three pillars, or focus areas that are to be adopted, namely: Digitization, Integration and Customer Centricity (Financial Institution, 2019). These three new pillars were to be adopted and become the new culture of the bank, in order to regain market share and retain the customers that the bank currently has (Financial Institution, 2019).

1.3 Conceptual framework for the study

This study is underpinned by Resource Based Theory (RBT), as it argues that a firm's resources can be a source of sustained competitive advantage, in particular the firm's human resources (Davis, 2017). The culture element of this study is based on the work of Edgar Schein. Schein (1990) proposed that there are three levels of culture namely: artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions. He also gives clarity that it is the leader who shapes the culture of an organization (Schein, 1983), by creating mechanisms to develop a desired culture (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Schein provides 12 embedding mechanism to shape culture, however only two are used in this study. Two leadership theories form the basis of the leadership element of this study, namely: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Leader Member Exchange (LMX). SET provided a good understanding of how two entities develop high quality relationships through repeated interactions, which in turn result in a sense of mutual obligation (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). LMX which is underpinned by SET, refers to the actual exchanges that take place between leader and follower and the effect thereof (Porter, 2018). As discussed earlier, the three pillars of the financial institution under study are: Digitization, Integration and Customer Centricity. This study is focused on Customer centricity as an espoused value of the financial institution understudy, (Habel et al., 2020,p.25) defined customer centricity as "putting customers at the centre of a firm's actions."

1.4 Purpose of the study

The study will seek to understand and is supported by evidence of how, during her tenure, did a manager of the branch of the bank shape the culture of customer centricity.

1.5 The objectives of the study, therefore, are:

- To describe the culture of customer centricity that was cultivated by the branch manager
- To analyze what the leader pays attention to, measures and controls on a regular basis in support of a culture of customer centricity
- To analyze how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching in support of a culture of customer centricity
- To analyze whether – and if so how – the quality of the dyadic relations between the leader and her followers enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanisms on the culture of customer centricity
- To analyze how the leader built high quality relations with her followers

1.6 Key concepts

For the purpose of this document, the following definition were chosen:

Organization culture is defined by Schein as “the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems ” (Schein, 2010:18).

Leader Member Exchange (LMX) Theory views the dyadic relationship quality between leaders and members as the key to understanding leader effects on members, teams and organizations (Bauer, et al., 2006).

1.7 Methodology

This research was conducted as an explanatory case study to gain insights and a better understanding of the research topic in question (Babbie, et al., 2007). The researcher deliberately selected one branch of a bank. This branch was performing well in terms of customer centricity. The researcher wanted to understand the relationships of the leaders and subordinates of the said branch, through semi-structured interviews.

Deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Deductive qualitative research takes as its departure point, the theoretical propositions that are derived from a review of the literature and applies these to the collection and analysis of data (Pearse, 2019).

1.8 The significance of the study

The study will contribute in the field of organizational culture, by providing practical demonstrations as to how the mechanisms that Edgar Schein refers to can be implemented. Leaders who want practical examples of how to shape the desired culture, will benefit and particularly leaders who are moving into a new business area with a new team. The study will also contribute towards SET literature in helping to define, exactly what exchanges are required to form a high-quality dyad. This will benefit leaders who proactively want to guide their followers as to how to interact, in order to have a positive, productive and successful working environment.

1.9 Limitations of the study

When the researcher went to conduct the interviews (January 2020) in the branch chosen by the gatekeeper who was head of the province at the time of selection (October 2019), the leader under study had been promoted to a new role in the province. A new leader was in the branch, therefore all documents of meetings and plans of the leader under study had been removed and done away with. The researcher could therefore not include document analysis.

1.10 Structure of the study

- **Chapter 1** sets the scene and introduction to the study. It provides the contextual background to the field of study. An overview of the conceptual framework is discussed, including the purpose of the study. It explains briefly the methodology followed, the key concepts of the study, the significance of the study, its limitations and provides a brief chapter outline.
- **Chapter 2** is the literature review chapter of the study which provides more detail in terms of the key concepts in chapter 1. In chapter 2 there is also more detail on the LMX theory which illustrates further how the dyadic relationships are formed between leaders and subordinates. In this chapter there is more clarity on organizational culture, specifically Schein's three levels of organizational. The mechanisms used to for this study in terms of shaping culture are explained in more detail, customer centricity is defined, and the research propositions are explained
- **Chapter 3** provides the detail of the Methodology followed. It provides a description of the aim and the goals, justification and description of the research design and the paradigm. The description of the procedure followed is provided.
- **Chapter 4** presents the findings and the discussion of the study

- **Chapter 5** concludes the study. The findings are summarized, there are implications as well as recommendations for leaders. The delimitations and limitations of the study are acknowledged, however the contributions of the study as well as recommendations for further studies are found in this final chapter

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to analyze how leadership shaped the culture of customer centricity in a branch of a bank.

The company in question is a bank that seeks to execute its strategy using three strategic pillars a namely: Customer Centricity, Digitization and Integration. For the purposes of this study, the focus will be on how leadership has shaped the culture of an organization towards customer centricity. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a more detailed review of existing literature on resource-based theory, customer centricity, selected leadership theories and organizational culture. Schein's (1990) model for organizational culture will be explained and will form the basis for understanding organizational culture in this study. Schein (2010) identifies mechanisms that leaders use to embed a value or basic assumption that they hold, though the message may be very implicit in the sense that the leader is not aware of sending it (Schein, 1983). In this chapter these mechanisms will also be explained.

2.2 Resource-based theory (RBT)

The resource-based theory (RBT) of competitive advantage argues that an organization's internal resources can be a source of competitive advantage, especially the firm's human resources. RBT is an approach where the organization focuses inwards: to assess and build its internal capabilities for the challenges and the opportunities that are outside the organization (Davis, 2017). Consistent with this belief, is having a strategy for customer centricity. If an organization has a strategy towards customer centricity, that organization has a strategy towards a competitive advantage, as stated by (Habel et al., 2020) "To achieve a competitive advantage,

companies increasingly strive to be perceived by their customers as customer centric” (Habel et. al, 2020, p.25). It is the employees’ roles to ensure customer centricity, as they serve the customers daily. This study views leadership, employees and culture as an internal resource that can form the basis of competitive advantage.

2.3 Customer centricity

“It is the customer who determines what a business is, what it produces, and whether it will prosper.” (Shah et al., 2006, p.113). Habel et al. (2020) define customer centricity as putting customers at the centre of a firm’s actions. Thus, decisions made in a company (e.g. marketing strategy, product offerings) are made around what is best for the customer, this is the heart of customer centricity. Business model scholars frequently emphasise that the customer should be at the centre of the business model, as its primary goal is to create value for the customer (e.g., Johnson et al., 2008). While customer centricity focuses on the customer and on building mutually beneficial and satisfactory relationships (Day, 2003), individual customers express their unique needs and the company’s resources are allocated accordingly to come with solutions that are able to satisfy these unique needs (Lamberti, 2013). “Customer centricity as a starting point, is the assumption that customers have specific needs and wants that only they can articulate” (Wagner and Majchrzak, 2006, p.19).

Five trends are reinforcing the need for firms to make the transformation towards focusing on customer centricity. These are: (a) intensifying pressures to improve marketing productivity, (b) increasing market diversity, (c) intensifying competition, (d) demanding and well-informed customers, and (e) accelerating advances in technology (Shah et al., 2006). The above five points are aligned to what is currently happening in the banking industry as per the top 3 trends that were predicted for 2018. In his report Top 10 Retail Banking Trends and Prediction for 2018, Jim Marous found the following top 3 trends: (a) Industry removing friction from the customer journey, (b) Improved use of data and advanced analytics and (c) Refinement in multichannel delivery. All top three trends are centred on improving the customer experience in banking (Marous, 2014). “The banks that have done the hard work of changing their internal culture in order to welcome and foster change and elevate the experience will

retain the relationship with the consumer and will compete successfully with new entrants.” (Marous, 2014, p.7).

2.3.1 Customer orientation

Customer orientation which puts the customers at the centre of all business activities and seeks to maintain good customer relationships, has been identified as a key success factor for any company’s long-term survival and profitability (Dang and Pham, 2020). In view of all the global changes and trends like the fourth industrial revolution, as an example, financial institutions have started to adopt digital platforms to collect and optimize data to modernize the banking system. Recently, customers have started using multiple channels to solve their banking needs (Dang and Pham, 2020). Customer have become spoilt for choice and are well informed, and are therefore no longer passive recipients of messages, instead they have become part of the value creation process (Dang and Pham, 2020). Given these changes, frontline staff need to ensure absolute efficiency, transparency and consistency at all customer touch points. It has therefore become more imperative for all frontline staff to become more customer centric, to ensure excellent customer experience.

In order for employees to be customer centric, they must be well equipped to do so. That is, they must be empowered to be able to make decisions so that they can face the ever-changing demands of customers (Dang and Pham, 2020). According to (Dang, and Pham 2020), there are many determinants of employees’ customer orientated behaviour. One of them is the introduction of control mechanisms by the leader, and the other is the quality of the leader member exchange relationship (Dang and Pham, 2020). Therefore, the employees’ behaviour towards customers is influenced by the relationship quality between leader and follower. Thus, frontline staff will display behaviours of customer centricity and efforts of satisfying customer needs if they perceive the environment to be conducive and that the LMX quality is high. (Dang and Pham, 2020). Martin and Bush, 2003 concluded that, customer orientated behaviour displayed by employees in the frontline may be influenced by LMX relationship quality.

2.4 Culture

Culture consists of the beliefs values, attitude, behaviours and practices that are characteristic of a group of people (Warrick, 2017). Culture is viewed as such an integral contributor towards organizations' success that Fortune Magazine's annual "100 Best Companies to Work for" report is based primarily on information employees anonymously report about their workplace culture (Warrick, 2017). For example, Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos said: " At Zappos, our belief is that if you get the culture right, most the other stuff – like great customer service, or building a great long–term brand, or passionate employees and customers – will happen naturally on its own (Warrick, 2017).

2.4.1 Organizational culture

The roots of organizational culture are found in cultural anthropology and organizational culture is popular within the organizational behaviour, management, and marketing literatures (Hogan and Coote, 2014). As explained earlier, Schein (1984, p.14) defines organizational culture as "the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems". The assumptions and beliefs mentioned herein involve the group's view of the world and their place in it, the nature of time and space and human relationships (Sims and Brinkmann, 2002).

"An organizational culture depends for its existence on a definable organization, in the sense of people interacting with each other for the purpose of accomplishing some goal in their defined environment," (Schein 1983, p.13). In other words, there must be a group of people working together towards a goal, for an organizational culture to exist.

Schein (1985, p.86) further asserts that culture affects how people behave, because, one of its major functions is to help people understand the environment and determine

how to respond to it, thus reducing anxiety, uncertainty and confusion. That being said, an organizational culture then dictates how people in a certain environment will behave and deal with situations and what behaviour is expected of them (Sims and Brinkmann, 2002). Culture is the key to the success of an organization, as it directs employees about how things should be done in the organization and the main task of the leader is to create and manage the culture of the organization (Suvaci, 2018). Therefore, the exclusive talent of leaders is the ability to appreciate and work with organizational culture (Schein, 2004). A leader, then can mould and shape a corporate culture (Sims and Brinkmann 2002).

2.4.2 Edgar Schein and three levels of organizational culture

Early research on culture viewed culture as one element, which resulted in difficulties in understanding culture in organizations. Schein (1990) however, identified three levels of culture, namely: artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions. The first level deals with artefacts or the physical attributes of an organisation (Schein, 1990) These may include amenities, offices, furniture, rewards, the dress code, and the visible interaction between employees themselves and other stakeholders. The second level deals with espoused values or the apparent culture of the organisations' stakeholders (Schein,1990). This includes the expression of the mission statements, strategies, goals philosophies and the functioning beliefs throughout the organisation. The third inmost level deals with the organisation's implicit hypothesis. These are elements of culture that are not visible, and which are unmentioned inside the organisation (Schein, 1990). These may include unspoken rules that employees are not consciously aware of, but which are deeply rooted and may provide an explanation to understanding why events take place in a particular way.

By emphasizing certain values and building corresponding norms for expected behaviours, managers can begin to build an organizational culture that has a powerful and compelling influence on employee behaviour (Hogan and Coote, 2014). Customer Centricity is therefore an espoused value of the organization under study as it outlined

in the organizations strategic document as a strategic pillar (or goal), therefore that is the level of culture that this study will focus on.

2.4.3 How leaders shape a culture

Schein, noted that leaders play a pivotal role in organizational culture because they can create, maintain or change a culture (Schein, 1985). Although many factors influence culture, organizational culture primarily reflect their leaders and their role modelling and decision making can affect not only the employees that report to them, but also the entire value chain associated with that organization that is: shareholders, suppliers, customers and the communities at large (Sims and Brinkmann, 2002). Culture can be built either by design or by default, meaning leaders can be deliberate when building culture, or they can leave it to chance (Warrick, 2017). Leaders play a key role in building and sustaining culture and they influence culture through their strategies, practices, values, leadership style and example (Warrick, 2017). Schein identifies what he refers to as culture embedding mechanisms, by which leaders cultivate a particular organization culture.

2.4.4 Schein's mechanisms that shape organizational culture

Leaders create mechanisms for cultural development and reinforcement of norms and behaviours expressed within boundaries of organizations (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Schein provides 12 embedding mechanisms that leaders use to cultivate culture. The mechanisms are divided in two parts: primary mechanisms, which are the most powerful, daily behavioural things that leaders do, and the secondary mechanisms support and reinforce these primary mechanisms. Due to the limited scope of the study, it would not be feasible to investigate all 12 mechanisms. Therefore, two primary mechanisms were selected based on their relevance to the formation of dyadic relationships and the quality of interactions between a leader and her employees. Secondly, the two mechanisms selected were based on the fact that the strategy of customer centricity is new to the bank in question and therefore the mechanisms would

need to assist the leader to implement the new culture. Given these considerations, the two selected mechanisms are explained next: (1) What leaders pay attention to measure and control and (2) How leaders perform deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching.

2.4.5 What leaders pay attention to measure and control on a regular basis

The most powerful mechanism that leaders have for communicating what they believe in or care about is, what they systematically pay attention to. This can be what they criticise, praise or reward. The important thing is that they must be consistent and systematic in their behaviour (Schein, 2010). Sims, (2000) presents the case of Gutfreund's tenure at Salomon Brothers to illustrate this point. His time as CEO was marked by his attention to only a short-term business focus. He was only interested on what was happening on a particular day, or in a specific week. As a result, the employees had the same outlook and were preoccupied with immediate profits, which resulted in unethical behaviour, as the focus was on short and quick wins and not on ensuring the long-term future of the business.

2.4.6 Deliberate Role Modelling, Teaching and Coaching

Leaders should know their behaviour has great impact in communicating organization assumptions and values to their employees (Schein, 2010). A leader communicates these cultural values to the employees through actions, role modelling and teaching. Through their behaviour, leaders can reinforce the values that support the organizational culture, as employees will emulate leader's behaviour and generally, they look to the leader for cues on appropriate behaviour (Sims and Brinkmann, 2002). "The example of leaders is one of the strongest shapers of culture. How leaders get things done, the actions that they take, the values and beliefs that they hold and the changes they are personally willing to make all set the example for others to follow" (Warrick, 2017). To illustrate, Gutfreund's rise to power at Salomon Brothers involved him betraying his very own mentor, Billy Salmon to further his career. Gutfreund made a "special, below -the- board" deal. This type of behaviour was then considered by onlookers as the norm, acceptable and even applaudable in the company. It was then

copied and encouraged; thus, a culture was created at Salomon and Brothers that valued success at any cost (Sims, 2000). The following propositions will therefore be investigated:

Proposition 1: What leaders pay attention to measure and control, can shape a culture of customer centricity

Proposition 2: Deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching can shape a culture of customer centricity

2.5 Leadership theories

Schein (1983, p.13) claims that a leader can shape an organization's culture. The following leadership theories were selected to explain this leadership dynamic: social exchange theory and leader member exchange theory (LMX). Social exchange theory (SET) is among the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behaviour, as it focuses on a series of interactions by the leader that generate obligations by staff. LMX theory, which is underpinned by social exchange theory has been proven to be among the most durable theories in describing supervisory behaviour and understanding its consequences (Walumba et al, 2011). Both theories are focused on the quality of the dyadic relationship between leaders and the people they lead.

2.5.1 Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory provides a good understanding of how two entities develop high quality relationships through repeated interactions, which in turn result in a sense of mutual obligation (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). To provide a broad understanding of SET there are three characteristics; 1) rules of exchange, 2) resources exchanged and 3) exchange relationships (Porter, 2018).

Firstly, there are two types of rules of exchange, namely negotiated rules and reciprocity rules. Negotiated rules give clarity on exactly what will be exchanged, by whom and when characterizing quid pro quo transitions (Porter, 2018). In contrast, reciprocity rules – also referred to as the best exchange rules - are interdependent, where one party provides a resource and the other party reciprocates due to perceived obligations, which then initiates another cycle of exchange. Reciprocity rules characterize social exchanges, where the resources exchanged but when they will be returned is not specified and these ongoing transactions, therefore result in high quality relationships (Porter, 2018).

Secondly, the resources exchanged can vary and can depend on the different entities involved. There are six categories of resources, namely: money, goods, services, information, status and love. Some resources can be exchanged, and some are particularistic (i.e. they could be useful to a person given certain circumstances, such as an employee who prefers flexible work arrangements) (Porter, 2018). Finally, exchange relationships are the result of a series of ongoing exchanges.

Therefore, in summary, social exchange relationships normally follow the reciprocity rule where resources are exchanged indefinitely and returned at an unknown time which results in high quality relationships (Porter, 2018). “Theorists agree that social exchange involves a series of interactions that generate obligations” (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005, p.874). Social exchange theory, with its emphasis on reciprocation, therefore, explains why workers are motivated to exert effort on behalf of their organization (Walumbwa, Cropanzano and Goldman, 2011). It is through these exchanges that a high-quality relationship between leader and follower is developed. These high-quality relationships are often characterised by trust, support, liking, loyalty and respect (Porter, 2018).

2.5.2 Leader Member Exchange Theory

A key element of LMX theory is that employees’ attitudes and behaviours depend on the treatment from, and the relationship with their supervisor; and thus, performance can be significantly impacted by the type of relationship established with the leader (Lindsey Hall, et. al 2016).

Scholars have asserted that, in line with the reciprocity rule of social exchange theory, if followers perceive that the LMX is of a high-quality, the follower will go beyond the call of duty, exceed the expectations of the job contract and will engage in organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Lee, et. al 2019). OCB is when employees go beyond the call of duty, beyond contractual and role requirements and are not recognised by the organizational reward system for those particular duties (Farrell and Oczkowski, 2011). OCB can be a source of competitive advantage due to the fact that it is hard to replicate (Farrell and Oczkowski, 2011). It has also been found that OCB has a positive impact on customer centricity. Since LMX results in higher subordinate behaviour and more OCB (Walumba et. al, 2011), this suggests that high LMX relations can indirectly contribute to customer centricity.

“High quality LMX relationships are characterised by trust, open communication and information sharing” (Walumba et al. 2011, p.740). According to (Dang, and Pham 2020), there are several determinants of employees’ customer orientated behaviour, one of them is the introduction of control mechanisms by the leader, and the other is the quality of the leader member exchange relationship (Dang and Pham, 2020). Therefore, the employees’ behaviour towards customers is influenced by the relationship quality between leader and follower. Thus, frontline staff will display behaviours of customer centricity and efforts of satisfying customer needs if they perceive the environment to be conducive and that the LMX quality is high. (Dang and Pham, 2020). Martin and Bush (2003) concluded that, customer orientated behaviour displayed by employees in the frontline may be influenced by LMX relationship quality. “Leaders and followers in high-LMX relationships often report enhanced levels of satisfaction and effectiveness, as well as mutual influence, more open and honest communication, greater access to resources, and more extra-role behaviours” (Gerstner and Day, 1997 cited in Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001, p.697).

Proposition 3: The quality of dyad relations enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanism on culture

Underpinned by social exchange theory, leader member exchange (LMX) theory refers to the exchanges that take place between leader and follower and the effects

thereof. LMX by definition is then an indication of the quality of the relationship between a leader and a follower. LMX relationships are developed through a series of interactions between the leader and the follower. As an example, the leader provides resources (e.g. meaningful work) and the employee in return produces work of high quality (i.e. high performance). The resources exchanged between leader and follower can vary. Therefore, the leader and follower can choose what to exchange in terms of what is applicable to them (i.e. time off or any incentive). Research on empowering leadership has shown that a leader's relationship-building with a subordinate might be crucial for empowering a subordinate. In a study conducted by Arnold et al. (2000), it was found that employees who were working in self-managing teams (i.e., empowered teams) were asked to describe effective leader behaviours, they indicated and listed several relationship-developing or relationship-oriented leader behaviours (e.g., showing concern for subordinates' personal well-being; patiently discussing subordinate individual concerns) that were perceived to be empowering. These behaviours were proposed to be a dimension of empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2000). In other words, empowering leaders influence employees' psychological empowerment through the high-quality work relationship that the subordinate perceives to be formed between him or herself and the leader (Kwak and Jackson, 2015). On this basis, the final proposition is derived:

Proposition 4: Regular positive and relationally-oriented social exchanges create high quality relationships

2.6 Chapter summary

In reviewing the literature on leadership and culture, the following four propositions were generated:

- Proposition 1: What leaders pay attention to measure and control, can shape a culture of customer centricity;
- Proposition 2: Deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching can shape a culture of customer centricity;
- Proposition 3: The quality of dyad relations enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanism on culture;

- Proposition 4: Regular positive and relationally oriented social exchanges create high quality relationships;

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 2.1 provides a framework of the literature reviewed in this chapter, illustrating the relationship between the four research propositions of the study.

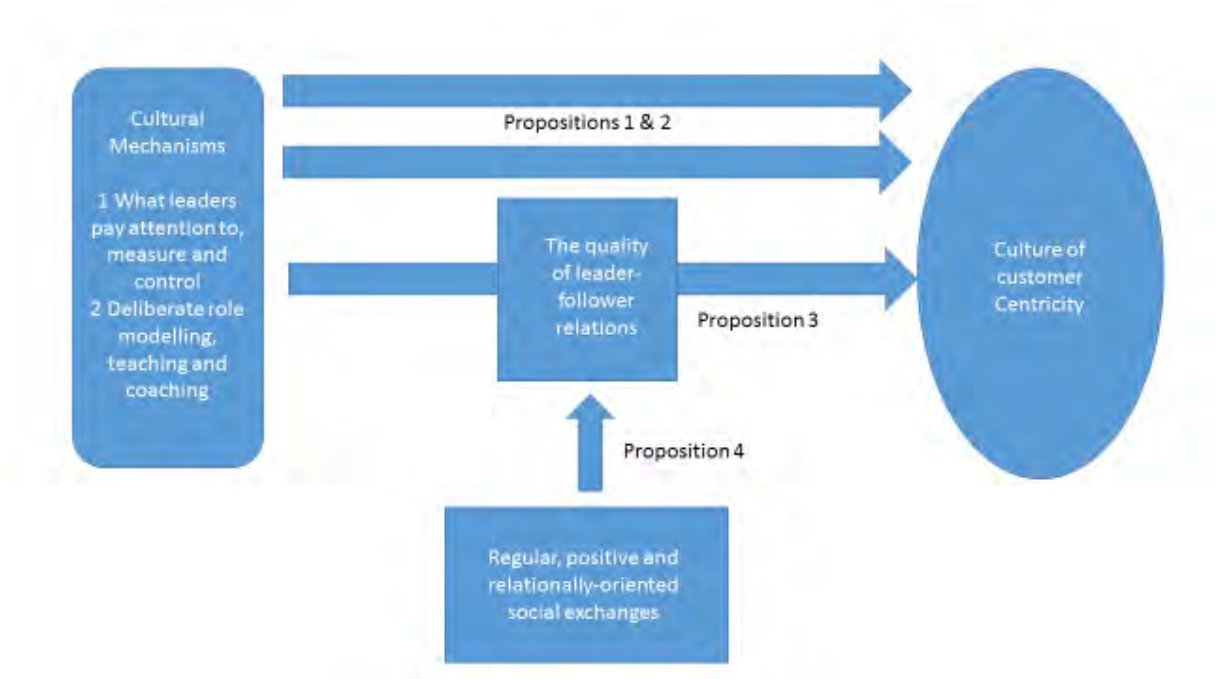


Figure 2.1: Framework illustrating how leaders shape a culture of customer centricity

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to explain the process undertaken by the researcher, in gathering and analysing data. The post-positivist paradigm will be explained, as the paradigm for this study. The research method followed was a case study, and therefore the explanatory case study method will be described. The data collection techniques used, and the data analysis procedure followed will also be explained.

3.2 Research design

“A research design focuses on the end product and all the steps in the process to achieve the outcome anticipated” (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.143). The study took a post positive approach in the form of an explanatory case study and adopting a qualitative research methodology.

Qualitative studies allow research into social problems and are non-numerical in nature. A qualitative study allows investigation into process, activity or people (Creswell, 2003, p.15) and can therefore be collected via interviews, as was the case in this study where semi-structured interviews were used. The interests of the qualitative researcher are more about understanding, they seek to immerse themselves in the reality of the people they observe in its most natural form to deeply understand their environment (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.308). That is the approach used by the researcher when conducting this research, as the objective was to understand how the employees reporting to the leader in the branch had experienced how she had shaped the culture of that branch.

3.3 Post positivist paradigm

“A study is qualitative if the purpose is primarily to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event” (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.65), in this instance being, how a leader shaped the culture of customer centricity in a branch of a bank. “A qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods and small samples, often purposively selected” (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.65). Qualitative research as indicated above, allows researchers to immerse themselves in the world of the people involved, and gains their trust and can therefore gather in-depth information through asking questions and examining documents written by them. This results in large amounts of textual data in the form of transcripts and observational fieldnotes (Pope, et al., 2000).

As defined by Merriam (2009) data analysis is the process of making sense out of this data. To make sense of the data, analytical categories are used to describe and explain social phenomenon (Pope, et al., 2000). Categories can either be used inductively – that is, obtained gradually from the data, or used deductively. The difference between the two approaches is that in the latter, researchers engage in existing literature – thus building on a body of knowledge. After engaging with the existing literature, theoretical propositions are established. Data is collected and themes are established (Pearse, 2019). Pearse (2019) provides seven steps of deductive thematic analysis. These were followed by the researcher in this study.

The qualitative approach is therefore aligned to a post-positivist paradigm, as this paradigm is appropriate for investigating a social phenomenon (Denscombe, 2008). For the post-positivists paradigm, the aim of the research is explanation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The focus of the researcher is understanding of the study as it unfolds (De Vos et al., 2011) and the knowledge accumulates by form of “building blocks” adding to an existing body of knowledge thus generating cause-effect linkages (Guba and Lincoln 1994). The post-positivist paradigm is therefore the ideal paradigm for this study. Once again, the researcher seeks to understand the world of the interviewees and build on an existing body of knowledge and create linkages.

3.4 Case study method

This research will be conducted as an explanatory case study to gain insights and a better understanding of the research topic in question (Babbie, et al., 2007). A case study is associated with the qualitative research methodology, in which an event, process, activity or individual(s) are investigated (Creswell, 2003, p.15). Unlike physical objects, human behaviour cannot be understood without having people giving meaning or purpose to their experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.106). Therefore, qualitative data can provide rich insights into human behaviour (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). "Since qualitative researchers are primarily interested in the meaning subjects give to their life experiences, they have to use some form of case study to immerse themselves in the activities of a small number of people in order to obtain an intimate familiarity with their social worlds and to look for patterns in the research participants' lives, words and actions in context of the case as a whole" (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.320). "An explanatory study is the type of case study that is used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes" (Yin, 2003, cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008, p.548). The purpose of an explanatory case study is to build and to test theory. Due to its nature of detailed investigation of complex entities or processes, explanatory case studies can produce theoretical insights that are born from real experiences (De Vos, et al., 2011, p.321).

3.5 Data collection techniques

Face-to-face, semi structured interviews were used. With semi structured interviews, the researcher will have a set of prepared questions, but these set questions are a guide and do not dictate the interview. The method gives both participant and researcher flexibility in that the researcher can follow up on interesting avenues brought about by the participant, participants may introduce an issue that researcher had not thought of. Semi structured interviews allow the researcher to gain detailed picture of a participant's views about a topic or an account. (De Vos, et al., 2011:352). This method suited the study as the researcher wanted the universal bankers (UB's) to share the in-depth knowledge, which only they could provide.

Face-to-face semi structured interviews with universal bankers (former sales consultants) of the branch were conducted. As the research unfolded, more

information was gained about the former branch manager through the team's responses. The researcher also found it necessary to conduct a telephonic interview with the leader under study to get her perspective of what she has done.

The type of sampling method used was purposive sampling, as the researcher deliberately chose to interview only those staff members in the chosen branch that have customer centricity as their key performance indicator in their job contracts. The branch was chosen by the gate keeper (Head of the North East province), based on its performance in terms of customer centricity. The population of branch is 33 staff members, out of which ten were selected to participate as the sample size, however only nine were interviewed. One of the ten universal bankers one was on training at the head office on the dates of the interviews. Interviews were conducted on 28 and 29 January 2020 at the branch, in Limpopo. The interview time for each universal banker was approximately 30 - 45 minutes.

3.6 Interview questions

The interview questions were designed with the universal bankers in mind and to address the research propositions. They therefore covered the topics of leadership, culture and customer centricity (See Appendix - A). These interviews were conducted face-to-face, while a telephonic interview was conducted with the former branch manager. The questions were the same but addressed to her and required her to reflect on how she encouraged customer centricity and how she interacted with staff (See Appendix - A).

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is dealt with through a chosen analytic method, that transforms the raw data into information that can be easily understood, is reliable and even original in its analysis (De Vos, et al., 1994). Data were collected from face-to-face interviews with the universal bankers, a telephonic interview was done with the branch manager. Deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Deductive qualitative research takes as its departure point, the theoretical propositions that are derived from

a review of the literature and applies these to the collection and analysis of data (Pearse, 2019). The steps were applied as follows:

1. A conceptual framework was developed, indicating the topics that will be studied. The framework shows that high-quality relationships between the leader and followers empowers the leader to shape a culture of customer centricity by using two of Schein's mechanisms. These mechanisms are: (a) What leaders pay attention to measure and control and (b) Deliberate teaching, coaching and role modelling.
2. As explained in Chapter 2, four propositions from the framework were developed.
3. Based on the objectives of the study, the propositions and the literature framework, the researcher developed a memorandum of codes which included leadership, culture, relationship, pay attention to measure and control, coaching and customer centricity.
4. Based on the coding memorandum, interview questions were developed to cover the four prepositions mentioned above
5. Making use of the interview questions, data were collected by means of face-to-face interviews
6. In analysing the data, the codes in the memorandum were applied, after data collection the researcher first read all transcripts and applied the coding memorandum. Thereafter, similar codes were grouped into categories. Data was then summarized according to these categories, or themes.
7. Themes were established and summarized. The findings were written up, based on the initial theories and how they linked to one another (Pearse, 2019).

3.8 Reliability, validity and triangulation

A researcher can prove to the reader that his/her work deserve to be considered by using reliability, validity and triangulation (Golafshani, 2003). In both qualitative and quantitative research, researchers need to prove that their findings are credible. The difference is, in quantitative research credibility depends on how the instruments are put together. However, in qualitative research (as is the case in this study) the

researcher is the instrument. Thus, in a qualitative study the credibility of the research depends on the researcher (Golafshani, 2003). In qualitative research, reliability and validity are not mutually exclusive and in proving reliability and validity, credibility is achieved. How can reliability be achieved? In qualitative studies the most powerful tool to test reliability, is quality (Golafshani, 2003). A good qualitative study can help us understand a situation that would otherwise be complicated or confusing (Golafshani, 2003). Therefore, if a study can generate good understanding, the quality is good and therefore it is reliable. "The terms credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be essential criteria for quality" (Golafshani, 2003, p.601).

Where validity is concerned, some researchers have questioned the need for validity in qualitative studies, however they have since found the need to have some quality check or measure for their research, and therefore some have come up with their own check lists these include: quality, rigour, trustworthiness and transferability (Golafshani, 2003).

Triangulation is a test for improving the validity and reliability of research or an evaluation of findings (Golafshani, 2003). It involves the employment of multiple external data collection methods (Fusch et al., 2018). In this study, data triangulation was used which is the combination of people, time and space (Fusch et al., 2018). The researcher initially held face-to-face interviews with nine universal bankers (out of a possible 10). After two months she conducted a telephonic interview with the branch manager.

3.9 Ethics

The researcher obtained approval from Rhodes ethics committee to conduct the research as laid out in the ethics application. When the researcher explained the purpose of the research to the gate keeper, who was Head of North East Province of the bank, he requested the researcher to conduct the research in a specific branch. Informed consent forms (See Appendix C –Informed consent forms) were used to obtain participant's consent. All participants signed consent prior to the interview. To ensure anonymity, there is no identification of the participants, and they were

numbered when the researcher was writing down their responses. During the interviews, only three participants agreed to be recorded.

3.10 Role of the researcher

The researcher is employed by the bank under study. Her position in the bank is middle management as she is a provincial manager, responsible for change and adoption in the North West Province. The researcher is also a member of the provincial executive committee. To reduce bias due to her position and role, the researcher conducted the research in another province of the bank, a province she had never been to (i.e. North East Province). The interviewees were all part of the universal banking team, the only people in the branch that have customer centricity in their contracts.

After the new branch manager was appointed, the researcher had to contact him to ask him for permission to interview the universal bankers. Prior to the interviews being scheduled, he addressed them in a meeting, and they agreed to participate. Once the researcher arrived on site, she explained the research to the participants and its purpose. She asked them to sign the consent form and had also explained that they are not obligated to respond, or take part, and could withdraw at any stage.

3.11 Limitations of the research

At the time the research was approved, there was a certain branch manager who was to be the focus of the research. However, in December 2019 she was promoted to another role within the province. At the time the interviews were conducted in January, the branch manager under study was no longer with the team as their branch manager. This could be viewed as an advantage due to the fact that the respondents may not be as limited in their responses. However, the disadvantage was that there were no documents to be analyzed (e.g. minutes of meetings).

3.12 Chapter Summary

In summary, the research was a qualitative study, a case study was done in a branch of a bank chosen by the gatekeeper. The researcher chose purposive sampling, deliberately selecting only those staff members that have customer centricity as a key performance indicator in their contracts. Nine staff members were interviewed, out of ten in the sample. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the respondents and a telephonic interview was later held with the former branch manager. Strategic documents on the walls of the branch were examined. Thematic analysis was applied to analyze the data collected by identifying themes. The research was conducted in accordance with the Rhodes business school ethics guidelines.

CHAPTER 4

Research findings and discussion

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and the discussion of the study. The findings are of a qualitative nature, gathered by means of conducting interviews with nine staff members of a branch of a bank, as well as their former leader. The analysis and findings are in accordance with the main aim and objectives of the study. The aim of the study is to analyze how a leader has shaped a culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank. The objectives of this study are:

- To describe the culture of customer centricity that was cultivated by the branch manager.
- To analyze what the leader pays attention to, measures and controls on a regular basis, in support of a culture of customer centricity.
- To analyze how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching in support of a culture of customer centricity.
- To analyze whether - and if so how - the quality of the dyadic relations between the leader and her followers enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanisms on the culture of customer centricity.
- To analyze how the leader built high quality relations with her followers

The sections below provide the findings of the investigation of the above-mentioned propositions of the study. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the case, including introducing the branch and branch manager under study. Thereafter the bank's strategy is presented before presenting the analysis of the case study. Here, the main research themes or findings are presented and discussed. This is structured according to the research objectives. The chapter ends with a summary of the chapter.

4.2 THE CASE STUDY

4.2.1 THE BRANCH

The Branch under study, is one of the oldest branches in Limpopo province. It is located in the CBD of one of the towns of Limpopo province. The clientele is mix of all segments (i.e. personal and business customers). Within the personal segment, a variety of customers were served in this branch, including Private Banking, Prestige, and Elite customers; as well as clients at the lower end of the market and forex customers. As is the case in business banking, all brackets were serviced in this branch including Agriculture, Small enterprise, Business and Commercial. The branch in question is the Bank's biggest branch in the province.

4.2.2 THE LEADER

The branch manager joined the bank in question on 26 November 2016. She joined the bank as the branch manager for the branch under study. Prior to that she was a branch manager at another bank, where she had been a branch manager since 2012. When she joined the branch, the branch had had no branch manager for a year. Not surprisingly, there were numerous customer complaints and customers were despondent. When she arrived, one of her first tasks was to meet with the team and discuss how they could improve customer service in the branch. By the time that she left the branch, she was recognized by the bank as having set a benchmark for customer centricity.

4.3 THE BANK'S GROUP STRATEGY

The table below provides a summary of the bank's group strategy aimed at regaining market share. The strategy is cascaded down and implemented as is, at branch level. Comprehension and implementation of the strategy by staff in the branches is key to the bank, in the quest to regain market share.

Table 4.1 FINANCIAL INSTITUTION STRATEGY DOCUMENT

GROUP PURPOSE	"Africa is our home we drive her growth"
GROUP VISION	To be the leading financial service organization in, for and across Africa, delivering exceptional client experience and superior value
EXECUTING OUR GROUP STRATEGY, OUR KEY FOCUS AREAS ARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client Centricity• Universal Financial Services• Digitisation
WE MEASURE PROGRESS USING FOUR VALUE DRIVERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client focus• Employee Engagement• Risk & Conduct• Financial Outcome

(Financial Institution, 2020)

4.3.1 THE GROUP STRATEGY

At the time of the interviews, all universal bankers were clear on the above-mentioned strategy of the bank. Aligned to the group strategy, they were also clear and articulate in terms of the branch's strategy: "To grow our Branch and to provide exceptional service to our customers." According to them, both strategies were discussed frequently by the branch manager during their branch meetings. They had also seen the group strategy on the bank's internal TV channel and strategy documentation, and it was displayed on their branch walls, in restrooms and elsewhere. The strategy above highlights three focus areas for the bank, and therefore for the branch:

- Customer Centricity
- Universal Financial Services
- Digitization

As previously explained, the focus of this study is customer centricity as an espoused value and how the leader shaped the culture of customer centricity.

4.3.2 DESCRIPTION OF A CULTURE OF CUSTOMER CENTRICITY

The first objective of the study was to describe the culture of customer centricity that was cultivated by the branch manager. According to the universal bankers the customer is the most important person. The customer is the centre of everything that they do, because they believe that if there is no customer – there will be no bank. They strive to always exceed customer expectations by providing solutions linked to the customer needs rather than merely selling the bank products. They are obsessed with customers and under the branch manager's guidance, came up with the following rules to ensure the customer is always happy with their Branch:

- 1) No customer will leave unattended, or no customer will be turned back,
- 2) All staff will be visible and active on the floor on busy days, there are no important positions (hierarchy) - we all serve no matter how senior you are the customer comes first,
- 3) On busy days, all take a 5-minute lunch so that they can get back to the floor to serve,
- 4) All staff wear name badges and call the customer by name,
- 5) All staff will go the extra mile for customers and
- 6) All customers will be treated equally.

The rules emerged from the team's understanding or appreciation of customer centricity, and as one universal banker put it: "Basically, customer centricity is about giving customers a great customer experience when they walk through our doors and making sure that we satisfy their needs and to ensure that before they leave, they get what they came here for." All the universal bankers that were interviewed - even though they all phrased it differently - were clear that the essence of customer centricity is putting the customer first. Another universal banker stated: "Customer centricity is helping customers to satisfy their needs and providing solutions for them." Due to this appreciation, when asked by the new branch manager to come up with a plan for customer centricity for their branch, they came up with the rules above.

The rules were adhered to by all universal bankers. "We have a good relationship with customers, we go all out. Even if the branch is full, we take only 5 minutes lunch so

we can serve them” one universal banker stated. The fact that the rules came from them, gave them a sense of ownership and commitment to the rules and customer centricity as an espoused value. One interviewee explained this commitment as follows: “Yes, we have our own rules, we do not want a customer to leave un-attended, even if they have a document missing like an ID, we make sure we find one on the system. We try by all means.” The level of commitment to the rules and to customer centricity was very evident in the interviews. Therefore, the rules created by the team, were not merely adhered to, but became a way of life and thus a culture of customer centricity emerged, because in everything they did the customer was their first priority.

4.4 WHAT THE LEADER PAID ATTENTION TO, MEASURED AND CONTROLLED ON A REGULAR BASIS

Consistent with the first research proposition, the second objective of the study was to analyze what the leader pays attention to, measures and controls on a regular basis, in support of a culture of customer centricity. When the universal bankers were asked if there were things that their leader had paid a great deal of attention to, measured and controlled on a regular basis, they all mentioned two things, namely the client register and queue management.

4.4.1 CLIENT REGISTER

In describing the branch manager’s focus on the client register, one universal banker said: “The complaints and compliments register, she used it as a tool for customers to rate us. She also looked at the time (how long a customer waited before being helped). Also, overall to measure our customer service.” As mentioned, earlier, before the branch manager commenced her duties in this branch, there was no leader for a year and therefore there had been a lot of customer complaints. To address this, the branch manager used the client register to control and measure the branch’s activities regarding customer centricity.

The client register is a file where, when the customer walks into the branch, they provide their name, surname contact details and reason for the visit. The time that the customer came is annotated, and before the customer leaves, they comment on how they were served and the time they left the bank. This file is available in most branches of the bank; however, it is barely looked at by most branch managers.

According to the branch manager, when she scrutinized the file regularly, she looked at:

- 1) Account closures – how many accounts were closed and why a customer closed their account,
- 2) Customer complaints – how many there were; and all customers who complained were contacted by her personally to follow up on the complaint
- 3) How long it took from the time the customer came into the branch to the time the customer was assisted,
- 4) Following up with customers to check if their queries are closed and if they are satisfied by contacting them telephonically, and
- 5) The register was used by the branch manager as part of the bi-annual performance discussion that took place with each of the universal bankers. The more compliments there had been for that banker, the higher the customer centricity score while any complaints logged lowered the customer centricity score. The branch manager scrutinized the client register weekly.

The register was also used to measure the employees' performance on customer centricity, and as a tool for reward and recognition, where every Tuesday employees were rewarded using the bank's rewards (which are vouchers redeemable in all retailers with card machines). The staff members are given cards, when one is rewarded, the rand value is allocated to that card. Another form of reward was a simple "thank you" as recognition for doing well, this also formed part of the Tuesday meetings among the universal bankers.

Every Tuesday she would gather the team and announce the name of the universal banker with the most compliments received during the previous week. The complaints were dealt with immediately, and the universal banker responsible had a coaching session with the leader. The lessons learned of how to avoid similar complaints would

be addressed at the next Tuesday meeting. As a result of the branch manager regularly checking on these elements in the register, it resulted in a clear daily focus on customers by the employees.

4.4.2 QUEUE MANAGEMENT

On busy days (i.e. social grants and month end), the queue outside the bank is long, even before the bank has opened. When she noticed this, the branch manager asked the staff to also start managing the queue outside, while other staff served the customers inside at the front of the line. On such days it was agreed that it was “all hands-on deck”, so if one department was busy (enquiries as an example) and another department was quiet (sales as an example), all sales staff would leave their desks and assist in serving customers. The branch manager was always first to start scrutinizing the queue and helping customers. Queue management was about walking the queue and asking customers what they came in for, and if they wanted a service that was available on digital platforms, or the ATM they were assisted accordingly.

In the past customers would stand for a long time in a queue, without being assisted. As a result, some would leave without being attended to, some would complain of a poor customer experience and some would stand in the wrong queue for a long time. One of the highest complaints was regarding the waiting times in the branch. A root cause was found to be language related. That is, when customers walk in, they write their names in the register and then wait to be called. Sometimes - due to language barriers - when the customer's name is called it is pronounced so badly, that some customers don't recognize they were being called. The result was that the customer would remain seated and then complain that they were waiting very long. In response to this, the branch manager implemented a numbering system. Instead of the customers being called out by name at reception, they were called out by their number. This new system worked very well and as a result, there were less complaints.

The management of the queue by the leader ensured all staff were always visible on the floor to assist with the queue themselves, most importantly this contributed to a customer centric approach for the entire branch, because customers became the priority and those that could be assisted on digital platforms were assisted accordingly

as opposed to them standing in a queue for a long time. Once again, the culture of customer centricity was cemented.

4.4.3 THE RESULT: A CLIENT CENTRIC FOCUS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CUSTOMER CENTRIC CULTURE

The branch manager's focus on the client register and on queue management had a number of positive outcomes. Firstly, as a result of the actions taken with both the client register and queue management, it was found that there was more focus on why customers are closing their accounts or leaving the bank. Therefore, instead of the employees merely closing the accounts on request of the customer, they probed and attempted to salvage the customers if they could.

Secondly, since customers with complaints were contacted by the leader, each employee ensured they deliver value to clients to minimize the number of complaints listed against their names.

Thirdly, waiting times improved. With the leader paying attention to the time the customers spent at the branch, the employees were more aware about customers not being assisted on time or waiting around in the waiting area for too long.

Due to what the leader paid attention to, this firstly ensured that there was no universal banker idle. Finally, there was always someone walking the queue, helping customers and redirecting customers if need be. This behaviour aligned to their rules of ensuring that "no customer leaves unattended." In these and other ways, the culture of customer centricity was further cemented.

4.4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE CULTURAL MECHANISM OF WHAT THE LEADER PAID ATTENTION TO

Bass and Avolio (1993) asserted that it is the leader that creates mechanisms to develop culture and through their behaviour reinforce norms, while Schein (2010) indicated the most powerful way a leader can communicate what is important to them

is by what they systematically pay attention to. To further elaborate, the attention the leader paid attention to could be what the leader criticized, praised or rewarded (Schein, 2010). What was crucial is that the leader must be consistent and systematic (Schein, 2010). Therefore, when the leader of the branch paid attention and controlled the register and the queue, the result was a culture of customer centricity. This culture was created by the leader firstly clarifying with the team the elements that she will be paying attention to, as mentioned above: The account closures, the compliments, the complaints, the time the customers spent in the branch and the queue.

The leader was also consistent in contacting all customers with complaints to ensure their queries are resolved. She read out any compliments at the Tuesday meetings, she made sure the waiting time of the customers in the branch was as short as possible, and she also made sure all bankers report on their account closures. By doing this regularly and consistently, she shaped the culture of customer centricity.

The findings therefore support and illustrate the first proposition, namely: What the leader pays attention measures and controls supports a culture of customer centricity.

4.5 ROLE MODELLING, COACHING AND TEACHING

The third objective of the study is to analyze how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching as a cultural mechanism, in support of a culture of customer centricity. For ease of reference, role modelling, teaching and coaching collectively, will be referred to here as staff development.

According to the branch manager: "I was role modelling, as I was always on the floor with them and the customers showing them what to do. I did teach as well. When I arrived, every complaint/issue was always referred to the branch manager to solve. I had to show them and teach them to be accountable. As an example, if a customer wanted fees waived, I taught them to listen to the customer and make decisions. I pushed back and eventually reduced the number of complaints escalated to me."

The branch manager developed her staff by (1) setting an example for others to follow, coached and mentored her staff; (2) empowering her staff to solve problems and make

decisions; and (3) giving reward and recognition where it was due. These developmental behaviours contributed to the culture of customer centricity.

4.5.1 SETTING AN EXAMPLE OF ROLE MODELLING, COACHING AND TEACHING

The branch manager was always visible and active on the floor. She showed the Universal Bankers what to do on the floor. She always gave them constant feedback on what they did well and how to improve where necessary, as and when it was happening. She was a “straight talker” and fixed issues as and when they appeared, she also always rewarded and gave recognition where necessary. She led by example and coached on the job. She held regular meetings where she was always teaching. She ensured the team understood that nobody’s title is more important than serving customers, she demonstrated this daily there was no hierarchy.

The branch manager had a box of books in her office, she always encouraged the staff to read. She also inspired the universal bankers to study and always inspired them to expand their minds and to “think outside the box”.

The example that she set, is summarized in the following statement by one of the universal bankers. “She definitely role modelled, because she didn’t just tell us what to do, she showed us and lived what she said on the floor herself. Some customers didn’t even know who the real branch manager was”

4.5.2 EMPOWERMENT

The branch manager did not just encourage the staff to “think out of the box” (i.e. think beyond the bank’s old rules and find new way of doing things) in order to solve customer problems, but also empowered them to do so. When the branch manager arrived, the staff were always scared to make decisions. She empowered them to be innovative and to make tough decisions, in the name of customer centricity. For example, in the beginning of her tenure, when a customer was difficult, the team would always refer the customer to the branch manager’s office. Over time, she and coached

them on how to handle difficult customers, instead of merely solving problems for them and eventually the number of complaints escalated to her reduced.

A popular request by customers is that their fees or interest be waived, when they were dissatisfied with the bank. Ordinarily, these kinds of requests would be referred to the branch manager to make the decision. However, they were coached to handle difficult customers. Universal Bankers were now empowered to make their own decisions where customer complaints were concerned. Moreover, she supported whatever decisions they made (in line with legislation and the bank's values), on condition that they would support customer centricity.

The team started getting more motivated to serve customers, they then started coming up with their own ideas to ensure that customers do not leave the branch unattended. An example, one universal banker said " We do not want a customer to leave un-attended, even if they have a document missing like an ID document, we find a copy of their ID on the system. We try by all means." They made tough calls and were supported by their branch manager.

4.5.3 THE EFFECT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT ON THE CULTURE

Having described how the branch manager developed her staff through the culture mechanism of role modelling, teaching and coaching, this section focuses on analysing the effect of this mechanism on the culture of customer centricity. The effect was that the universal bankers knew exactly what to do on the floor, they learned how to handle difficult customers as a result of the coaching, and they were equipped to be able to serve customers in a manner that cemented a culture of customer centricity.

4.5.4 DISCUSSION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE

Schein (2010) asserted that leadership behaviours are instrumental in communicating the organization's values and assumptions to the employees. Thus, a leader communicates these desired cultural values through their actions, role modelling and coaching (Schein, 2010). This implies that whatever behaviour the employees see

from the leader, they will emulate, and thereby create that as a culture. The leader in the branch communicated and effectively demonstrated how to uphold the values of the bank. Customer centricity is a goal of that bank that is instrumental in, gaining market share and customer loyalty and therefore the leader in this branch deliberately demonstrated the required behaviours to achieve customer centricity.

As observed by Elliger and Keller (2003, p.436) "The concept of coaching has emerged as a new paradigm or metaphor for management." Thus, indicating a new way of influencing employees to perform the way leaders want them to perform – is coaching. Consequently, because the leader demonstrated what needed to be done, to achieve the organization's goal – the universal bankers emulated the desired behaviour.

According to Sigler and Pearson (2000) employees who feel: (1) that they have been equipped with the skills they need to do their work, (2) that they can choose how to execute their work and (3) who feel that their work is meaningful, will produce better results than those employees who don't share the same sentiments. Sigler and Pearson (2000) also asserted that employees who display this behaviour perceive themselves to be empowered and thus the quality of work that they produce will always be better.

Over and above emulating the desired behaviour, the team was empowered to serve customers in a manner beneficial to customers through the leaders' behaviour of coaching them to do so and teaching them how to handle difficult customers. The findings therefore support and illustrate the second proposition, namely: Role modelling coaching and teaching support a culture of customer centricity.

4.6 DYADIC RELATIONS AND CULTURAL MECHANISMS

The fourth objective of the study was to analyze whether – and if so how - the quality of the dyadic relations between the leader and her followers enables or disables the effect of cultural mechanisms on the culture of customer centricity. To meet the fourth objective, a description of the typical relationship that existed between the leader and

her followers will first be explained, then the effect of the quality of the relationships on the cultural mechanisms will be demonstrated.

4.6.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP

According to the employees interviewed, the universal bankers had a high-quality relationship with the leader. A quote that illustrates this is: “Her door was always open for both us and customers, she had a positive attitude and made time for everyone”. As another universal banker summarized “She led by example”. Other typical comments made about the leader’s character were about her open and honest communication. It was clear from the interviews that the universal bankers liked her, respected her and trusted her; and because of this, they followed her instructions with ease.

4.6.2 THE EFFECT OF QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS ON CULTURAL MECHANISMS

The effect of the positive relationships between the leader and her staff, meant that the cultural mechanisms were enabled to produce a customer centric culture. This was evident in several ways.

Firstly, through the constant consultation, communication and building of relations between leader and followers, fewer customer complaints arose, and the customer service scores of the branch improved. The staff realized that the leader had the customer’s interests at heart and theirs, and therefore this led to her often teaching them how to treat customers, for example. They reciprocated and thus high-quality relationships were formed between the leader, staff and customers. An employee said: “She always wants to make customers happy. If it’s busy, she will ask us in a very nice manner to work through lunch and we didn’t think twice. She would lead by example and scrutinize the queue herself.”

Secondly, they speak fondly of her coaching, role modelling and teaching. A few staff members also highlighted how they felt inspired by the leader due to how she treated

them an example is that one Universal banker has a chronic condition. She felt inspired to always do more for the leader because, the leader showed she cared for her personally and always showed concern and where necessary she was always accommodated by the leader for her condition. They also admired her for leading by example. They held her in high regard, therefore, when she was showing them what to do, correcting their mistakes and teaching them. They followed her instructions and learnt with ease. A result is that they grew in confidence as bankers and were able to handle their own difficult customers without referring to the branch manager, as was the case in the past.

Finally, there were several examples whereby staff contributed beyond the requirements of their job description. As mentioned before, the branch manager managed a branch with all segment of the bank – in one branch. As an example, due to her leadership universal bankers would offer to assist in business banking and private banking, to firstly develop themselves, as they were inspired by the leader; and wanted to support the leader and the bank. Often there is a challenge of staff availability on weekends or when some people go for training. Therefore, the universal bankers would volunteer to assist in whichever department there were staff shortages, as a display of support towards the leader.

In the bank there is an expectation for leaders to be involved in the communities in which they operate. This would entail, visiting hospitals to give gifts to children or cleaning a certain part of the community. Volunteer work is not remunerated, and if an employee agrees to participate it is in their own time and at their own cost. Community work was always outside of working hours however the leader would not struggle should she need employees to support community initiatives.

4.6.3 DISCUSSION OF QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS AS AN ENABLER OF CULTURAL MECHANISMS

Leader member exchange (LMX), is about exchanges that take place between the leader and the employee (Lee et al.,2019) LMX is a reflection of the quality of the relationship between leader and employee, and through repeated positive interactions between leader and employee high quality relationships develop between them

(Porter, 2018). Due to these repeated exchanges between the leader and her followers, high quality relations were built.

Secondly, due to the perceived high quality of relationship the leader could, for example, pay attention to, measure and control the client register and manage the queue without staff feeling that they are being micromanaged. Instead, they knew she was doing this to make customers happy, and in turn they were committed to do the same.

Thirdly, when employees perceive the quality of the relationship to be high, they will go above and beyond the call of duty. Such employees will go beyond contractual obligations and engage in organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), as defined by Lee et al. (2019). OCB is when employees go beyond contractual duties and engage in duties that are not recognized by the organizational reward system.

The staff in the branch showed the relationship they had with the leader was of a high quality. As a result, when the leader implemented mechanisms to shape culture of customer centricity, the mechanisms were well received and implemented. To demonstrate the high-quality relationship the employees started engaging in OCB. When the staff engaged in OCB, this created another cycle of obligations from the leader and therefore the quality of the dyad strengthened and thus the cultural mechanisms were becoming easier to implement

Therefore, it can be said that the findings support and illustrate the third proposition, namely: The quality of the dyad enabled the effect of the cultural mechanisms.

4.7 HOW HIGH-QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS WERE BUILT BETWEEN LEADER AND FOLLOWER

The final objective of the study was to analyze how the leader built high quality relations with her followers. Firstly, the exchanges that took place between the leader and her followers will be described.

4.7.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE EXCHANGES IN THE BRANCH

When the branch manager first came to the branch, one of the first things she did was to consult with the team regarding the state of the customer service and included them in coming up with the branch's strategy – aligned to the group strategy. "Being new helped me, I had to take a collaborative approach in sharing the strategy by getting ideas from them on how we can improve customer service. You get better buy-in when you hear from them and you just add here and there. This process also helped me to get to know them as staff, customers and the new environment. So, communication helped me."

Firstly, the branch manager consulted with her followers, as she wanted a bottom up approach in implementing the strategy versus top-down, as in her words in provides more buy in and action. She also mentions that she used the consultation sessions to get to know the staff and the new environment.

Secondly, she built relations by getting to know them, she understood their strengths and weaknesses and played to the team's strengths and weaknesses accordingly. The roles were clarified, and expectations were clarified with the team.

Thirdly even though the rules were clear, she found it necessary to show the team what to do when they were not doing the right thing and always gave constant feedback. This was done through consistent communication. One universal banker mentioned: "She will observe what we are doing and later discuss with us, she basically coached on the job, her feedback was constructive" When the team was coached, they became empowered – there was mutual trust and respect. One universal banker confirmed "When we implemented the stuff, she taught us, she actually gave us support and so we knew she had our backs" The universal bankers voiced that they felt like they were cared for and treated as individuals. What was well received by the team was the weekly Tuesday meetings were staff received incentives, and some a "Thank you" whether the team just enjoyed being recognized especially in front of their colleagues. The above-mentioned exchanges were reciprocated by, commitment to serving customers including taking 5-minute lunches on month ends, loyalty to the leader – whatever request she came with they supported and respected, the team was always ready to go the extra mile.

4.7.2 DISCUSSION ON BUILDING HIGH QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

According to Walumba, Cropanzano and Goldman(2011, p.740) “High quality LMX relationships are characterized by trust, open communication and information sharing” Therefore, to summarize the exchanges that happened in this branch, the leader was deliberate in consulting the team to get a bottom up strategy. While doing this she got to know the staff members and thus started building relations. She then communicated consistently through coaching and teaching. In turn, the team firstly felt empowered when she coached them to make their decisions when dealing with difficult customers and supported those decisions. They were committed to serving customers at all costs, they were loyal and respected their leader and they felt cared for. The findings therefore support and illustrate the fourth objective: To analyze how the leader built high quality relations with her followers, it was found that through consultation, communication and building relations the high-quality relations were developed.

4.8 ADDITIONAL FINDING - REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Although analysing the role of reward and recognition as a cultural mechanism was not an objective of the study, during the interviews with the universal bankers it emerged as a prominent factor in the development of customer centricity in the branch.

The bank’s policy provided various ways to acknowledge outstanding behaviour that contributed towards meeting the bank’s goals. There are financial rewards in the form of vouchers or gift cards that are loaded with money up to R1000 limit, the amount determined by the person nominating. There are also duvet days, where the line manager gives a staff member a day off, and verbal recognition in the form of “thank you notes”. These could either be from one staff member to another, or from the line manager to the staff member.

The branch manager began to use the customer register as a basis to reward and recognize staff who had received compliments from customers. “She created a culture of recognising even the small things we do, this could even be a ‘Thank you’ or ‘Well done’ as long everybody knew you did something, we were happy with that.”

Sometimes the leader would give a simple thank you to the team and let them know who is doing well, the team appreciated this recognition and it propelled them to serve their customers better.

To further entrench a culture of customer centricity, the team members were asked by the branch manager to start nominating each other for the bank's monetary incentive. They then started looking out for excellent customer experiences that were displayed by team members. Consistently, every Tuesday there was a service celebration where all those who received compliments from customers, or any other type of reward or recognition, were publicly acknowledged and celebrated.

They would meet, hold hands in a circle and nominate each other. These weekly celebrations stood out for the universal bankers during the branch manager's tenure. Before the meetings, there was great excitement and a build up as to who would get nominated and who would be recognized. The meetings were a celebration of each other. The branch manager described the meetings as follows: "Our Tuesday meetings were special, we would hold hands and recognize each other for great service, everyone had to openly nominate someone and say their nomination. We would clap hands, dance and do drumrolls for the nominations, this was fun...everyone made sure they go out of their way for the customer, so they get recognized...I too looked forward to those nominations."

The weekly "celebrations" seemed to really motivate the staff to continue giving customers exceptional service. One universal banker mentioned: "We really looked forward to those Tuesday meetings, nothing beats being recognized in front of the whole branch!" The result of these reward and recognition practices was that while the universal bankers had tried to serve their customers before, they were now even more motivated to do so, because they were being recognised and rewarded for doing the right thing.

4.8.1 DISCUSSION OF REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Mehmood et al., (2013) recommended that if an organization wanted to achieve its organizational goals: skilful coaching together with reward and recognition was essential as the combination contributes positively towards work performance.

Customer centricity is a strategic goal of the bank and it was important for this branch, the branch manager therefore did well in ensuring that it is achieved by rewarding the universal bankers who did well in serving customers, thus a culture of customer centricity was further cemented. The reward and recognition motivated the staff and created a lot of excitement and build-up for the Tuesday weekly meetings.

Cameron and Pierce (1997, in Milne, 2007) explored the effects of rewards and recognition on building a culture and found that. They observed the role of tangible and intangible rewards. Tangible rewards like money motivated employees towards completing a task or towards attaining or exceeding specified expectations. Intangible rewards on the other hand, such as giving an employee praise, increased interest towards tasks and thereby increased performance. The leader of this branch used both tangible and intangible rewards, and the universal bankers acknowledged that even a simple “thank you” or “well done” motivated them and encouraged them to exceed customer expectations. The branch manager’s initiative of recognizing and rewarding employees for serving customers well, therefore cemented the culture of customer centricity.

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary, this Chapter presented and discussed the findings of the research. The findings were discussed in line with the objectives and thereby the propositions were tested. Customer centricity was described and there was an analysis of what the leader pays attention to measures and controls on a regular basis in support of a culture of customer centricity. There was an analysis of how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching in support of a culture of customer centricity. Furthermore, there was an analysis of how the quality of the dyad relations enabled the effect of cultural mechanisms; and the kind of social exchanges that created high quality relations were identified.

The branch manager was successful in shaping a culture of customer centricity in the branch. Firstly, the group strategy was shared repeatedly and secondly the branch strategy was aligned to the group strategy to get this alignment, the leader consulted with the universal bankers as to how they would achieve the branch’s strategy. The

study confirmed and explained how the leader used two of Schein's mechanisms to shape a culture of customer centricity namely: (1) what leaders pay attention to measure and control and (2) deliberate role modelling and coaching. Recognition and reward also emerged as a third cultural mechanism that was prominent in shaping the culture.

The branch manager was good at role modelling, coaching and teaching – she led by example and was always visible on the floor and showed the universal bankers what to do and what not to do. This empowered and inspired the team, and the customer service improved. As confirmed by the universal bankers, the quality of the relationship between them and the leader was high and thus when the leader was consulting, communicating and building relations with the universal bankers, she became successful in shaping the culture of customer centricity in the branch.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter five brings the study to an end. The findings are summarized, there are implications as well as recommendations for leaders. There are also acknowledgements with regards to delimitations and limitations of the study. The contributions of the study are stated and finally there are recommendations for further research.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study was about how a leader shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank. There were five objectives that the study aimed to achieve, as follows:

The first objective was to describe customer centricity as an espoused value of the financial institution. The study described customer centricity as putting the customer at centre of the business. The findings indicated that the universal bankers of the branch under study, at the request of their newly appointed leader – to define what their customer centricity strategy would be; came up with their own rules on how they would serve customers in their branch. They lived by their rules, one of them being “no customer will leave un-attended” as an example, they supported each other, and their leader also supported them in implementing their rules. Customer centricity in the branch started taking shape.

The second objective was to analyze what the leader pays attention to measures and controls on a regular basis in support of a culture of customer centricity. Findings indicated that the leader paid attention to, measured and controlled the client register, weekly by looking at the compliments, complaints, time customers walked in compared to the time they left and the account closures. The leader also paid attention to the

queue in the branch, on month end days they were all on the floor, serving and re-directing customers including the leader. When the leader consistently did this, it created a culture of customer of customer centricity

The third objective was to analyze of how the leader conducts deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching in support of a culture of customer centricity. It was found that the leader was always on the floor, showing the universal banker how to serve customers. She coached them as and when incidents occurred. When they started making decisions, she then empowered them by supporting the decisions they made. She also rewarded and recognized the staff who did well in terms of customer centricity and also encouraged the universal bankers to nominate each other, they had weekly meetings to celebrate the nominations. These activities contributed enormously towards a culture of customer centricity.

The fourth objective was to analyze whether the quality of the dyad relations enable the effect of cultural mechanisms. It was found that the quality of the relationships between the leader and the universal bankers was high, as result the universal bankers started engaging in organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and this is when the employees perceive the quality of the relationship with the leader to be so high that they start engaging in OCB, by going above contractual obligations. Since the quality of the dyad was high, the leader could easily implement the cultural mechanisms above.

The last objective was to analyze how high-quality relations had been created, and highlighted the importance of consultation, communication and building of relations. It was found that when the leader first joined the team, she consulted with them in order to build a bottom-up strategy for customer centricity for the branch. She used these consultations to get to know the universal banker and thus build relations with them. When she had done this, it was much easier for her to communicate by consistently giving feedback, teaching and coaching towards the desired culture of customer centricity. Thus, the exchanges that created high quality relations were indeed consultation, communication and building relations.

Reward and Recognition was not an objective when the study began, however all universal bankers mentioned the strong impact of the introduction of: recognising the small contributions of the banker, with a mere “thank you”, rewards the universal

bankers enjoyed the financial rewards and what had the most impact were the weekly Tuesday celebrations. Reward and recognition played a crucial role in the customer centricity becoming a culture in the branch.

5.3. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

The study highlights a few recommendations for managers:

- When a new leader joins a new team, instead of building their knowledge of the new business alone or constructing a strategy for the team in isolation, it is recommended to include the team in strategy formulation. This doesn't only provide immediate buy in for the new strategy, but it also gives an opportunity for the new leader to get to know the team and to build relations.
- Employees watch and learn better from their leaders' actions versus what they say. Things that leaders do or don't do daily, shape a culture whether the leader intended to do so, or not. Leaders need to be mindful of their behaviours, and if a leader wants to achieve a goal through the employees, it is recommended that they lead by example. The same is true for behaviours that are not wanted, the leader needs to be the first to refrain from unacceptable behaviour.
- Reward and recognition can contribute positively towards shaping the desired culture, however consistency is very important as a leader, as it helps to be credible and reliable to the team. If a leader is going to reward for certain behaviour, they need to be consistent in doing so. It is also recommended to have set days to do this, this helps build rapport and excitement among staff. It becomes something they look forward to regularly.
- It is recommended for leaders to consistently hold regular meetings. However, the meetings need to add value, and there must be something to learn and look forward to.
- A final recommendation is for the financial institution is to investigate how to ensure that good leadership practices such as these are emulated across the organization. For example, branches that are doing well could have visitors from other branches for a short period of time to understand how things are done in one branch.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.4.1. Delimitations of the study

The scope of the study was such that it only focused on the universal bankers, who worked with the branch manager over a relatively short period of time of two years. Therefore, design of the study was such that the study only looked at how culture was shaped in the branch, from the perspective of the universal bankers. The study did not include other positions in the branch, such as tellers. The study also did not include the customer perspective. Future research studies could focus on all branch staff and include the customer perspective.

The study focused only on customer centricity as an espoused value. Another study could focus on the culture more holistically and seek to understand what the overall culture is in the branch. In particular, it could look at the development of all four value drivers.

5.4.2. Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations to the study. Firstly, with respect to collecting data, at the time the researcher went to collect data in the branch, the branch manager under study had been promoted to a different role within the bank. There was a new leader in the branch, and thus all documentation and minutes of meetings that had the old leader's name on, had been done away with. Therefore, the researcher could not conduct document analysis and had to rely on only interviews with nine universal bankers and their former leader as the source of data.

Secondly, the study was done only on one branch of the bank, within only one province. Therefore, the results cannot be applied to all branches of the bank, or to other provinces. Future research could examine a larger sample of branches across the provinces.

5.4.3. Contributions of the study

While the limitations and delimitations of the study are recognized, the study does make a contribution. Firstly, drawing on the literature on Social Exchange Theory (SET), where it is clear that high quality relations between leaders and employees are built through repeated interactions, this study was able to explain *how* relationship building was demonstrated by the leader. Secondly, the research has confirmed and illustrated the role of several cultural mechanisms in shaping the culture of an organisation. Further research can extend this contribution by researching the behaviour in a whole branch and not just investigating one department of a branch. The leader in this branch was there for two years, another study could investigate a longer tenure or conduct a comparison of different leaders over a period of time.

Finally, the role of reward and recognition emerged as being instrumental in shaping the culture of customer centricity. Further studies could delve into reward and recognitions as contributing factor towards shaping of culture. It is hoped that these contributions have also provided insight for leaders, and how they should work with their employees to implement strategy and bring about cultural change.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Interview Questions

Interview Question – Analysis of how leadership has shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank – Universal Bankers

1. Please state your position and how long you've worked with the Branch Manager (BM).
2. What is your organization's vision or strategy?
3. How was the vision or strategy communicated with you?
4. What is your branch's vision or strategy?
5. How was the branch vision or strategy communicated?
6. In your understanding, what is Customer Centricity?
7. With regards to Customer Centricity, do you believe that the BM has managed to instill a culture of Customer Centricity? Please give examples where possible
8. How would describe the way staff in the branch interact with customers
9. Do you have certain principles/rules/policies/codes as to how you engage with customers in your branch?
10. What is that the branch manager does to encourage a culture of customer centricity? Please elaborate specifically regarding coaching, role modelling, and teaching
11. What would you say are the things that the branch manager pays attention to measures and controls on a regular basis regarding customer centricity?
12. How would you say the systems and procedures in the branch have assisted you in reinforcing customer centricity in the branch?
13. Are there any stories about important events and people that your branch manager shared with you – that reinforce a culture of customer centricity?

Branch Manager Interview Questions – Analysis of how leadership has shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank

1. Please state your position and how long you've worked with the Branch Manager (BM).
2. What is your organization's vision or strategy?
3. How was the vision or strategy communicated with you?
4. What is your branch's vision or strategy?
5. How was the branch vision or strategy communicated?
6. In your understanding, what is Customer Centricity?
7. With regards to Customer Centricity, do you believe that the BM has managed to instill a culture of Customer Centricity? Please give examples where possible
8. How would describe the way staff in the branch interact with customers
9. Do you have certain principles/rules/policies/codes as to how you engage with customers in your branch?
10. What is that the branch manager does to encourage a culture of customer centricity? Please elaborate specifically regarding coaching, role modelling, and teaching
11. What would you say are the things that the branch manager pays attention to measures and controls on a regular basis regarding customer centricity?
12. How would you say the systems and procedures in the branch have assisted you in reinforcing customer centricity in the branch?
13. Are there any stories about important events and people that your branch manager shared with you – that reinforce a culture of customer centricity?

Appendix B -Insitution Particiation letter



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

RHODES BUSINESS SCHOOL
Tel: [+27] 046 603 8617
E-mail: N.Pearse@ru.ac.za

1 November 2019

Mr Gatekeeper
Corner Madiba and Samora Machel dr
Nelspruit
1200

Dear Mr Gatekeeper

Re: Invitation to conduct research at your institution

Mandisa Mali under the supervision of Prof Noel Pearse is a Rhodes Business School postgraduate student studying towards a Masters in Business Administration at Rhodes University carrying out research on How leadership has shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank. The aim of this research is to analyze how leadership of one branch of Standard Bank of South Africa has cultivated the organisation culture, through his/her interactions with the subordinates, and by using primary embedding mechanisms to embed a culture of customer centricity. The participation and cooperation of your institution is important so that the results of the research are accurately portrayed.

The research will be undertaken by conducting face-to-face interviews with Branch staff in one branch, specifically the universal bankers. The data to be collected from this research will be qualitative. The identity of your institution and the employees who voluntarily consent to participate will be treated with complete confidentiality. The collection of this data will require from each participant about 45 minutes to complete.

Attached for your information is a copy of the participant's Informed Consent Form. If you have questions or wish to verify the research, please feel free to contact us.

If you would like your institution to participate in this research, please complete and return the attached form.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will find our request favourable.

Yours sincerely,

Mandisa Mali
Research Student

Prof Noel Pearse
Supervisor

Notes to researcher:

- Any involvement of students in general, if this is not part of their subject, requires the approval of the Dean of Students
- If the research is carried out in the public areas of the university, the permission of the Registrar is required, and if staff is involved the approval of the Registrar or the Director: Human Resources is required.

An analysis of how leadership has shaped a culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank

Institution Consent Form

Participation Consent
I consent for you to approach employees i.e. Universal Bankers to participate in the Analysis of how leadership has shaped a culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank.
I acknowledge and understand:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role of the institution is voluntary.• I may decide to withdraw the institution's participation at any time without penalty.• Universal Bankers will be invited to participate and that permission will be sought from them too.• Only employees who consent will participate in the project.• All information obtained will be treated in strictest confidence.• The employees' names will not be used and individual employees will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.• The institution will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.• Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.• A report of the findings will be made available to the institution.• I may seek further information on the project from Mandisa Mali on 0733373173.

Full Name:	
Position:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Please return to:	
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Appendix C – Participants Informed Consent

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION

(Participant)

Project Title: An Analysis of how leadership has shaped the culture of customer centricity in the branch of a bank.

Mandisa Mali from the Business School, Rhodes University has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The purpose of the research project is to Analyze how leadership of one branch of SBSA has cultivated the organization culture through his/her interactions with subordinates.
2. The Rhodes University has given ethical clearance to this research project and I have seen/ may request to see the clearance certificate.
3. I will participate in the project by Answering Interview questions honestly
4. My participation is entirely voluntary and should I at any stage wish to withdraw from participating further, I may do so without any negative consequences.
5. I will not be compensated for participating in the research
6. There may be risks associated with my participation in the project. I am aware that
 - a. the following risks are associated with my participation: Maybe not being able to answer bank related questions
 - b. the following steps have been taken to prevent the risks: The researcher will elaborate

7. The researcher intends publishing the research results in the form of a Dissertation However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and that my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conduct of the research.
8. I will receive feedback in the form of the Dissertation regarding the results obtained during the study.
9. Any further questions that I might have concerning the research, or my participation will be answered by Mandisa Mali 073 337 3173
10. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.
11. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record.
12. Request to take pictures, video and voice recording for this study

I, have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand, and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask, and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

.....
Participants signature **Witness** **Date**

Rhodes University, Research Office, Ethics

Ethics Coordinator: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za

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