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**A FRAMEWORK THAT SUPPORTS THE ACQUISITION OF
REFLEXIVE COMPETENCE IN A MBA
*South African Perspectives***

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science,
University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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The purpose of this research was to explore the domain of reflexive competence; how it is developed in business schools; what role the Council on Higher Education (CHE) plays in supporting its development and what organisation processes support its development. Further to this, the research then set out to establish if the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence and the methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence, exist for MBA students.

The study used a dominant – less dominant design. In-depth semi-structured interviews were used in the dominant qualitative phase to explore the views of the CHE, business schools in Gauteng, and various medium to large organisations in Gauteng as to what reflexive competence actually is, and what methods or processes support its development. The findings from this phase, was then used in the less dominant quantitative phase of the study to design a survey that was administered on final year MBA students.

The findings from the dominant study showed that predominantly, reflexive competence is about making values-based judgements in varying contexts by systematically and holistically working through the issue or problem. Reflection and feedback were identified as key tools that enable an individual to develop reflexive competence that should permeate every context. Environmental factors such as open and honest communication, a safe environment and trust were found to be necessary to promote reflection and feedback. The qualitative study showed that business schools develop reflexive competence through: curriculum design, assignments and syndicate work, a case study approach, the use of lecturers with business experience and different styles of lectures, values, social responsibility and ethics education and the research project. Organisations support the development of reflexive competence though a commitment to ethics and



values, the developme oning culture, empowerment and accountability, a diverse culture and work autonomy), career development and succession planning, mentoring and learning and development. The role of the CHE in supporting the acquisition of reflexive competence was found to be that of monitoring and reviewing. It was further found that the individual needs and self interests played a huge part in developing reflexive competence.

The findings from the less dominant study showed that the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence and the methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.

Finally, a framework is proposed that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA.



I declare that this research project is my own work except where reference is made by name or in the form of a reference. This research project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Vasinthee Moodley

Date



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MBA	Master in Business Administration
AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
SA	South Africa
CHE	Council on Higher Education
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
Aspen BSP	Aspen Institute's Business and Society Programme
EBL	Experienced Based Learning
CPD	Continued Professional Development
IMD	International Institute for Management Development
HR	Human Resources
MDP	Management Development Programme
EQ	Emotional Intelligence
e-learning	Electronic Learning
IMPM	International Master's Program in Practicing Management
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

“Every craft and every line of inquiry, and likewise every action and decision, seems to seek some good; and that is why some people were right to describe the good as what everything seeks.” Aristotle (1999, p.1)

Henry Mintzberg’s book, “Managers not MBAs” (2004a) sparked huge controversy across the world and questioned the approach to management education and the very competence of Master in Business Administration (MBA) graduates. Founded in 1881 by Joseph Wharton (Mintzberg, 2004a), the MBA was once regarded as the academic qualification for business leaders and has enjoyed respectability in academia and prestige in the business world. “Today, however, MBA programs face intense criticism for failing to impart useful skills, failing to prepare leaders, failing to instil norms of ethical behaviour – and even failing to lead graduates to good corporate jobs”, Bennis and O’Toole (2005, p. 96).

The MBA has long been under attack with many questioning its relevance, its content and the teaching methodologies employed by business schools (Behrman and Levin, 1984; Muller, Porter and Rehder, 1988; Argyris, 1991; Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004a; Bennis and O’Toole, 2005; Ghoshal, 2005). In an attempt to defend the MBA and redeem the quality and prestige of business schools, Danko and Anderson (2005, p.24) claim that the “real problem with business education may not be a lack of relevance, but a lack of recognition for what it is getting right.”

Sadly though, because of fraudulent acts and an enrichment of self at the expense of others, the corporate scandals of the 21st century have left such worldwide severe effects

(Bartunek, 2002), that it schools are doing right.

These corporate crises are “undermining confidence in capital markets, eroding trust in professional institutions, and casting a shadow over the probity of corporate life and those institutions affiliated with it — including business schools,” Adler (2002, p.148). Are business schools to blame though for these acts of immorality? If so, what should they be doing? What role should be played by business in this crisis?

1.2 Motivation for the research

Corporate scandals like Enron, Worldcom, Tyco, Qwest and Global Crossing have accounted for the loss of approximately one-half trillion dollars in shareholder wealth through their aggregate misdeeds, as claimed by Horovitz (2002) cited in Laczniak and Murphy (2005, p.175). According to Laczniak and Murphy (2005), business schools are to blame for the breakdown in ethical decision making as the key participants in many of the scandals were business school graduates. It would appear that there are many ethically impoverished MBA graduates driven by the need to perform at the expense of their very own values, those of their organisations and even those of society. Have these MBA graduates stopped, even for one second, to reflect on the consequences of their actions?

Performance is often seen as a product of opportunity, motivation and competence (Blumberg and Pringle, 1982; Meyer, 1996; Robbins, 2005). These highly qualified MBA graduates from leading business schools have had the opportunity and motivation to perform. Mintzberg (2004a) advocates that a dedication to business, intelligence and aggressiveness are reasons why MBA graduates get to the top of corporate organisations. However, once at the top, not many of them actually stay there and Mintzberg found that out of the nineteen best alumni in 2003 from Harvard Business School, ten clearly failed and the performance of a further four was questionable: “None of the fourteen left behind

solid sustainable business (Michael and Sutherland (2005, p.66), suggest that, “MBA graduates be particularly aware that competence is not the same as performance, but that competence leads to performance.” With this in mind, is it not then valid to revisit the acquisition of competence on a MBA?

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (2005) claims that applied competence consists of the following:

1. Foundational competence, which is the demonstrated understanding of what we are doing and why we are doing it
2. Practical competence, which is the demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks and actions in authentic contexts, and
3. Reflexive competence, which is the demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations.

In an earlier publication, competence has been defined as “an application of knowledge, skills and values in a specific context to a defined standard of performance,” (SAQA 2002, p.16). Various other definitions are noteworthy, in particular that of Meyer (1996), who defines competence as being comprised of knowledge, skills, attributes and value orientation. Based on these three definitions, it would appear that reflexive competence incorporates the issue of values or value orientation. The term “reflexive competence” was coined by the Education Training and Development and Practices (ETDP) Project team in 1996 and first defined in the ETDP Practice Project Phase 2 report (McLean, 2006). According to McLean it was subsequently adopted verbatim by SAQA.

No doubt, business schools have done well to develop the knowledge and skills of MBA graduates. Thomas Lindsay, former provost from the University of Dallas, explains in Bennis and O’Toole (2005, p.104) that: “[B]usiness education in this country is devoted

overwhelmingly to technical training, even before Enron, studies showed that executives who fail – financially as well as morally – rarely do so from a lack of expertise. Rather they fail because they lack interpersonal skills and practical wisdom; what Aristotle called prudence. Aristotle taught that genuine leadership consisted in the ability to identify and serve the common good. To do so requires much more than technical training. It requires an education in moral reasoning, which must include history, philosophy, literature, theology and logic...”

The practical wisdom or prudence referred to by Lindsay (in Bennis and O’Toole, 2005) is also what Aristotle refers to as *phronesis*. This is “a state of grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being”, Aristotle (1999. p.89) cited in Birmingham (2004, p.314).

Therefore, taking into consideration the definitions of competence and reflexive competence stated above, one sees that the integration of performance with understanding or knowledge and skills must be done reflexively, so as to take an action that is good. Hence, SAQA’s domain of reflexive competence is, in essence, the same as the virtue of *phronesis* referred to by Aristotle, and the same as the practical wisdom or prudence needed by business school graduates, which Thomas Lindsay describes. From this, stems various questions: What exactly is reflexive competence for a MBA? How is it developed by business schools?

Reflexive competence is dependent on context; MBA students and graduates find this in the organisations for which they work. Hence other key questions that arise are: What organisation processes support the MBA student in acquiring reflexive competence? Further to this, how does the MBA accreditation body in South Africa, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), ensure that business schools actually develop reflexive competence and what role do they play in supporting business schools in developing it? Do MBA students

agree that the method, or support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist? Do their individual needs encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence? It is the answers to these questions that this research will endeavour to find and hence develop the framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA.

1.3 Relevance to South Africa

“The corporate scandals that opened the 21st century sent unpleasant reverberations through most businesses and created suspicion and distrust about the role of business and society. MBA programmes were not immune to this and nor were their students...” CHE (2004, p.114). We are living in a global world and although these corporate scandals originated in the United States, MBA graduates around the world are being questioned for their ability to make ethical business decisions that take all stakeholders into consideration. In South Africa in particular, “where political democratization came hand in hand with the promise of social justice and deracialisation, these issues are enormously relevant,” CHE (2004, p.115). The CHE go on to say that, the curriculum renewal and pedagogy that can support the development of new relationships between business and society, can only take place if there is enough research producing the knowledge base from which to develop new practices. This research will thus assist in producing some of that knowledge base.

Within the context of applied competence, SAQA (2000) claim that learners must gain practical experience in real-world contexts where they will be required to adapt and re-contextualise their learning so as to enable the development of reflexive competence and self improvement. However, “the notion of applied competence is often ignored and assessments focus on foundational competence, or in limited cases, practical competence. Rarely is assessment directed at reflexive competence,” SAQA (2000, p.18)

According to SAQA (2000) views on the issue of reflexive competence. Firstly, owing to the emphasis on outcomes, the National Qualification Framework (NQF) processes side step the issue of values in the curriculum. The second view is that, “reflexive competence requires learners to reflect on their learning experience critically, in terms of the values espoused by a democratic society and that the critical outcomes suggest that reflexive competence within the NQF includes consideration of the learning experience within a value system, the ethical implications of particular practices and the attendant social responsibilities,” SAQA (2000, p.18). SAQA go on to affirm that, “it is the duty of the educators to ensure that this educationally sound interpretation of outcomes competence is not neglected in a system that is socially negotiated,” (p.18). Hence, this research will shed some light, firstly, on the views of reflexive competence and secondly on how it is developed.

1.4 Research Aims

This research study has the following objectives:

- To define reflexive competence for a MBA
- To explore how the CHE assures and supports the acquisition of reflexive competence on a MBA.
- To explore how business schools in South Africa develop reflexive competence.
- To explore how South African organisations assist the MBA students and graduates to acquire reflexive competence.
- To establish if the methods and processes that develop or support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.
- To establish if the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.
- To develop a framework for the acquisition of reflexive competence on a MBA.

1.5 Subsequent chapters

The subsequent chapters of this research report are structured in the following way:

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature pertaining to the impact of the corporate scandals, firstly on business schools and secondly, on organisations. This is then followed by a review on leadership and, in particular, values-based leadership and ethical leadership. The fourth part of the review focuses on reflexive competence, reflexivity and *phronesis*. The fifth part incorporates a discussion on reflection, reflection tools. Finally, the review concludes with a summary of the argument that supports the research questions and research propositions

Chapter 3 outlines the research questions and research proposition.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology employed in this research. This includes the sampling procedures, methods of data collection and data analyses techniques.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the qualitative phase of the study.

Chapter 6 presents an interpretation of the qualitative study against the literature review. This interpretation leads to the design of the survey.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the quantitative study. This includes the demographics of the sample, as well as the relevant statistical analyses.

Chapter 8 presents an interpretation of the quantitative results against the findings in the qualitative study.

Chapter 9 presents the framework, recommendations to stakeholders and suggestions for further research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review commences by taking a look at how business schools have responded to the corporate scandals and what MBA students think of the preparation they have received to deal with them. The MBA in South Africa is also explored. The second part of the review focuses on the role of business and how organisations have responded to the scandals. This is then followed by a review of leadership and, in particular, values-based and ethical leadership. The fourth part of the review takes a closer look at reflexive competence, reflexivity and *phronesis*. The fifth part incorporates a discussion on reflection and reflective learning tools. The literature review then concludes with a summary of the argument and sets a foundation for the proposed research questions and propositions.

2.2 Business Schools

2.2.1 Corporate Scandals and Business Schools

According to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International (2004), travesties like those at Enron, Worldcom and Parmalat have left few professions immune from public embarrassment and accusations. However, “while there have been business scandals throughout the last century, the recent debacles have brought the focus to ethics and business schools,” AACSB International (2004, p.9).

These scandals, according to Ghoshal (2005), have left business schools in a state of flux with many reviewing to what extent their curriculum includes a course on business ethics or corporate social responsibility. However, Ghoshal (2005, p.75) continues to argue that, “Business schools do not need to do much more to prevent further Enron’s, but rather to

stop doing a lot they cur supported by Trank and Rynes (2003), as well as Bennis and O'Toole (2005), who all indicate that business education might be heading in the wrong direction and that there are signs of de-professionalisation of business schools. The AACSB are slated for their standards by Trank and Rynes (2003), who suggest that they are based on a self selected "mission" rather than a professional body of knowledge or standardised outcomes. In a similar manner, the relevance of the product of business schools and the poor effect that the MBA had on both the careers of their graduates and on management practice has been highlighted and questioned by Pfeffer and Fong (2002).

It has been argued that the MBA programme focuses too much on analytical capabilities to the neglect of the softer management skills that are becoming increasingly important in today's business world, (Kretovics, 1999; Mintzberg and Gosling, 2002; Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005; Simpson, 2006). "Communication ability, leadership, interpersonal skills, and wisdom – "the ability to weave together and make use of different kinds of knowledge" (Mintzberg and Gosling, 2002, p.28) – are at once less easily taught or transferred to others, but at the same time, because they are less easily imitated, have more value." (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002, p.84).

One of the key issues highlighted by Pfeffer and Fong (2002), is the inability of business schools to offer clinical training or learning by doing. What they offer instead is teaching by the case method which fails to replicate the actual management experience. Leavitt (1989, p.40) cited in Pfeffer and Fong (2002, p.85), noted that, "business schools have been designed without practice fields." Reflexive competence deals with the ability to integrate knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts. Hence, the above arguments may lead us to conclude that what is critically lacking is indeed reflexive competence.

Business school research is often criticized for being less relevant to practitioners due to the prevalence of scandals. Bennis and O'Toole (2005), suggest that, although some of the research produced is excellent, very little of it is grounded in actual business practice and hence becomes less relevant to practitioners. "Too focused on 'scientific' research, business schools are hiring professors with limited real-world experience and graduating students who are ill-equipped to wrangle with complex, unquantifiable issues - in other words, the stuff of management," (Bennis and O'Toole, 2005, p.96).

Most business schools have adopted the scientific model in their teaching and research, (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Ghoshal, 2005; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005) and the reality, as outlined by Bennis and O'Toole (p.100), is that in business research, "the things routinely ignored by academics on the grounds that they cannot be measured – most human factors and all matters relating to judgement, ethics, and morality - are exactly what makes the difference between good business decisions and bad ones." Simpson (2006, p.180) by quoting Cunliffe, Foray and Knights (2002), reinforces this by adding that, "A focus on values and context therefore facilitates the development of critical awareness as a necessary precondition for managers who wish to become 'creative, innovative and flexible' in a rapidly changing world." Reflexive competence calls for the ability to adapt to changed circumstances and as indicated in Chapter 1, values and value orientation are incorporated within this domain of competence. It is the purpose of this research to explore if the "matters of judgment, ethics and morality" and the focus on "values and context", as called for above by Bennis and O'Toole and Simpson, are reflexive competence.

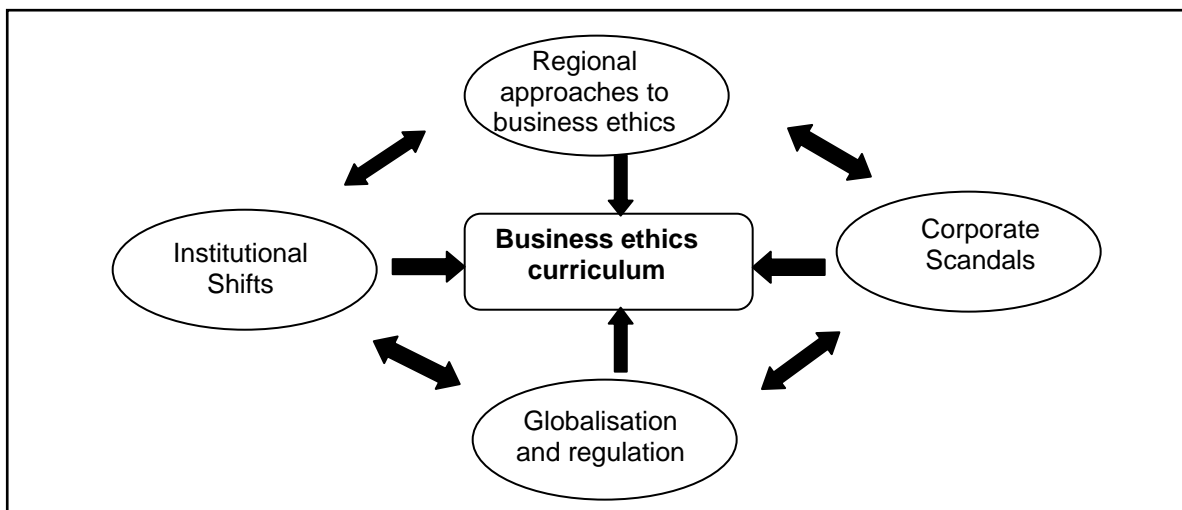
With this background and with the call for a focus on ethics and values, what then is the status with regard to incorporating ethics education in the MBA curriculum?

2.2.2 Ethics Education

AACSB International (2004) stressed the need for everyone in management education to think deeply and creatively about how best to advance awareness, reasoning skills, and the core principles of ethical behaviour that will help to guide business leaders; those who have to deal with a continuously changing legal and compliance environment. They urge that, “While many schools have initiated new ethics instruction, we must not fall into the trap of assuming the majority of students are adequately prepared to meet the ethical challenges of the modern workplace,” (p.7).

Crane and Matten (2004), suggest that there are 4 key forces that should shape the domain of the business ethics curriculum as represented in (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Forces shaping the “appropriate” domain of the business ethics curriculum (Crane and Matten (2004, p.360))



The AACSB International (2004) further provided the following list of questions to business schools that seek to evaluate and confirm their commitment and support of ethical conduct and curricular content.

1. Is there any reference to ethical orientation, aspirations, or commitment in the school's mission statement?
2. Are there any criteria or procedures used in the selection and continuance of

participants (students, faculty, and administrators) emphasize ethical conduct or that would de-select individuals with a demonstrated propensity to act unethically?

3. Is there any guidance describing appropriate conduct for faculty, students, and administrators?
4. Is there a process for identifying and managing deviations from appropriate ethical conduct? If so, is there evidence that it works?
5. Where do students learn about the responsibility of business in society? What assurance is there that these learning opportunities are effective?
6. Where do students learn and practice ethical decision making? Do any examples involve ethical issues from student's own experience? What assurance is there that these learning opportunities are effective?
7. Where do students learn about their responsibilities for ethical leadership in organisations? What assurance is there that these learning opportunities are effective?
8. Where do students learn about corporate governance? What assurance is there that these learning opportunities are effective?
9. Where do students learn about specific ethical issues and guidelines relating to other content areas? What assurance is there that these learning opportunities are effective?
10. What proportion of the business school faculty is involved in the activities covered by questions five through nine?
11. Overall, do the culture, climate, and curriculum support an ongoing commitment to ethical conduct by all participants and effective delivery of ethics content.

The AACSB International (2004, p.12) highlights that, one way “students learn about ethical behaviours is through the ethical culture they observe in their respective business schools.” They go on to say that students cannot be expected to internalise the actual importance of

ethics and value unless

commitment themselves.

The extent to which South African business schools are meeting these requirements and using them to develop reflexive competence requires investigation.

2.2.3 Aspen Institute's Business and Society Program (Aspen BSP) Survey

The Aspen BSP survey was conducted in 2001 and 2002 with the aim of determining:

- What does the next generation of business leaders think about the disturbing and destabilizing events occurring in the 21st century
- What kinds of dilemmas do they expect to face in this changed business climate?
- Do they feel prepared to meet the challenges of this new environment?

The Aspen BSP (2003) report compared the 2002 and 2001 responses and revealed some of the findings below. Opperman (2005) replicated the survey in South Africa and the South African findings are also shared below.

- The primacy of shareholder value seems to be slipping in MBA student's view of what constitutes a well-run company. Satisfying customer needs is now seen as the primary responsibility of a successful business. South African (SA) students shared the similar view.
- Operating according to corporate values and a strong code of ethics has gained importance for students in 2002. SA students shared the similar view.
- MBA students see three key challenges for today's CEOs: lack of investor confidence, the spate of corporate scandals and the economic downturn. They also believe that breakdown in trust between management and public as well as between employees and management – is creating problems for business leaders. SA students chose breakdown in trust between employees and management, lack of investor confidence and lack of trust in business as key challenges
- Revelations of corporate fraud and misconduct are prompting students to rethink



their responsibility to place greater emphasis on personal values. SA students share a similar view.

- Only 22% say their schools are doing “a lot” to prepare them to manage value conflicts while 1 in 5 respondents feel they are not being prepared at all. SA students share a similar view.
- Overall students would like to see more discussion in core courses about issues relating to social responsibility. SA students held a similar view. It is, however, interesting to note that 70% of the South African students surveyed said that business schools spend very little time (if any) on the King II Report (on corporate governance for SA), Cadbury Code (written codes of conduct for unethical behaviour) and *Sarbanes Oxley* (financial and disclosure information act that came about in the wake of the corporate scandals).

In South Africa, besides the corporate scandals and the introduction of the King II (that suddenly became a focus at business schools), business education was also affected by the re-accreditation of MBAs. Against what criteria was this done and what were the findings?

2.2.4 South Africa and the MBA

One of the contributing factors to the re-accreditation of the MBA in South Africa was the “concerns expressed by the Minister of Education and other stakeholders about the proliferation of MBAs in the country and the Higher Education Quality Committee’s (HEQC) need to have a better sense of their quality, costs and benefits, and relevance to the country’s needs”, CHE (2004, p.vii). At the end of the accreditation process, only 7 business schools were granted full accreditation, 15 received conditional accreditation and the other 15 were completely de-accredited.

The accreditation is done across three categories: governance issues, learning programme

and context, and looks a

A huge portion of the MBA accreditation is dependent on the learning programme that, as per criterion 9, is reflected by the mission, goals and objectives leading to the MBA. It would be interesting to ascertain to what extent these business schools' missions show a commitment to ethics and values and what would be the importance of this in developing reflexive competence.

Table 1: HEQC Re-accreditation criteria (Adapted from CHE (2004, p.128)

Category	Criteria	Criteria details
GOVERNANCE	1	Organisation Setting: External: The programme is an integral part of the national higher education system and the higher education institution
	2	Mission, goals and objectives: Unit and programme shall have a clearly stated motivation with supporting goals and objectives
	3	Organisational setting: The internal organisation of the school/unit/faculty is conducive to teaching, learning and research
	4	Governance: Clearly defined policies and processes concerning programme governance and academic policies
LEARNING PROGRAMME	5	Resources: The programme has resources adequate to fulfil its stated mission and goal
	6	Human Resources: The programme has an adequate and dedicated faculty able to support the programme's mission, goals and objectives
	7	Student Recruitment: The programme has student recruitment policies and admissions policies designed to recruit learners who will develop competencies in the field of business management
	8	Diversity, access, redress and equity: The programme shall address the broader issues of access, redress and equity in relation to both staff and student profiles
	9	Learning programme: The programme reflects the mission, goals and objectives leading to the MBA or in the designated area of the specialisation and has clear learning objectives
	10	Teaching and Learning: The programme ensures that each student displays an understanding of the areas of knowledge that are basic to general management, acquires skills and experience in the application of basic management principles, and demonstrates integration of this knowledge
	11	Assessment: The assessment processes are valid, reliable and transparent. The assessment practices demonstrate the integration of content, teaching methods and models of delivery
	12	Research: The programme has an active research focus through which both staff and learners contribute to the knowledge base of the field of management
CONTEXT	13	External environment: The unit is active in the field of management and contributes to the improvement of management in society

Concerns raised by the re-accreditation of the South African MBAs were confirmed by

highlighting the six areas of business schools as suggested by Doria, Rozanski and Cohen (2003). The MBAs were required to:

1. Offer more courses in communication, leadership, human resources, psychology and other fields that provide graduates with skills vital to effectively managing people
2. Introduce and emphasise courses that offer the basic skills and tools needed in problem solving
3. Give more and better grounding in theory to help students go beyond case studies to analyse problems and craft solutions in situations which they have not encountered before
4. Make changes in the curriculum so that students can integrate their learning and apply multiple disciplines on the job
5. Encourage students to take full advantage of courses outside the traditional core curriculum
6. Commit themselves to differentiation in their curriculum.

The last two criteria (Table 1) were particularly highlighted as being critical to the future of the MBA in business schools: research and the ability to build the relationship between business and society. “If teaching on corporate social responsibility doesn’t come in a fairly short time, business will lose interest - not in the topic, but in the business schools,” (CHE, 2004, p.117). Based on the Aspen survey findings, business schools were not doing enough on issues of social responsibility. What about organisations?

What exactly is the role of business and how have the corporate scandals impacted on the various organisations?



2.3 The Role of Business

2.3.1 What's a business for?

“The purpose of business, in other words, is not to make a profit, full stop. It is to make a profit so that the business can do something more or better. That ‘something’ becomes the real justification for the business,” Handy (2002). This “something” is what Drucker (2001, p.20) refers to as “purpose”. Drucker further says that a business’ purpose “must lie outside of the business itself. In fact, it must lie in society, since business enterprise is an organ of society. There is only one valid definition of business purpose: to create a customer,” (p.20).

2.3.2 Business and Society

With reference to the executives responsible for the corporate scandals, Adler (2002, p.148) says that, “In their pursuit of private gain, they have wreaked social havoc, destroying savings and jobs in monstrous disproportion”.

The AACSB International (2004) highlights the importance of business leaders to understand that their actions affect not only themselves, but also other stakeholders like customers, employees, investors, suppliers, governments, citizens and the very communities in which they operate.

The report identifies that business (p.10):

- Must faithfully exercise its responsibility in the use of power and not punish or exploit those who are dependent on its largesse or vulnerable to its demands
- Has a responsibility to foster improved conditions for wealth creation by enhancing its future success and contributing to the communities where it hopes to prosper.
- Must report not just financially but also understand and assess broader responsibilities through social reporting, social impact management and the triple bottom line.



- Must define its responsibilities; various broader impacts on different constituencies, quality of life, regional economy, security, safety and environment.

What then ensures that organisations actually meet these responsibilities?

2.3.3 Corporate Governance

McAlister and Ferrell (2005) advise that through corporate governance, executives and boards can ensure that an effective system of checks and balances exists for fulfilling responsibilities to stakeholders and society.

Before the governance crises of Enron, Worldcom, and other firms, the editor of Corporate Governance.Net commented on corporate governance as follows: ‘Despite its still relatively low profile, it’s where much of the real action is going on when it comes to positively changing corporate behaviour’,” McRitchie (1999) cited in McAlister and Ferrell (2005, p.57). The AACSB International (2004) suggests that corporate governance knowledge can be an important deterrent to unethical behaviour and that understanding the complex interdependencies between corporate governance and other institutions can be an important aid in managing risk and reputation.

To deal with the corporate scandals, the *Sarbanes Oxley* Congress held hearings and quickly passed reform legislation that put CEOs and CFOs under scrutiny, Collis and Montgomery (2005). South Africa responded to this with its very own King II Report. Both accountability and control is required for business to function as a responsible social entity. McAlister and Ferrell (2005), advise that from a control perspective, business needs cohesive values and policies to achieve consistency across organisational decisions and practices, including financial reporting, human resources, and the establishment of an ethics programme. It has been said that the accountability for organisational decisions and

resources should begin with a focus on creating a culture of leadership that creates a responsible organisation responsive to stakeholders.

Interestingly, in an article on research conducted by the Stanford Graduate School of Business, LaPlante (2004) highlighted that a company's reputation for ethics and caring about employees both rose to the top third of the list of 14 attributes that MBA graduates use to make job choices. So, what does this mean for leadership?

2.4 Leadership - values and ethics

2.4.1 Values and Values-Based Leadership

Rokeach (1973, p.5) defines values as the "basic convictions that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence." Increasingly, what an organisation stands for and how it makes decisions is becoming more important than what it sells. Hence, organisations and leaders are faced with the challenge of approaching business within a context of values and ethics. Clearly, the MBA graduate business leaders that caused the corporate scandals have shown a disregard for values and have raised questions around both values-based leadership and ethical leadership. Consequently, this forces us to question the extent to which the MBA has prepared students to be values-based or ethical leaders.

Albion (2006a), claims that a values-based leader has a broader social concern beyond a single financial bottom line and that there are three fundamental organisational values that should guide a leadership strategy:

- Transparency in leadership: Being open and honest
- Sustainability in leadership: Knowing your capabilities and how to pace yourself and your company's growth

- Responsibility in understanding of what you intend to provide.

Further to this, Albion (2006b), introduces three personal characteristics that are the foundation of successful values-based leadership practice:

- Competence: Translates the mission and values of the organisation into practice, creating a values-based context for all decision making
- Compassion: Respects the individual needs of all who are impacted by the organisation, acting in the best interests of all
- Commitment: Brings his or her deepest desires and most profound dreams into the core of the organisation and its community in a form that's vibrant, meaningful, and inspirational for all stakeholders

2.4.2 Ethical Leadership

Ethical Leadership is described as being “people oriented, modelled through visible ethical actions and traits, focused on setting ethical standards and accountability, based on broad ethical awareness, and indicative of a strong decision-making approach,” Trevino, Brown and Hartman (2003) cited in McAlister and Ferrell (2005, p.74). Characteristics and associated practices are displayed in (Table 2).

Table 2 : Characteristics of Ethical Leadership (Trevino, Brown and Hartman (2003), cited in McAlister and Ferrell (2005, p.75)

Characteristics	Practices
People Oriented	Cares about people Treats people with respect
Modelled through visible ethical actions and traits	Serves as a role model of ethical conduct Is consistent and predictable
Focused on setting ethical standards and accountability	Does not tolerate ethical lapses Practices values-based management
Based on broad ethical awareness	Serves the greater good Acknowledges interests of multiple stakeholders
Indicative of a strong decision making approach	Uses fairness criteria Employs other heuristics, such as the golden rule and “newspaper test”

Freeman (2005) present  nical leader. They:

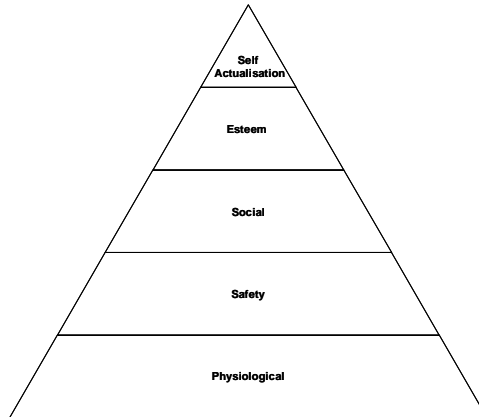
- Frame actions in ethical terms and takes responsibility for using sound moral judgement
- Articulate and embody the purpose and values of the organisation
- Connect the basic value proposition to stakeholder support and social legitimacy
- Make tough calls whilst being imaginative.

By analysing the various corporate scandals, Werhane (2005) suggests 4 main reasons why misdeeds occur:

- Human nature and self-interest – motivated and pre-occupied by self-interest
- Disregard for others – focusing on own personal gain and individual needs
- Role definitions of job responsibilities – how managers prioritise client, corporate and professional responsibility
- Training in moral reasoning – it is necessary to talk to managers about moral responsibilities through the introduction of moral theory, locate moral culprits and begin moral education

Knights and O’Leary (2005), argue that the failure of ethical leadership has been partly because of a preoccupation with self, which, they say, is the legacy of the Enlightenment and humanistic thinking on autonomy. Yet at the same time, they support the Aristotelian virtue ethics as a possibility for challenging the preoccupation with the self and thereby unethical leadership. This correlates with Werhane’s reasons of human nature and self interest and disregard for others. This can also correlate with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954) cited in Robbins (2005, p.171). Maslow hypothesised that within every human being there exists a hierarchy of five needs as displayed in Figure 2. Based on the literature thus far, it is clear that the misdeeds were motivated by a desire to meet social and esteem needs. Does this impact the development of reflexive competence?

Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow (1954) cited in Robbins (2005, p.171))



2.4.3 Ethical Decision Making

Why and how people make ethical decisions has gained much interest due to the recent corporate scandals. Forte (2004, p.315) says that as a result, "much attention has been focused on the development of moral reasoning in corporate individuals."

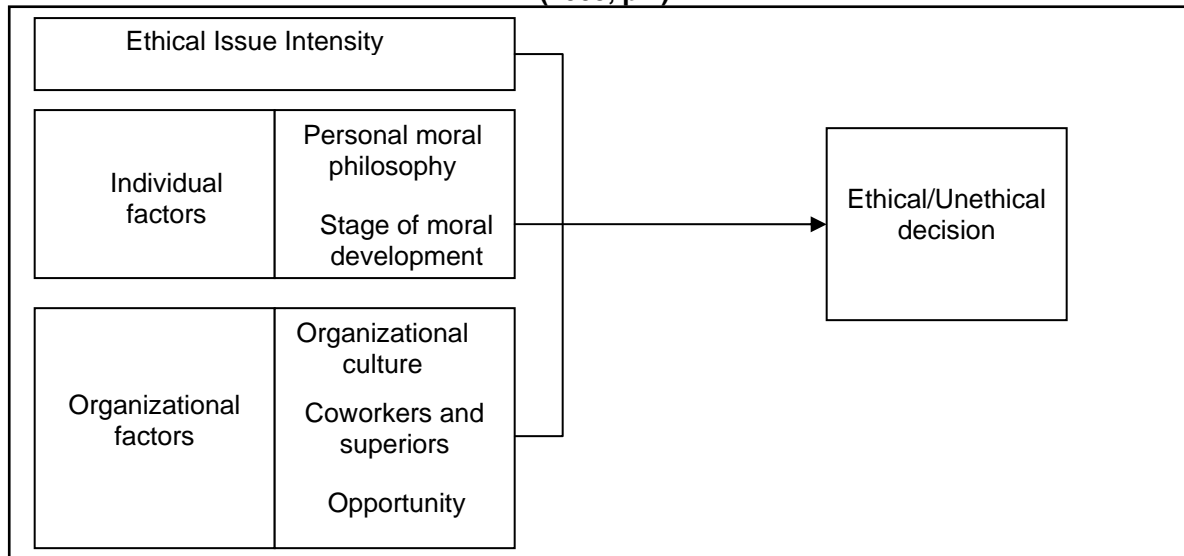
Kohlberg and Hersh (1977) define moral development as the "transformations that occur in a person's form or structure of thought," (p. 54). They claim that moral reasoning develops through three levels:

1. Pre-conventional – where individuals focus on their own needs and desires
2. Conventional – where individuals focus on group centred values and conforming to expectations
3. Post-conventional, autonomous – where individuals are concerned with upholding basic rights, values and rules of society.

Ferrell (2005) presents a model of ethical decision making, (Figure 3), and shows that the intensity of the legal issues, individual factors and organisational factors collectively influence whether a person will make an unethical decision at work. This leads us to conclude that business schools are not the only stakeholder that has a role to play in MBA graduates making ethical or unethical decisions. It is the purpose of this research to explore what individual factors and organisational factors develop or support the development of

reflexive competence.

Figure 3: A Framework for Understanding Ethical Decision Making in the Workplace (Ferrell (2005, p.7))



2.5 Reflexive Competence

2.5.1 Competence

There appears to be no lack of definitions for competence (Appendix 1) and with that comes a great deal of confusion. From a South African perspective, the two definitions that appear to be most widely used are those of Meyer (1996), who defines competence as knowledge, skills, attributes and value orientation, and secondly, of SAQA (2005), who define competence as consisting of:

- Foundational competence - which is the demonstrated understanding of what we are doing and why we are doing it;
- Practical competence - which is the demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks and actions in authentic contexts and;
- Reflexive competence, which is the demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations.

Carmichael and Sutherk and Semark (1998) definition of competence, which is similar to the Meyer (1996) definition above, is “embedded in the noun ‘competency’, meaning a specific learning outcome.” Boyatzis, Stubbs and Taylor (2002, p.150), in their study on how a MBA improves competencies, define “competencies” as, “the underlying characteristics of a person that lead to or cause effective and outstanding performance.” Further on, Boyatzis *et al* (2002, p.150) refer to “competencies or skill” implying then that competencies and skills are one and the same.

Boyatzis *et al* (2002) indicate that leader performance is predicted by a set of three competencies:

- Cognitive or intellectual ability – such as systems thinking
- Self Management or intrapersonal abilities
- Relationship management or interpersonal management.

They go on to say that the latter two clusters made up emotional intelligence competencies as defined by Goleman (1998).

However, beyond knowledge and competencies, Boyatzis *et al* (2002, p.150), highlights that the additional ingredient to performance is a “person’s values, philosophy, sense of calling or mission, and unconscious motives and traits.” They go on to indicate that knowledge, competencies and these motivational drivers are capabilities and, respectively, help us understand what a person can do, how a person can do it and why a person should feel the need to do it. If one correlates this to the SAQA definition of competence, can it be inferred that knowledge is the foundational competence, competencies are the practical competence and the motivational drivers are then reflexive competence?

Many of the competence models and definitions seem to pay relatively little explicit attention to ethics and values, Cheetham and Chivers (1998). Meyer (1996, p35) clearly states that, “value orientation has received very little emphasis in the literature and debate on

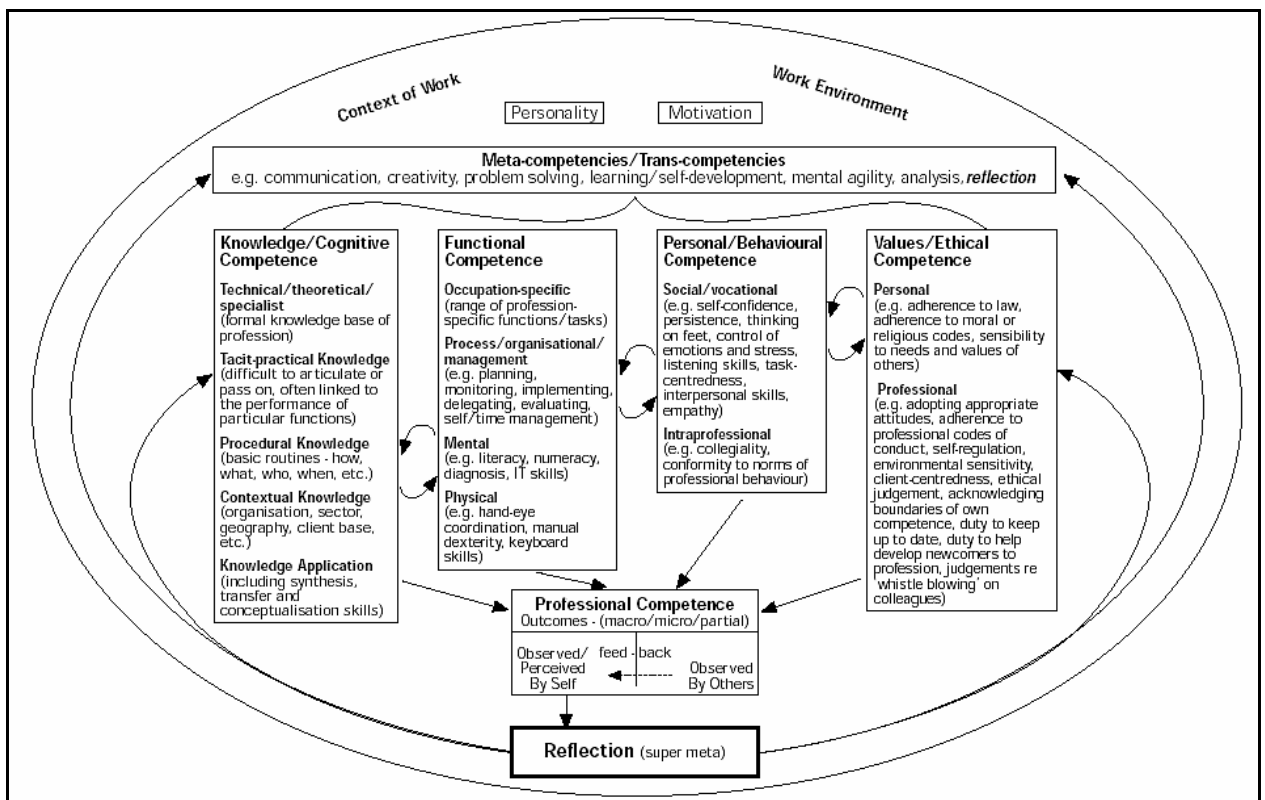


competencies...” To add to this, Chivers (1998) developed a competence model that actually took into consideration the role of value/ethical competence, represented in (Figure 4). Unlike Boyatzis *et al* (2002), Cheetham and Chivers make a clear distinction between behavioural competence and functional competence.

At the heart of the model are four core components:

1. knowledge/cognitive competence
2. functional competence
3. personal or behavioural competence
4. values/ethical competence

Figure 4: Model for Professional Competence (Cheetham and Chivers, (1998, p.275)



In the above model, one can see that reflection and feedback is critical to achieve the four key competences. According to Schon (1983, 1987) cited in Cheetham and Chivers (1998, p.267), “This is important for additional development, day to day practice and continuous

improvement.” Cheetha (2006) states that “reflection (about past or current action) may lead to some kind of behavioural modification and hopefully to an improvement in professional competence,” (p.270).

The literature verifies the use of various terms and the use of terms interchangeably to explain competence and, in particular, the third domain, or level of competence. Why did South Africa choose to use the term, ‘reflexive competence’? What was the motivation?

2.5.2 Reflexivity

According to McLean (2006), the term ‘reflexive competence’ was based on the work done by Margaret S. Archer on reflexivity. Archer (2002), claims that social realism requires an individual who is both active and reflexive: “someone who has the properties and powers to monitor their own life, to mediate structural and cultural properties of society, and thus to contribute to societal reproduction and transformation,” (p.19).

As an epistemological practice, Barge (2004, p.71), defines reflexivity as being “primarily concerned with helping individuals construct competing multiple meanings and interpretations for phenomena.”

According to Barge (2004):

- Reflexive practice should be viewed as a relational activity that highlights issues of situated judgement, timing and rhythm within conversation
- Reflexive practice emphasizes inclusive, respectful, and safe communication. The safe space for conversation is created by establishing clear accountability and responsibility in teams by offering feedback, setting clear agendas and actively inviting people to speak
- Reflexive practice is connected to empowerment, in that when acting reflexively, managers feel less pressured to make a correct decision, and feel freer to experiment with alternative punctuations of situations.

Barge goes on, by quoting (Stensson and Hooijberg, 1997, p.72), to highlight that, “Reflective practice involved managers learning to experiment with naming and framing situations in different ways and to assess the pragmatic utility these names and frames held for achieving the desired ends.” A key theme that emanated from Barge’s study on what characterises reflexivity was self-reflexivity, where attention is paid to multiple contexts where, “the cultures in which people live and work shape what they see, how they feel, and how they act,” (p.73). He found that besides multiple contexts operating within situations, self-reflexivity also connects contextual awareness and moral logic. So, yet again the issue of morality presents itself.

This leads us to conclude that, to be reflexive requires one to reflect on the situation and the multiple meanings and to then consider the action. This critical reflection requires one to take cognisance on what this action means, whether it is right and what the consequences will be – for self and to wider society.

2.5.3 *Phronesis* and Reflexive Competence

“The problem is not that business schools have embraced scientific rigour but that they have forsaken all other forms knowledge”, Bennis and O’Toole (2005, p. 104).

Birmingham (2004) presents other forms of knowledge, by drawing on Aristotle’s states of mind as:

- *episteme*: scientific knowledge which is about things that are necessarily true and which Aristotle (1999, p.88) claims “does not even admit of being otherwise”.
- *techne*: craft knowledge which is a state of involving true reason concerned with production
- *phronesis*: practical intelligence, practical wisdom or prudence

According to Kessels and Korthagen (1996), *episteme* is propositional and consists of a set

of assertions that can be admitted. Eisner (2002) supports this by saying that episteme is what the Greek philosophers regarded as true and certain knowledge. The foundational competence that SAQA (2005) refers to can be regarded as *episteme*.

Birmingham (2004, p.314), says that in teaching, *techne*, “is the means to reach a given end...”. So, it is highly concerned with the how of doing something and hence the practical competence that SAQA (2005) refers to can be regarded as *techne*.

Phronesis is “a state of grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being,” Aristotle (1999. p.89) cited in Birmingham (2004, p.314). Eisner (2002), says that *phronesis* refers to practical reasoning. Eisner goes on to say that, “Practical matters required practical reasoning. They require *phronesis*. Practical reasoning is deliberative, it takes into account local circumstances, it weighs tradeoffs, it is riddled with uncertainties, it depends upon judgement, profits from wisdom, addresses particulars, it deals with contingencies, is iterative and shifts aim in process when necessary. Practical reasoning is the stuff of practical life. It is not the stuff of theoretical science. It is not enduring and it is not foundational. Its aim is to arrive at good but imperfect decisions with respect to particular circumstance,” (p.375).

So, if reflexive competence is the “demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations,” SAQA (2005, p.3); if reflexive competence requires opportunities in the “real world context,” SAQA (2000, p.17); and if reflexive competence “requires learners to reflect on their learning experience critically, in terms of the values espoused by a democratic society,” SAQA (2000, p.18) then based on the views on *phronesis* presented above, this leads us to conclude that reflexive competence is *phronesis*.

Reflexive competence is the only published article found was that by Karecki (2002), which focuses on how higher theological education that has a strong emphasis on reflexive competence can help learners to construct meaning and hence enable them to participate in a globalised milieu with confidence. Karecki defines reflexive competence as “the ability to reflect on the various components of a learning experience so as to be able to make meaning for oneself, interiorise that meaning and apply that meaning in other real life context, in a way that is transformative for the individual and her/his social context,” (p.146). This is similar to the views expressed by Archer, 2002; Eisner, 2002 and Barge, 2004.

But, how can we develop reflexive competence or support its development?

2.6 Reflective Learning

2.6.1 Experience Based Learning and Reflection

“If higher education is to play an effective role then it must focus its attention on the transformative learning process... higher education must itself be transformed...so that it produces transformative agents: critical reflective learners able to cope with the rapidly changing world,” Harvey and Knight (1996, viii) cited in Brockbank and McGill (1998, p.48).

This implies that there is a strong link between transformative learning and reflection. Boud and Walker (1990) believe that reflection is one of the key processes of learning from experience. In fact, Anderson, Boud and Cohen (1995) determined three key features that are part of all experienced based learning (EBL):

- Involvement of the whole person – intellect, feelings and senses. Learning takes place through all of these
- Recognition and active use of the learner’s relevant life-experiences and learning experiences. Where new learning can be related to personal experiences, the



meaning thus der , integrated into the learner's values and understanding

- Continued reflection upon earlier experiences in order to add to and transform into deeper understanding.

The process of reflection is characterized by Schon (1992) as consisting of three components. The first is that of *knowing-in-action* where the knowing is built into and revealed through the performance of everyday routines and action. The second is that of *reflection-in-action* which is “an ephemeral episode of inquiry that arises momentarily in the midst of a flow of action and then disappears, giving way to some new event, leaving in its wake, perhaps a more stable view of the situation,” (p.125). The third is that of *conversation with the situation* where “back talk” occurs that momentarily interrupts action, evoking uncertainty. According to Dewey (1933.p.12) cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.119), “reflective thinking is distinct from other forms of thought because it involves (a) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity.”

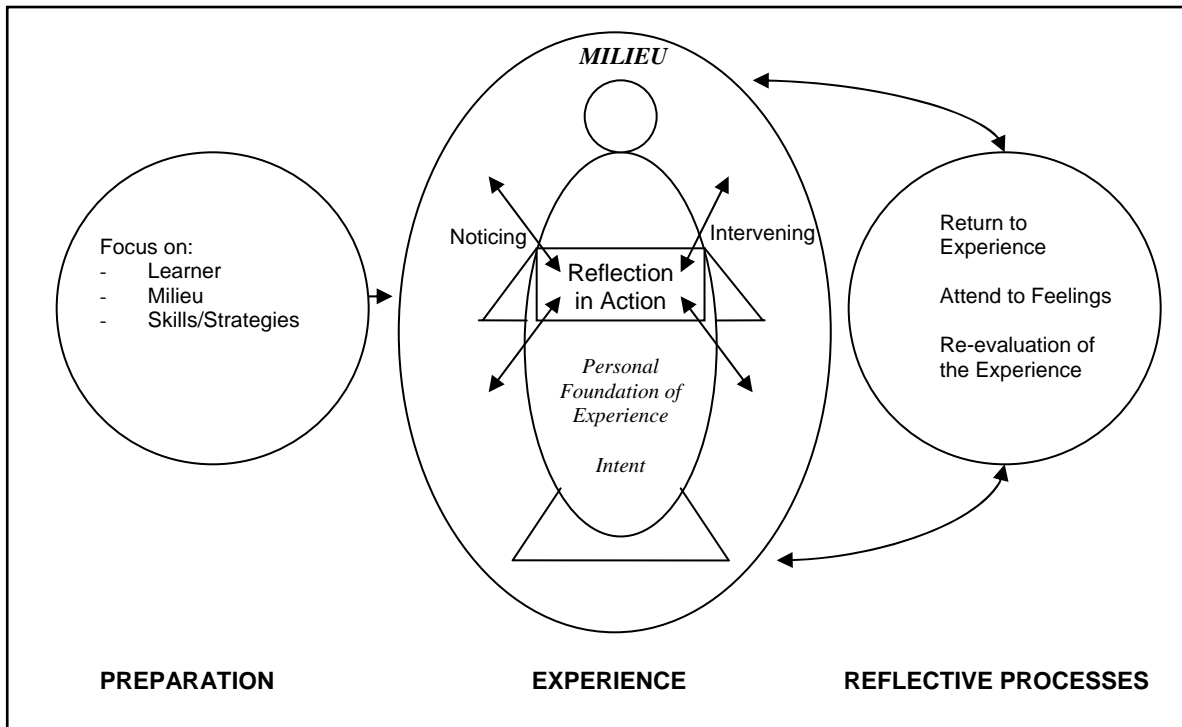
Boud, Koegh and Walker (1985) cited in Boud and Walker (1990, p.61) created the model of learning from experience represented below, where they capture the above three stages of engagement in the learning event, (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Model for prom

in Boud and Walker (1990, p.61)

Keogh and Walker (1985) cited



Brookfield (1995) cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.119) claims that, “where reflection is absent, there is a constant risk of making poor decisions and bad judgements. In the quest to achieve the vision and succeed, many leaders become so driven by their personal ambition that they fail to question the consequences of their actions.” Densten and Gray (2001, p.120) by quoting Dewey (1933), highlight that critical reflection is enhanced where students have three attributes:

- Open-mindedness – listen to more than one side of an issue, give attention to alternative views and recognise that even the firmest beliefs may be questioned
- Responsibility – to actively search for the truth
- Wholeheartedness – to overcome fears and uncertainties and to make meaningful change and to critically evaluate themselves, organisations and society

If reflection is critical to making good judgements, then which reflection tools can be used?



2.6.2 Reflection Tools

The use of writing as an aid to reflection has been encouraged by Walker (1985); Brockbank and McGill (1998); Densten and Gray (2001), and Loo and Thorpe (2002). Walker (1985) claims that writing can exist in the form of “journals, diaries, record books, portfolios, verbatims, sociological diaries, dossiers and logs,” (p.52). Walker used the portfolio to assist participants on a leadership development programme and found that the portfolio actually enabled them to see their areas of growth and where they lacked and also to observe their growth taking place. Walker saw changes in attitudes, values and behaviours over the 12 months.

According to Brookfield (1995), cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.121), four critical lenses can assist the reflective process:

- Student autobiographies or journals where students are encouraged to record how they perceive actions and experiences
- ‘Students’ eyes’, which can be equated with followers’ perspectives. Leaders need to understand how followers perceive their actions. By understanding the followers’ perspectives through feedback, trust is built which encourages learning
- Colleague experiences to provide new insights on various situations. This allows learning from others and continuous questioning
- Theoretical literature allows leaders multiple perspectives on familiar situations.

Brockbank and McGill (1998) suggest that action learning, academic supervision and mentoring are important tools to aid reflection. Further to this they stress the importance of facilitators ensuring that students engage in reflective dialogue. Densten and Gray (2001, p.120) support this by saying that, “an important function of leadership education is to provide opportunities for student reflection so that students gain understanding of how they perceive and interpret their observations.”

Other skills highlighted in the literature reviewed, required to allow critical reflection to take place are: questioning, giving and receiving feedback, immediacy and confrontation.

Smith (2001) also contends that action learning forms a sound setting for leadership development, reflective inquiry and for building a learning organisation. In action learning, managers and leaders learn through experience and the job environment is the classroom. Smith (2001, p.36) adds that “by promoting cogitation and insightful inquiry with perceptive partners in situations where solutions are not always obvious, and by leaving responsibility for implementation of the solution in the participants hands, it is particularly suited to enhancing leadership capabilities.”

Further, how a learning programme is designed and facilitated allows reflective learning. Baruch and Leeming (1996) highlight that besides teaching excellence and research output, the curriculum and value of graduates to business are important. They point out that as the pace of the business world changes so to must the MBA curricula. Typically they say that curriculum is designed to include formal and informal learning.

Mintzberg (2004b) argues that this “formal and informal learning” is first and second generation management development and as an alternative to the MBA, he developed the International Master’s Program in Practicing Management (IMPM). The program is designed around a framework of five managerial mindsets (p.31):

- Reflective (about self)
- Worldly (about context)
- Analytical (about organisation)
- Collaborative (about relationships)
- Action (about change)

The approach used is that of “experienced reflection”. Various tools are used to achieve this

approach: IMPact (active sessions where insight books are used to write thoughts about the preceding learning, reflection papers and teaching impact (where the managers extend the learning into their organisation).


The philosophy of the programme is really to bring work experience into the classroom, rather than teach people more theory. Mintzberg claims that when the lecturer cedes the curriculum to the students, “They engage them in the best of their ideas, while managers engage the faculty in the most interesting of experiences.” (p.35). With the IMPM, learning is not just in the classroom, and the company has a huge role to play. Mintzberg highlights that “Management development will become that much more powerful, when the company and classroom work together to extend the learning beyond the participating managers.” (p.37).

It is the purpose of this research to explore if these tools are used by both business schools and organisations to develop reflexive competence.

2.7 Conclusion

It is evident from the literature review that the corporate scandals of the 21st century have forced all stakeholders to reconsider their role in producing ethical business leaders. Business schools are not practical enough; organisations do not have the appropriate checks and balances in place to prevent misdeeds; MBA accrediting bodies focus on mission statements of business schools, which themselves show a lack of commitment to ethics and values and MBA graduates are driven by their own self interests and individual needs rather than that of the broader society.

The literature abounds with criticism, and the key thread that runs through is that a MBA degree fails to produce graduates who are able to use knowledge in multiple contexts so as to adapt to the rapidly changing world. Graduates fail in their ability to conduct moral

reasoning, to reflect a  in making ethical business decisions. What is called for is practical wisdom, *phronesis* or reflexive competence.

Besides the literature produced by SAQA on reflexive competence and the study done by Karecki (2002), no other research delves into the reflexive competence domain and in particular into what this means for a MBA. Further, much of literature focuses on blaming business schools for non-performing MBA graduates, and few consider the role that an organisation has to play in assisting and supporting this graduate to become a competent business leader.

This research sets out to produce a framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence through two methods. Firstly, the research qualitatively explores the domain of reflexive competence; how it is developed in business schools; what role the CHE plays in supporting its development, and what organisation processes support its development. Secondly, it sets out to establish if the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence and the methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence, exist for MBA students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

As indicated in Chapter 2, very little research has been done into reflexive competence. Further, based on the literature, it appears that reflexive competence is lacking in MBA graduates. As such, in order to propose a framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA it was important to first explore the domain of reflexive competence for a MBA with the various stakeholders (business schools, CHE, organisations). To this end, research questions were proposed for the qualitative study. The MBA student is also a stakeholder, and research propositions were then set to quantitatively assess if the findings in the qualitative study exist for MBA students.

3.2 Qualitative Study

Based on the literature review the research questions are:

- **Question 1:** How do the CHE, business schools and organisations define reflexive competence for a MBA degree?
- **Question 2:** How does the CHE assure and support the acquisition of reflexive competence on a MBA?
- **Question 3:** How do business schools in South Africa develop reflexive competence?
- **Question 4:** How do South African organisations support the MBA student in acquiring reflexive competence?



3.3 Quantitative Stud,

Based on the literature review, the following research propositions are posited:

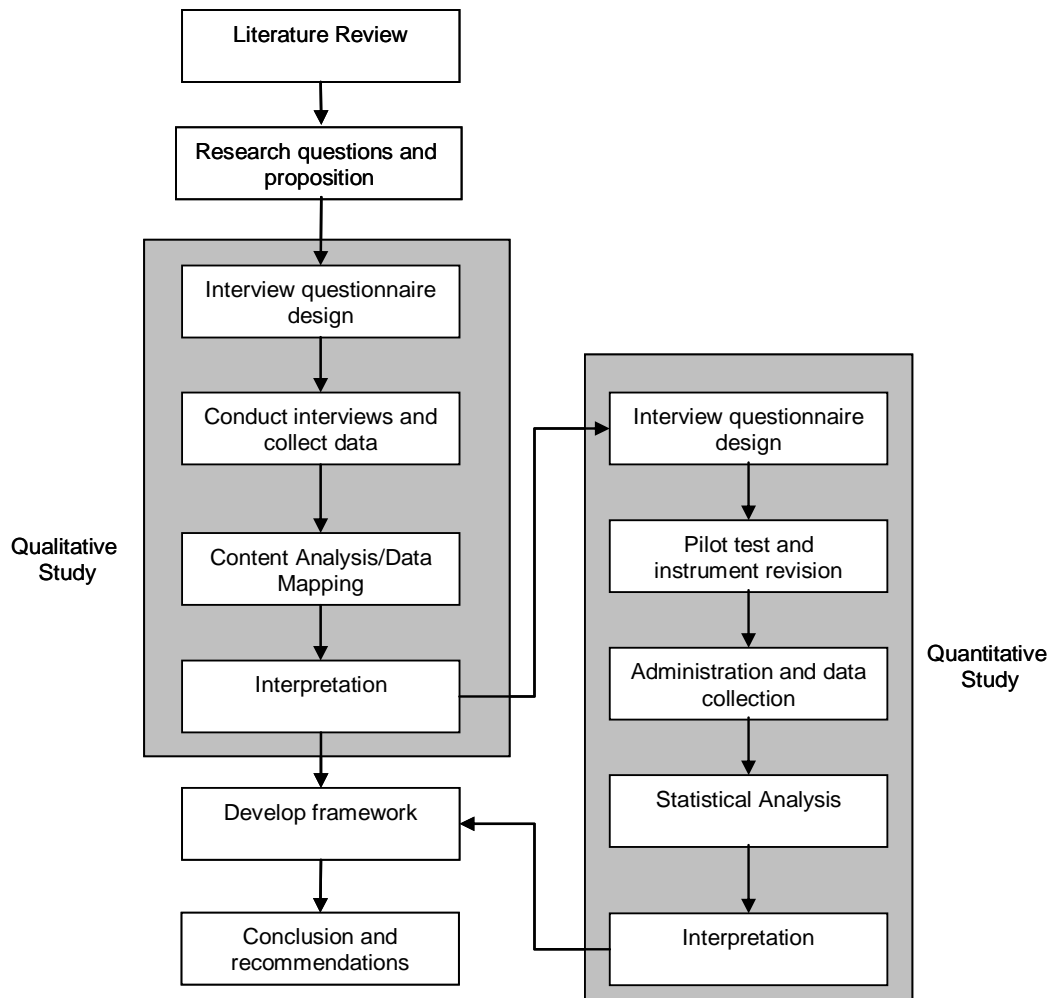
- **Research Proposition 1:** The individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.
- **Research Proposition 2:** The methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

A mixed method, dominant – less dominant approach was employed in this study. The dominant phase of the study was qualitative in nature and used in-depth semi-structured interviews to determine what reflexive competence is for a MBA and what methods and processes are used by the business schools, CHE and organisations to develop reflexive competence or support its acquisition. These findings were then used to develop a survey, which was used in the less dominant quantitative phase of the study. Figure 6 is a graphical representation of the methodological approach adopted.

Figure 6: Methodology Roadmap (adapted from Friedman, 2003, p.28)

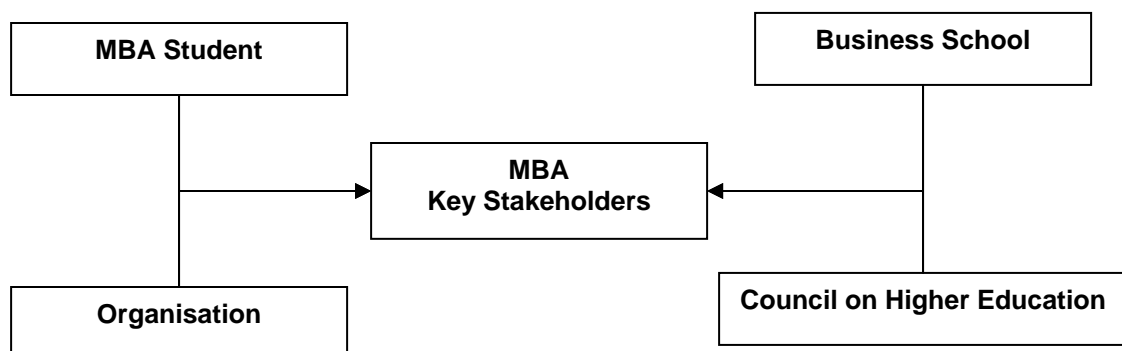


4.2 Mixed Method Ap

“The design of a study begins with the selection of a topic and a paradigm”, Creswell (1994, p.1). The two most widely discussed paradigms in research literature are the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. According to Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), the last 100 years have witnessed a fervent debate about the above paradigms, and have resulted in three research camps; the purists (restrict themselves exclusively to either the quantitative or qualitative method), the situationalists (maintain the mono-method stance held by purists, but also contend that both methods have value) and, finally, the pragmatists (advocate integrating methods within a single study).

Greene (2005) claims that we are in the midst of another battle for which is the best and most worthwhile methodology to use for educational research and evaluation. He suggests that a mixed method of thinking seeks a better, more comprehensive understanding of educational phenomena, through the juxtaposition of different lenses, perspectives, and stance. This research project was rooted in the educational and learning field of study and various perspectives and stances arose from the various stakeholders that share an interest in the MBA programme, as displayed in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7 : MBA Key Stakeholders



Greene, Caracelli and (1994, p.175); Hammond, (2005, p.239) and Onwuegbuzie *et al*, (2005, p384) advocate five key purposes for the support of mixed method research:

1. **Initiation**: wherein contradictions and fresh perspectives arise
2. **Triangulation**: where the researcher seeks convergence or additional validity
3. **Complementary**: where a fuller picture of the research issue is developed
4. **Developmental**: wherein the first method is used sequentially to help inform the second method
5. **Expansion**: wherein the mixed method adds scope and breadth to the study

Further to this, Greene (2005) argues that the mixed method approach is viable to the practice of educational research and evaluation due to:

1. It being rooted in a defensible and democratic set of values – that of acceptance, tolerance and understanding of difference
2. The fact that the mixed method strategy troubles simplistic answers disquiets notions of best practice and challenges the thin understandings of teaching and learning.

This research was, as explained, rooted in the educational sphere. Further to this, there were various stakeholders who had different perspectives and stances to share regarding the definition and the development of reflexive competence on a MBA. Hence, mixed method approach was best positioned to handle these different viewpoints.

4.3 Dominant - less dominant design

According to Creswell (1994), there are 3 models for combined design: two phase design approach, dominant - less dominant design and mixed methodology design. Creswell



explains that in the two phases, the researcher conducts two completely separate qualitative and quantitative phases each with their own purpose and literature review. Further to this, the researcher presents the paradigm assumptions behind each phase separately. A key disadvantage is that the researcher is unable to discern the connection between the two phases.

In the dominant - less dominant design, “the study is presented within a single dominant paradigm, with one small part of the study drawn from an alternative paradigm”, Creswell (1994, p.177). This research first explored the concept of reflexive competence with various stakeholders and thereafter used these insights to quantitatively assess if the findings exist for MBA students. Hence, the dominant - less dominant design was used, with the dominant phase taking a qualitative stance and the less dominant phase taking a quantitative stance.

The findings from the qualitative phase were essential for planning the quantitative phase and hence, “sequential triangulation”, as indicated by Morse (1991) occurred. Further to this, the various interviews with the key stakeholders served the purposes of the initiation, complementary, developmental and expansion stages within and between the phases, (Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) cited in Creswell, (1994, p.175); Hammond, (2005, p.239) and Onwuegbuzie *et al*, (2005, p384)).

4.4 The qualitative study

4.4.1 The qualitative paradigm

The purpose of the qualitative study was to explore what reflexive competence is for a MBA; to establish how business schools develop it; to establish how the CHE supports its development, and to establish what organisation processes support its development. These findings were then used to design the survey for the quantitative phase of the study.

Given the characteristics of the research by Leedy and Ormrod (2001),

a qualitative approach was thought appropriate for the dominant phase due to:

- The purpose of this phase being to describe and explore
- The variables being unknown
- The sample size being small
- The research being context bound and encompassed personal views
- In-depth, semi-structured interviews being used to collect data

Creswell (1994, p.4) highlights that “For the researcher, the only reality is that constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation.” Therefore, it becomes critical that the researcher, “report faithfully these realities and to rely on the voices and interpretations of the informants,” (p.4). Hence, the following qualitative paradigm assumptions informed this research (Creswell, p.5):

- The relationship of the researcher to that researched is “researcher interacts with that being researched”
- The role of values is “value-laden and biased”
- The nature of reality is that “reality is subjective and multiple as seen by the participants in the study”
- The language of the research is “informal, evolving decisions, personal voice, accepted qualitative words.”

4.4.2 Population

The population for the QUAL phase was:

- The Council on Higher Education (CHE): The CHE has recently been tasked with the role of accrediting, evaluating and monitoring the MBA in South Africa. The population included the various subject matter experts who were involved with the accreditation of MBAs.

- Fully accredited published by the CHE (CHE, 2005). The relevant MBA Programme Directors, Business School Directors or academics involved in the MBA programme served as the population.
- Medium to large South African organisations in the Financial, Manufacturing and Telecommunications sectors. The relevant HR Directors or Human Resource Development/Learning and Development experts at these organisations served as the population.

4.4.3 Nature and Size of Sampling

Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used. According to Welman and Kruger (2001) a non probability sampling technique is used for reasons of convenience and the fact that it is more economical from a time and financial expenses perspective. In purposive sampling, “Researchers rely on their experience, ingenuity and/or previous research findings to deliberately obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample they obtain may be regarded as representative of the relevant population,” (Creswell, 2001, p.63).

There is only one MBA accrediting body in South Africa and the CHE was contacted telephonically to enquire as to which subject matter expert could assist appropriately in the study. MBA Programme Directors in Gauteng-based accredited business schools were contacted directly. Human Resource Directors and/or Human Resource Development/Learning and Development Managers from medium to large organisations in the Financial, Manufacturing and Telecommunications sectors, who have acknowledged expertise in the area of competence development, were also contacted.

From previous qualitative research (Brehm, 1994; Selby, 2005), between 10 and fifteen interviews were considered sufficient to establish constructs. Ultimately, 11 in-depth semi-structured interviewed were conducted; one with the CHE, five with Gauteng-based

business schools and f large organisations. Each of these interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes.

Two interviewees expressed concerns about being quoted in the research study and, as a result, all interviewee details are kept confidential.

4.4.4 Data collection

Each respondent was contacted telephonically to explain the objectives of the research and to enquire if they would be willing to participate in the interview or could recommend someone with the relevant academic and subject matter expertise that could assist. Once they agreed to the interview, an email with an attached correspondence letter detailing the topics to be discussed and time and venue of the interview was sent (Appendix 2). All respondents were interviewed at their place of work. The interviews were digitally recorded and the full interviews were transcribed.

4.4.4.1 Semi-Structured in-depth interview

As alluded to, the study was exploratory in nature, and in-depth interviews were selected as the appropriate technique. According to Welman and Kruger (2001, p.188), the aim of in-depth interviews is to “understand how individuals experience their life-world and how they make sense of what is happening to them.” They further highlight, that the interviews may vary from completely structured to unstructured, where the latter purposefully does not use an interview schedule so as not to preclude any questions.

Welman and Kruger (2001) suggest that semi-structured interviews are considered when the topics are sensitive in nature and where the respondents come from divergent backgrounds. As this research was built on the different perspectives and stances of the various stakeholders, semi-structured interviews, where open and closed questions can be used, were chosen to guide the interview discussion.

The following characteristics were considered at each interview (Welman and Kruger, 2001, p.161):

- Interview guides involving a list of topics and aspects of these topics that have a bearing on the theme are used
- Although the respondents are asked the same questions, the interviewer may adapt the formulation, including the terminology, to fit the background and educational level of the respondents
- The order that the interviewer broaches these topics may vary and depends on the way in which the interview develops.

Gillham (2000, p.45) recommends that it is important to “steer” the interview for the “direction and also ensure that key points or topics are covered.” He suggests the use of probes, prompts and reflecting. “Probes are supplementary questions or responses which you use to get interviewees to feed you more,” (Gillham p.46). According to Gillham, it can take the form of clarification, justification, relevance, giving an example and reflecting. These were all used extensively in the interviews to gain a deeper, richer insight into the domain of reflexive competence.

As the stakeholders differed in their role in the MBA, three interview guides were prepared for the interviews (Appendices 3, 4 and 5). The objective of the interview with the CHE and business schools was to determine what reflexive competence is for a MBA, how they supported or developed reflexive competence and what organisation processes support the development of reflexive competence. It was assumed that they would have an understanding of both business schools and organisations.

With the organisations, the objective was to ascertain, what reflexive competence is and what organisation processes support its development. It was assumed that they did not have a thorough understanding of the MBA programmes.



4.4.5 Data analysis

4.4.5.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis allows the researcher to identify those key substantive points and to put them into categories or themes, (Gillham, 2000; Welman and Kruger, 2001). As indicated, semi-structured interviews were used, and as such, the coding was informed by the topics, probing questions and prompts and other emerging themes. According to Ritchie and Spencer (1994) cited in Sturges, Simpson and Altman (2003, p.56), “piecing together the overall picture is not simply a question of aggregating patterns, but of weighing up the salience and dynamics of issues, and searching for a structure, rather than a multiplicity of evidence.” According to Daley (2004), concept maps are useful to help the researcher focus on meaning. As such, data (cognitive) mapping (Jones, 1985 cited in Brehm (1994, p.61) or concept mapping (Daley, 2004) was used to assist in providing a richer, deeper meaning.

4.4.5.2 Data Mapping

The process used by a previous research (Brehm, 1994) to construct data maps (Appendix 6) was employed to present the interview contents in a diagrammatic form.

The following steps were used to create the data maps. The steps as used by Brehm (p.62) were used as stated or adapted slightly:

Step 1: Each interview transcript was read independently at least three times.

Step 2: Concepts relating to the research questions, topics and probing questions were highlighted using various coloured highlighters.

Step 3: The colour coded groups or themes were transposed to a large sheet of paper (A4 paper was pasted together to make a larger sheet). Within the groups each concept or theme was written down in the order in which it occurred in the interview and relationships to concepts and themes within other groups was indicated using arrows.

Step 4: The groups or as possible into the research questions, to become clearer. The sequence of thought between constructs and theme was also re-ordered. Wherever possible, the actual words used by each respondent have been reproduced within the data maps. Some concepts have been paraphrased to ensure clarity and/or succinctness.

Step 5: The final step involved checking the groupings and final concepts which were abstracted from the data map against the interview as a whole. This was done to ensure that the data map retained the overriding message/s of the interview.

The concepts that are related are boxed together. The arrows represent either the linked themes as the respondents viewed them or progression of the interview to the next topic. The start of each interview is shown as underlined. The grouping of the concepts into the various research questions was done wherever possible.

The results of the interviews as determined through the data maps are presented in Chapter 5 and discussed in Chapter 6.

4.5 The quantitative study

4.5.1 The quantitative paradigm

The quantitative paradigm is an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed statistically so as to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory hold true (Creswell, 1994).

The purpose of this phase of the study was to test the propositions that the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence; and the methods and processes used to develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.

The following qualitative paradigm assumptions informed this research (Creswell, p.5):

- Researcher is independent
- Value free and unbiased
- The nature of reality is that “reality is objective and singular”
- The language of the research is formal and uses accepted quantitative views.

4.5.2 Population

The population of relevance for this phase included final year MBA students from the accredited business schools that were interviewed in the qualitative phase of the study.

4.5.3 Size and nature of sampling

Probability simple random sampling was used (Welman and Kruger, 2001). Each of the respondents interviewed was contacted to enquire if they would allow their final year MBA students to participate in the interview. The number of final year students was requested and this informed the sample size as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 : Sample Size

BUSINESS SCHOOL	APPROXIMATE SAMPLE SIZE (Final Year MBA Students)
Business School 1	200
Business School 2	111
Business School 3	70
Business School 4	144
Business School 5	110
TOTAL	635

A total of 201 responses were received. The data was checked for incomplete responses. This resulted in a final sample size of 180 responses to analyse; yielding a 28% response rate.

4.5.4 Data Collection

As indicated, the business schools interviewed in the qualitative study were approached. Each of the business schools agreed to allow their final year MBA students to participate in



the survey. The co-ordinator was contacted by email to all the final year students was suggested. The website link to the survey was emailed to the co-ordinators with a short note of how the email message should be worded to the students. All the responses were automatically captured on the website. Once the survey was closed, the responses were exported into Microsoft Excel for data analysis.

4.5.4.1 The measuring instrument

The findings from the qualitative study, were used to design the survey. The SurveyMonkey.com website was used to design the survey (Appendix 7) and collect responses. The survey consisted of four sections:

Section 1 contained questions pertaining to the demographics of students.

Section 2 contained one question that used a ranking scale of most important (1) to least important (10) to rank 10 statements pertaining to what is important to the individual once the MBA is completed.

Section 3 contained 26 questions that pertained to the business school. A five point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' was used. The respondent was asked to rate the extent to which the range reflects their answer to the questions.

Section 4 contained 25 questions that pertained to the organisation in which the employee was employed and, again, a five point Likert scale with the same range of response was used. Unemployed students would not be able to provide input into this section. As such, a question was asked as to whether the employee was "employed" or "unemployed". If the respondent answered "unemployed", the survey re-directed the respondent to the last page of the survey where they were thanked for their participation.

4.5.4.2 The pilot test

According to Welman and Kruger (2001), a pilot test assists to:

- Detect possible flaws in the measurement procedures
- Identify unclear or ambiguously formulated questions
- Notice non-verbal behaviour that may signify discomfort or embarrassment

The survey was tested on one current MBA student and three past MBA graduates. The survey was then modified taking into account all the issues and concerns raised during the test.

4.5.5 Data Analysis

Statistical techniques can be broadly divided into descriptive and inferential categories (Welman and Kruger, 2001). This was the less dominant phase of the study and the analysis was not meant to be exhaustive. As such the overall sample was used for analyses and no comparison between any of the demographic data was done. Welman and Kruger suggest that when analysing and interpreting the descriptive data, statistical tests of significance can be conducted, and these were done for Section 3 and Section 4 of the survey. Microsoft Excel, NCSS and Statistica software packages were used for the analysis.

Section 2 of the survey was analysed by determining the mean responses for each of the 10 statements and thereafter ranking them from lowest to highest to determine at which end of the importance scale the statements featured. A ranking of (1) was regarded as most important and (10) was regarded as least important. Six of the statements were individual needs that encouraged the acquisition of reflexive competence and four of the statements were individual needs that discouraged the acquisition of reflexive competence. To

normalise the data and the mean and standard deviation for each category means for these two categories were calculated, to determine each category's position on the ranking scale.

Section 3 and Section 4 of the survey were analysed using median box plots, frequency of responses and one sample t-tests for each theme and for each individual question.

Internal reliability was determined for Section 3 and Section 4 using Cronbach's alpha.

4.6 Potential research limitations

- Only fully accredited business schools in Gauteng were chosen due to the ease of access to these schools. As a result, this could have introduced some regional bias and the findings should be approached cautiously.
- One interviewee did not allow the conversation to be recorded and was also late for the interview. As such, the interview might not have been accurately recorded and nor was the interviewer able to concentrate solely on the answers provided given that notes had to be taken.
- Medium to large organisations were interviewed specifically in the Financial, Manufacturing and Telecommunications sectors. This excluded small organisations that might have a different perception of reflexive competence.
- Interviewer bias may have been introduced in the process of data collection and interpretation.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the qualitative study. The sample demographics are presented, followed by a discussion of the data analysis techniques that were used and the corresponding results from the semi-structured in-depth interviews. The results are discussed and interpreted in Chapter 6.

5.2 Sample Demographics

The qualitative study sought to explore the domain of reflexive competence for a MBA and how it is developed and supported. As such, key stakeholders: the CHE, Gauteng-based business schools and medium to large Gauteng-based organisations were interviewed. The sampling methodology, as explained in Chapter 4, was convenient and purposive. As discussed, details of all respondents have been kept confidential.

Table 4 : Sample Demographics

INTERVIEWEE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
Council on Higher Education	1	1
Business Schools in Gauteng	5	6
Organisations in Gauteng	5	5
TOTAL	11	12

Table 5: Sector Breakdown

Sector	Number
Telecommunications	1
Banking and Financial Services	2
Manufacturing	2
TOTAL	5



5.3 Individual Data Maps

As indicated, the data mapping technique, used in a previous research (Brehm, 1994), was used in this research to analyse the content of each interview and determine the key concepts and themes that emanated from the interviews. The data maps for each of the 11 interviews are found in Appendix 6. The start of each interview is shown as underlined. Where possible, the grouping of the concepts into the various research questions has been done, since semi-structured interviews allow for both open and closed questions. The arrows indicate the flow of the discussion or relationships that existed in the conversation.

Presented below, are some of the views and concepts as expressed by the respondents per theme. Wherever possible, the words and phrases of the respondents have been used, although it should be noted that what follows does not always indicate the number of respondents who identified a specific concept or idea. In many instances specific concepts were mentioned by more than one respondent. However, in some instances the concept might have been alluded to or implied by a number of others. Some respondents might have required probing or even prompting to take the discussion forward.

As with Brehm (1994), it was found that, although certain notions emerged as strong perceptions from at least one respondent, they were often supported by impressions gained from other interviews. The data maps has assisted greatly to present the interviews in a manner that does not reduce them to tables and frequencies, but rather that captures the essence and richness of the discussion.

5.4 Research Question: What is competence?

5.4.1 Competence

Many of the interviews started with the question of what competence is - from a fairly broad perspective - and then through probing and prompting, delved deeper into the reflexive competence domain.

All respondents made the distinction between the various types of competences. The business schools suggested that:

- “Competence is the demonstrated combination of practical application in a variety of contexts...I would see it as including knowledge, skills, attributes or attitudes or whatever supports that,”
- “There are three levels...skills – the ability to do certain things...the behavioural aspect...and...an issue of attitudes, the attitude that deals with the eagerness to learn, teamwork etc.”

Organisation respondents suggested:

- “Our competence acquisition process has been functionally oriented – focused on technical aspects, to the exclusion of any leadership or other competencies,”
- “We did not use the term Boyatzis used, which is broader and includes behavioural competencies like people skills and emotional intelligence,”
- “If you look back, what is acknowledged is that it is very much functional competencies...and that has been the easy side. The behavioural side is not so easy to do,”
- “(Can be) defined with regard to three components: Knowledge, Skills and Commitment...Then commitment will be more...values based.”

The ability to integrate...ly from the business schools, whereas the organisations were a bit more concerned about justifying their functional approach to competence development. It was mentioned by one of the respondents and implied by a second, that addressing the functional competence “was an important base.” Three of the respondents admitted that, the “behavioural” competence was “excluded” or “not easy to do.”

5.4.2 Reflexive Competence

“We hope to get reflexive competence and we can’t measure it. We can’t predict whether we will get it but we hope to get it on the basis that those are the people who move inside this company. They are our tomorrow people...” (Interview Respondent)

The discussion on this topic started, in most instances, with reference to the correspondence sent through to the respondents (Appendix 2), which highlighted the definition of reflexive competence as given by SAQA (2005). Some respondents admitted that they had not had a chance to read through it and in all instances the definition was iterated and the respondent then asked to reflect on what they thought this meant for a MBA student.

All the responses that related to the domain of reflexive competence are grouped in the data maps. Some of the responses received from the organisations interviewed suggested that:

- “It is the ability to make a judgment where there is one more unknown...and to make a majority of those judgments well,”
- “It’s the ability to actually consider your own past and its context; consider your own actions, relatively dispassionately; acknowledge errors, learn from them...reduce the extent of the unknown that places you in this new situation and...by applying what you

have got, to reduce... allows you to be less at the mercy of random numbers,”

- “We have to learn very fast and go to other countries...and you have to learn very fast and adapt...Now that...builds your reflexive competence foundation, your strength,”
- “(In a) Competitive environment – (you) need to be flexible and agile – got to have high level of reflexive competence,”
- “What you have learned in the classroom and what it is that you have done practically, might not apply in this situation - but something happens at some level where you understand that you have this basic toolkit,”
- “Reflexive competence is also a bit like emotional intelligence,”
- “It’s more about the behavioural, attitudinal and intangible dynamics between people and across business – the relationship side of things and the strengthening of the EQ and social and spiritual – yes, reflexive competence,”
- “(It’s) Being able to understand what this crisis is, define it. Take the emotion out of it for a second. Apply your rational mind. Define what is the thing that is threatening you and figure out how you are actually going to get around it.”

Comments received from the business schools suggested that:

- “(It’s the) Ability to see things holistically,”
- “(It’s the) Ability to know that who you are is shaped by your actions,”
- “(It’s the) Ability to argue and debate an issue, but not become overly emotional “
- (It’s the) Ability to walk into any situation and grasp the essence of how this thing is structured, what is strategic, operational, what is tactical – where do you slot in and where do you make a difference,”
- “It’s about the choices that you make when you are faced with a situation...being able to look into the future and also think about the team and make intelligent and informed choices.”

It was found that reflexive competence is about making values-based judgements in varying contexts by systematically and holistically working through the issue or problem. The issue of being unemotional or having a high degree of emotional intelligence, in particular self awareness and self knowledge, while making those judgements, appeared to come through quite strongly from most of the respondents. Adaptability, the ability to deal with adversity and change, was also mentioned on more than one occasion by the respondents.

5.4.2.1 Values

The importance of values within the reflexive competence domain was made both implicitly and explicitly. Both organisations and business schools concluded that:

- “(Values give the) Ability to judge with that fine line – that’s the right thing and that’s not the right thing,”
- “It is important to have a coherent set of values. Sound application comes as a consequence of that. That, in turn, affects your attitudes and your ability to make decisions. Hence the question of reflexive competence.”
- “It’s a way of sorting out an unknown, and where you don’t have an answer you must have a guideline, and if you cannot get a guideline you must have a principle, and if you don’t have a principle you must have a philosophy and the value is the written form or the evident form of the philosophy,”

5.4.2.2 Reflection

In all the interviews, the ability of the individual to reflect was seen as critical to the development of reflexive competence. Comments suggested:

- “Look back, reflect, what did I do well, what did I not do well, how could I have done things differently,”

- “(The more you ca ate, learn and take it forward, the higher the proportion of good judgements made in that new and unknown situation and that is only done with experience often done with hindsight,”
- “Reflection and introspection is very important,”
- “(Reflection is the) Ability to look at a situation, reflect upon what you have been taught and then attempt to apply it or not apply it,”
- “It’s about being self driven – having self leadership – look at what you are doing as an individual and to reflect on what it is that you are doing as a leader – where you don’t have a sounding board – you don’t have anyone to ask, where you are exposed and you must have the ability to reflect on what it is you are doing right and what it is that you are doing wrong.”

5.5 Research Question 2 – How does the CHE assure and support the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA?

It was found that the role of the CHE, as stated by themselves, is purely to:

“Verify value for money, make sure qualification is appropriate at a Masters level by setting the criteria, make sure business schools are transforming (curriculum, access to school, success of previously disadvantaged students, staff demographics).“

The views expressed by business schools are that the CHE now has the job of monitoring and reviewing. This was confirmed by the CHE: “Now we will monitor and review.”

Regarding the issue of the corporate scandals and the focus on ethics and values the comments received were:

- “We have been very direct in our accreditation report that ethics, social responsibility and transformation be part of the curriculum,”
- “CHE is driven by its own mandate and not that of corporate scandals.”

During one of the interviews with a business school, a key point raised in terms of how the CHE can support the acquisition of reflexive competence was that: “CHE should be playing a role in setting guidelines for supervision.”

5.6 Research Question 3 – How do business schools develop reflexive competence?

It was important to be aware in this part of the interview, not to allow the respondents to sell their MBA programme but to gather what aspects of their programme would develop the reflexive competence that was earlier explored. Prompts and reflecting took place frequently, to gauge the reasons why or why not, some aspects of the programme developed reflexive competence more than others. The discussions focused on the following key themes: Curriculum Design, Assignments and Syndicate Work, Case Study Approach, Lecturers and Style of lecturing, Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education, Research Project, Reflection and Role of the MBA student

5.6.1 Curriculum Design

All 5 business schools, spoke proudly about their curriculum design, which takes students through the basics or foundations, whilst interweaving the practical aspects, to then getting a more holistic and strategic view of business. This, they believed, helped to develop the ability to think holistically. Further to this, respondents commented that business schools should provide continued learning opportunities for the MBA students and graduates so that the student is able to keep up with changes in business and management best practice.

Some of the comments made were:

- “That is why our courses are built in a certain way...people say why don't you just do these courses together and those together...if we could do that way we would...it would have made life easier, but it's about what makes logical development sense,”



- “We talk about the integration and then finally strategy...if you are missing these bits then the strategy is not going to even blimp on your screen. So, that is why, for us, it is the holistic development of the student, by the student himself/herself, the impact that student has on his/her syndicate, and then it just mushrooms out, from the syndicate to the class...So, it has that ripple kind of effect,”
- “It’s to do with world class faculty, it’s to do with a very well designed curriculum,”
- “We say that we are opening up horizons – taking them to the next globally positioned...holistic thinking level,”
- “If you speak to lecturers on the MBA, the first semester is very much operational, about calculations – then, the second semester; it is different and a bit broader. And then when you get to the second year and they do the leadership and the strategy and all that, the growth that you actually see in that individual occurs from being so operationally focused, and moving beyond to that strategic focus. It’s the one thing you do see with an MBA student - that ability to stand back and see the big picture. And that is where the reflexive competence comes in.”

5.6.2 Assignments and Syndicate work

It was discovered, through exploring reflexive competence, that application of knowledge in a work environment is important to its development. All the business schools used assignments and exams as key assessment tools. It came across quite strongly that assignments are used extensively to place the student in the work environment, allowing them to apply what they have learned in the classroom - so aiding the development of reflexive competence. Further to this, the syndicate work was seen as important in assisting students to work with diverse teams and handle ethical issues within a team environment.

Comments that were made include:



- “Exposure of students to their learning in different work environments, will be an important part of it. Most of our syndicate exercises involve going into corporations and doing some kind of project and I think that...is also part of building reflexive competence. As long as they take it seriously. Some do and some don't,”
- “Someone in your group behaving in an ethical manner - how do you handle it? The fact that he/she does not pull their weight is a test of how you would handle someone who is not towing the line,”
- “Syndicate assignments...you are putting them into the business context...changing circumstances, and being able to adapt comes in there,”
- “In running their syndicate groups...in setting up the syndicate group, I expect them to write a group charter, what are the rules of the game and how to conduct themselves within the group. If someone does not perform or is not participating as required; how do we handle this, how do we do it in a transparent way, how do we take action. So, in practicing ethical behaviour and ethical decision-making, it is done in their syndicate groups,”
- “Our program is so geared to making sure students reflect from day 1, because all our assignments are based on their own companies...so their companies become the laboratories of practice,”
- “You need to work together in syndicates. It is a collaborative experience and it takes you far further than just the book...You are going to have conflicting characters. You are going to have people that don't want to work. You are going to have all those lovely dynamics. And this is where you can learn to manage them.”

5.6.2.1 Feedback

On discussing the role of assignments, several of the respondents mentioned the importance of feedback in development of reflexive competence, either on the individual assignment or from syndicate members. Some comments made included:

- “We insist on fairly in-depth feedback...the student has the option to enter into discourse with the lecturer. Then it is not a matter about haggling about marks. That’s not what it is about. It’s about; all right I am ‘here’, where should I be? How do I get there?”
- “And the difference here is that...the non-performance of 2 people is going to impact on 8 or 6 other people and it is the same thing at work. You...created your own learning contract...you created it with that group, so, it is how you manage it. Again, it is coming back to you and your accountability,”
- “Now coming back to feedback - the lecturers are meant to give you proper feedback in your assignments and by proper I mean in-depth feedback, and I know that it doesn’t always happen - some lecturers will just write the basic comments and send it through,”
- “What we do is we give them a group participation sheet, and they score one another, and that has to be a consensus decision. If they don’t use it and come complain about free riders etc, then I ask them: have you used your charter? and so then I say, go away.”

5.6.3 Case Study Approach

All respondents indicated that the case studies discussed in class helped to bring the business world into the classroom. Many also saw the benefit of case studies to teach students how to make ethical business decisions. Respondents further commented that the lecturer’s ability to facilitate the case was crucial to the extent of learning. Some comments were:

- “You cannot go into a study...the preparation has to be before hand and then you interact with everybody else’s thoughts...and you can make more meaningful contribution to the discussion and then make sense of it,”
- “Embed ethics and so on into the courses and get the lecturers to use examples and cases to highlight the consequences of ethical vs. unethical decision making processes. We use a lot of the Harvard cases and we use a lot of our own cases,”
- “You can do this through cases: what would be the results? and get people to expose themselves to their own thought processes - and then periodically ask if they change their minds - is it ethical or unethical? - and add more info...so does this make the decision unethical or ethical?”

5.6.4 Lecturers and Style of Lectures

The quality of lecturers and the style of lectures were highlighted as important to develop reflexive competence. Regarding the lecturers, business schools indicated the importance of having lecturers that had exposure to the business world and still consulted in that area. It was identified as critical that lecturers bring the work environment to the classroom. Ongoing learning and development for lecturers as well as peer reviews were seen as important in making sure that lecturers were also receiving exposure to stay abreast of the changes in the business world. Many of the business schools commented that they have not been doing enough to further develop their lecturers and that peer reviews needed to be done more often. Regarding the style of lectures, the participative, lively, debate style was highlighted. Some comments made within this theme included:

- “We have the privilege that all our lecturers are real-time consultants...our selection criteria are that they must have the academic qualification and secondly is in consultation - is real business,”
- “We encourage that lively debate and interaction,”

- “Right, but it is not in the hands of the 60 somewhat very bright students - who have been accepted onto this programme, if you want to challenge and that is what we keep saying - have the challenge with the faculty members - have the challenge with yourselves - you know what this is about, you know what corporate governance is all about, you know what ethics is about, what determines right and wrong...So, it doesn't have to formally come from the lecturer – it's how you are going to bring it up and how you are going to interact with the people in your class,”
- “Lecturers have to have a clear plan on how to handle the responses in the class,”
- “We have done peer reviews...then they are expected to read and publish and research and then they are expected to consult. So, they have to be exposed to all of that - in order to bring that into the classroom,”
- “We use a very participative lecture style here so all the lecturers bring out student discussion - and really good lecturers will take themselves out of the discussion - and let the students talk to themselves and then come back again,”
- “In the class - the classes are very discussion-based and the idea is to get the class talking about issues and the lecturer to facilitate the theory that emerges from the discussion.”

5.6.5 Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education

None of the business schools were aware of the criteria laid out by the Ethics Education Task Force presented in Chapter 2, that one could evaluate oneself against to assess the commitment to ethics. Typically, the general feeling was that ethics education was important so that students then have the knowledge that will assist them in making decisions. Regarding a specific course on ethics, only one business school supported it and was currently running it within the programme. The perception was that it is integrated throughout all the courses and in particular the courses on finance covered the legislations

and corporate governance... the role of business in society – again the feeling was that the students learn about this in all the courses in the discussions and from their peers. All the business schools claimed that their mission showed a commitment to ethics and values, that they set an example of ethical behaviour to the students and had a culture that supports ethics and values, which is required for reflexive competence.

Some general comments made include:

- “We have been trying for quite a while to introduce corporate governance and that would incorporate ethics. We haven’t considered building in Ethics as a subject but rather embedding it in Corporate Governance - as we feel that that is where it belongs,”
- “We have done Corporate Governance and Ethics as an elective every year...but it is something that will come out in your discussions throughout the courses. You will touch on it in accounting, management accounting, in strategy or whatever...it should be a thread that runs throughout the courses that you do,”
- “We can’t try to teach ethics on an MBA programme if we have a top management team that behave unethically. So, you have to practice what you preach,”
- “The whole issue of values and ethics has been interwoven into this programme, since time immemorial,”

5.6.6 Research Project

It was agreed that the research project was highly useful in developing reflexive competence. Comments were made on the importance of supervision as well.

- “(The) research project is where reflexive competence is honed,”
- “I see it as a partnership - I have the responsibility to be the best supervisor that I can and the student has the responsibility to be the best student. I will advise and suggest

things - and there

suggest alternatives etc. and

ask them to think about things from that perspective,”

- “It (the research project) has the potential to be (effective). I don't think it has been managed effectively enough and I don't think in many cases the faculty has enough skills. I don't think the faculty do enough of their own research...if faculty members are producing research then they will be better supervisors to their students,”
- “(The) research project is very important and requires passion from the student...but it also requires that the business school has the research process under control,”
- “The role of supervision in reflexive competence? I think that it is a function of both what the supervisor and student bring and what their expectations are. So, it's not about meeting 3 times or whatever, it's about building a relationship, they have to meet a certain outcome,”
- “That process of reflection takes place the whole time. We ask students, where do you want to take this thing in your life? How does this feed into your career development?...we assist the student to be reflexive,”
- “The interesting thing is that this reflection, sometimes you can do on your own, sometimes you get so involved in what you are busy with that you lose track and that is where the role of the supervisor is so incredibly important,”
- “Generally speaking - supervisory activities on an MBA level are ineffective,”
- “I mean, they force us to go on induction and before you supervise, you should go on a similar programme.”

5.6.7 Reflection

Learning journals were highlighted as being useful to enhance reflection, although most business schools were not using them. Further to this, the lecturer's ability to ask the right questions to allow students to reflect on the values and behaviour was seen as important. It

was also identified that leadership was necessary to provide students with self awareness.

Comments made included:

- “Students will be exposed to something like this in your personal leadership course,”
- “A skilled facilitator will ask those questions and there probably aren't many who would ask those questions - it takes teaching on how to use cases, it takes practice and guided practice...go out there are teach cases but you might do it wrong and if there is nobody there to keep you on track...you will never do it right and blame the case method for being bad,”
- “(The) role of the lecturer is much less about giving answers than it is about asking the right questions, which forces the student to think and reflect - ask the right questions and the student will transform.”

5.6.8 Role of the MBA student

Just as much as the CHE, business schools and organisations have a role to play in developing reflexive competence. Many respondents were clear that a lot depends on the student themselves and what their individual needs are. Self learning ability was seen as important in developing reflexive competence. Some comments made were:

- “People who we accept onto the MBA and...we always say this - we will accept you and you must accept us because we can't hope to change you if you don't want to change yourself,”
- “You can come here with the fact that, oh - I just want to do an MBA, cos I want to get more money, cos research has shown that you finish your MBA and your salary trebles,”
- “I am doing this MBA suddenly...but it's not about that, it's about the way in which you communicate, so that you don't come about as suddenly being all knowing or this level of arrogance,”



- “But if they are c, , come in and the environment supports that - they will transform,”
- “Ultimately, we need to enable our students to walk out with a skill set which they can apply to a variety of areas...Some people the moment they walk out the door with an MBA qualification - they stop learning - which we don't want.”

5.7 Research Question 4– How do SA organisations support the development of reflexive competence?

As with Question 3, it was important not to let the respondents sell their organisation, but to gather what aspects of their organisation would develop or support the development of reflexive competence that was earlier explored. Prompts and reflecting took place frequently, to gauge the reasons why or why not, some aspects of the organisation developed reflexive competence more than others. The discussions with the business schools and organisations, focused on key themes: Commitment to Ethics and Values, Organisation Climate, Performance Management, Mentoring, Career Development & Succession Planning, and Learning & Development.

5.7.1 Commitment to Ethics and Values

Having identified the importance of ethics and values in exploring what reflexive competence is, the following comments were made regarding the role of leadership commitment to ethics and values:

- “By example setting and intolerance of unethical issues and governance issues and really demonstrating - the senior managers have to walk the talk,”
- “I think that ethics comes more and more from inculcation from the managers and execs: the way managers behave - that's how the staff will behave.”



- “We actually get it, but we’re not making decisions, but we haven’t created the context for them to make the decision; the foundation for them to make that decision and that is the value set,”
- “Yes - the values have to permeate. If it does not permeate, you are probably going to behave in a way that is counterproductive to that.”

5.7.1.1 Role Models

The importance of having people that can set an example to others was seen as important by most of the respondents:

- “And then, of course, there are the success factors in people around you, and you look around and it doesn’t take long to find someone who is really good at what they are doing and how they do it, and the next thing you know, you, almost by osmosis, absorb some of that good stuff,”
- “People learn best when they see someone else do it. It is active learning. If you walk around and see a poster - its visual, you see it and you walk away from it, but if you see someone do it, you say well this works and it takes it far more closer to home, it makes it far more practical, it helps a person learn how it is meant to be done.”

5.7.1.2 Alignment to vision and values

Alignment to vision and values was seen as important in driving the right behaviour which hence supported the development of reflexive competence. Key comments made were:

- “I say that it is so important to have that bigger context...things like clear purpose, alignment; people need to know what is the vision of the org, how do they contribute to the vision?”
- “What is it about you as an individual that...you can be identified as being aligned to the organisation in terms of your values, or not aligned,”

- “We are truly visitors here. We don’t want rules, we don’t want policies that tell us what to do, we are guided by our values.”

5.7.2 Organisation Climate

The organisational climate, in particular a safe environment where people feel they can trust each other, was identified as being important. Along with that, an organisation that has open and honest communication, diversity, a questioning culture and an empowering and accountable climate came through as also being of importance from several respondents:

- “I think it is to do with the work culture, the kind of accountability that the environment of work gives to each employee, cos to allow people to be shielded for their poor actions, merely creates the situation where it can be perpetuated time and again, and then it’s to the detriment of the customer, the client,”
- “Structure of the environment - it should be flat rather than hierarchical to nurture more openness and autonomy,”
- “Mix different people across the organisational levels in your structure...you learn from each other like that - and that is another way to develop and get people to start reflecting: if I want to be there then maybe I should be doing X, Y and Z or I have forgotten how to be passionate,”
- “Yes - the culture and, if it is an unquestioning culture, then you got no chance of developing reflexive competence, if it is questioning culture then you have a good chance and the kind of people you employ will influence that,”
- “You know particularly in a competitive environment - where you need to be flexible and agile - you got to have a high level of reflexive competence - and how you develop that depends on the kinds of people and the kinds of - or rather the way of working, do you have a bureaucratic org – with lots of structures and lots of this is how you do it here - or is there a bare minimum of guidelines - so it’s like asking do you want robot sales representatives or thinking representatives?”



- “We have broken way of approaching work to enabling and empowering and giving people the opportunity to really be the best that they can be,”
- “We must be able to have conversations, be able to engage each other,”
- “We do peer feedback, 360s, we have done individual assessments and we have shared that with each other. It has required a lot of trust and openness.”

5.7.3 Performance Management

Respondents mentioned the importance of giving and receiving feedback in developing reflexive competence. When probed further with regard to their organisation, most respondents referred to the performance management process. However, it was very strongly argued that it is not about the percentage salary increase but rather that process of engaging with your employee and giving feedback that forces reflection and, hence, development. For some, discussing this topic made them reflect on the fact that performance management could be detrimental to the development of reflexive competence, if the environment is too competitive or performance driven. Some comments made were:

- “It includes 360 degree feedback and it must be safe for me to tell my boss - that they are not performing or where they are performing,”
- “Performance Management is a very dangerous tool....if you look at the five top driving factors for successful people to stay within business, finance or remuneration does not become one of them,”
- “The formal process is a lot less powerful cos it has salary attached to it, than the informal process,”
- “We also ensure that our values are entrenched in our Performance Management process. So, in our process, the extent to which you have lived those values forms 25% of your performance management contract,”

- “That is something...down and having a honest discussion around behavioural issues. The conversation becomes...tougher. Typically you shy away from those tough discussions. But...those tough discussions...have the big impact in terms of reflexive competence,”
- “Sometimes it gets a bit out of kilter because we have this high performance drive lead and you have a bit of a lag with how I do things, so we want to measure people...on how they do things. “

5.7.4 Mentoring

The ability to have a conversation in a safe environment was identified as important to support the development of reflexive competence. Typically, the respondents agreed that mentoring accomplished that, although the quality of the relationship had to be right for it to work. Key comments made were:

- “Your mentor, who might not be the person you report in to...can give you brutal, cold feedback...and at the same time you are able to express your fears...It’s a safe environment with your mentor but at the same time it cannot be abused,”
- “Formal mentoring...within companies - where you are formally appointed a mentor – (they) ...shouldn’t be the person you are reporting to, cos you want a safe environment,”
- “Mentoring is a tremendous tool - very poorly used. If you have the privilege of working in a large company - mentoring should be an absolute. It should be a given because ideally your MBA is going to be one of your rising stars and fast tracker,”
- “Mentoring, yes - but a lot depends on the quality of the mentor, “
- “What we find...is that we are a very performance-driven organisation - and sometimes when you are too performance-oriented the environment becomes one where you can’t reflect openly - because your reflections or your deliberations or your thinking or your expression of thought with your team or with your manager - might be

used against you ... encourage that. So, mentorship is a safe place to plug in and bounce things off - to share your thinking and know that it won't be held against you,”

- “You actually need to speak to someone that you trust...to help you and guide you around managing upwards and managing your boss and dealing with the people circumstances that you might find yourself in.”

5.7.5 Career Development and Succession Planning

Respondents highlighted the need to have worked in varying contexts to develop reflexive competence. Several respondents saw that career development and succession planning could be supportive in that it allowed the individual and the organisation to plan career moves that would help develop the individual. It was indicated that it was important that these individuals had development plans in place. Further to this, other processes to ensure employees were exposed to varying work contexts were identified. These included job rotation and shadowing. Some of the comments made include:

- “To develop people and move people from point A to point B and create an opportunity of various contexts. I think career pathing is also another big thing and that must be formally talked about,”
- “I think that it is important because it goes back to the individual again...people want to take the effort to reflect and develop - they also want to know where they are going - so it's like basic human need...in a good organisation, this process would certainly support reflexive competence. People who do MBAs are ambitious and want to go somewhere and if they come into an organisation and there are no processes to help them manage their careers - succession planning - then they will leave,”
- “Then once we have the accountabilities, we can then say what are the competencies required, and then what are the necessary learning interventions that are required: so,



coaching, mentoring or rotation in the organisation or whatever the story might be,”

- “You co-reflect with people about what reasonably can you do, what would you like to do, what are the gaps and how are we going to fill them...what’s practical and what’s reasonable...you provoke that clarity of thought that enables people to be realistic.”

5.7.5.1 Shadowing

Shadowing was seen as important to the development of reflexive competence, although many respondents argued that it was very difficult to do it within their organisations.

- “The problem is that because things are changing so much, people’s tenure in any particular organisation is much shorter. Prior, people would stay 15-20 years and wouldn’t have job changes. Now if you have someone for 3-5 years it’s too long...so I am not sure that that can work - unless you have some kind of continuity and that might be an inhibiting factor for the building of reflexive competence,”
- “In this instance, it was someone shadowing a more senior person...taking this young person studying the MBA full time and serving an apprenticeship with a business leader...if this meant that as the apprentice of this CEO you carry his golf bag etc, you do it cos by doing that you listen to the way they network, do deals etc,”
- “Yes, we have an example of that...where an MBA engineering graduate is shadowing our CEO. I chatted to him and it doesn't seem to be working. He has been with us for 6 months. So, maybe it works for limited period - cos people want a real job and the issue with shadowing is that people feel they don't have a real job.”

5.7.5.2 Job Rotation

Here again, the importance of varying contexts was seen as important, but job rotation was also seen to be difficult to implement. Only two of the five organisations were actively using job rotation.

- “We sometimes struggle with it is in a restructure...It’s hard to take a skilled successful person out of his job and put them somewhere they don’t know on the basis of a tomorrow possibility,”
- “At a region it happens a fair amount cos you can rotate, financial accountant to management accountant, warehouse, to depot and within the sales function itself, it’s a bit difficult,”
- “We do it a lot in the actuarial area to give them exposure in different spaces of work so then they move around and learn different contexts,”
- “We believe that in the cross pollination there is a lot of development opportunities, lots of innovation, lots of business goals that can be achieved. Also, it’s about putting people together that wouldn’t normally work together and so they come out with that diversity.”

5.7.6 Learning and Development

Due to the fact that reflexive competence is impacted by change, the continuous learning and development of staff was seen as important to support the development of reflexive competence. Along with that was the training of staff and senior management on ethics and values. Action learning by exposing employees to work in teams through project work was seen as important. Some of the comments made were:

- “Business must ensure that continued professional development is part of that organisation,”
- “The environment needs to be nurturing, create the opportunity to up-skill people if they are lacking in areas...So, if you are lacking in X or Y - what has your company done for you to learn that,”
- “I don’t think businesses train enough and when they do train, it’s on functional stuff and they take you away on team building - which is hopeless...”

- “Businesses are e... earn, but then they say - hold on if we teach you too much you are going to jump ship. People should be looking at how they can keep intellectual capital. If you are running a business and you don’t nurture intellectual capital, which is reflexive competence per se - you are committing suicide as you will not be able to remain competitive over a long period of time,”
- “Everybody has to go through a workshop on ethics which is just the formal thing - for example I can’t employ my wife or rather outsource my training to my wife who has a training company,”
- “The ability to want to learn. Continuous improvement is driven very much in our organisation - and is part of people’s scorecards,”
- “We are doing a whole lot of this in graduate development. These graduates come out of university with a whole range of up to date technical skills, and they are stepping into a corporate environment where essentially now, we say how do you take that technical and theoretical knowledge and start to apply it in the corporate environment and for me that supports this whole concept of reflexive competence,”
- “You need to develop your training programme and assessments so that it is not rote learning, they should be engendering thinking, debate, lots of discussion, exploration, double loop learning, questioning. So, I think there is a design skill in your programme here and in the learning interventions,”

5.7.6.1 Action Learning

Three of the five businesses highlighted that they use action learning as well as project based international assignments to develop reflexive competence.

- “Business must provide MBA students with consultant roles or project work so that students are able to apply in different contexts,”
- “International assignment is largely project-based in other words you are not going there for 2 years, you are going there for 3 months, in and out and deliver. If they fail

its kind of OK depending on the circumstances. It is not an absolute necessity that they succeed,”

- “Some interventions, such as action learning, where you acquire and develop reflective and investigative skills more so than other programmes; you know a great new project that you are sent out to do with a team of folks and you have a lot of complex information,”
- “Every year we put 23 people on an action learning programme...it is quite a significant learning tool, and if anything it does develop reflective, investigative thinking - debate, discussion.”

5.7.7 Role of the MBA Student

Here again, the organisations highlighted that the MBA student has to also contribute to the development of reflexive competence. Predominantly, MBA students were seen to be driven by the need for more money and better career. However, most of the respondents agreed that they should start showing more of an interest in their MBA employees to benefit. Some of the comments made about the MBA and students were:

- “It produces a potential within an individual. Although we find that it produces an expectation which exceeds the potential within the individual and that makes the person a pain,”
- “People that walk into an MBA should walk in with their heads turned 30 degrees to say that when you go in and when you come out you are going to be the same person, you are going to be better educated,”
- “I really believe that the tone around an MBA is really about how this is going to benefit me, like I am going to be able to do a much higher level job, I am going to command a much better salary, I am going to be involved in much more strategic work, and somehow I think that there needs to be a shift in the focus where people realise that the MBA is equipping you to become a senior leader in an organisation

and that is not necessarily out to be.. the reverse is true almost, leadership is about serving others, and developing others and growing others and developing societies and communities and whatever depending on the context in which you are working and I think that if you ask a majority of MBA students why they are here and what they expect when they leave that would certainly be the tone,”

- “They now get frustrated and say this MBA is the solution to their development, and their advancement in their careers. They come... and say I now have an MBA what are you going to do with me. We say, well, there are only so many senior roles in an organisation at the end of the day,”
- “We need to create an environment that absorbs the application and really embrace it, and never mind the higher order stuff but are we ready for a different person to come into this organisation. It’s a mindset. The individual might realise this MBA might not mean a career move for me, but I can make a difference in this place. I can unleash a whole new energy in this organisation. I can not only improve my personal performance but I can improve the performance of my team and it’s that kind of application. It is not just the application of the knowledge.”

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

In this Chapter, the various themes and constructs established in Chapter 5 are evaluated in the context of the research questions and the various theories presented in the literature review in Chapter 2.

6.2 Research Question 1 - What is reflexive competence?

Research Question 1 sought to establish the various views from the CHE, business schools and organisations in terms of what reflexive competence is for a MBA student. It was important to first establish a view of what the respondents viewed as competence, and then to delve deeper into what reflexive competence means.

As shown in Chapter 5 and in the data maps (Appendix 6), there are various definitions of competence. This adds to the growing list of definitions as highlighted in the literature review and in Appendix 1.

What is made clear is that there are levels of competence and although knowledge and skills are common across the definitions, it is the third level of competence that seems to vary amongst respondents, with indications that this level is either attribute, attitudes, behaviours or commitment.

Only one of the respondents mentioned values whilst discussing competence and this perhaps justifies the findings of Cheetham and Chivers (1998) and the comment made by

Meyer (1996,p.35), wh very little emphasis in the literature and debate on competencies.”

The mindset from the organisations was that behavioural competence was excluded and that it was “not easy do.” Hence, the organisation respondents’ discussions on competence focused to a large extent on functional competence, which is the second component of competence as defined by Cheetham and Chivers (1998) and as represented in Figure 4.

As shown by the comments in Chapter 5, and the summary of interviews presented in the data maps (Appendix 6), reflexive competence is predominantly about making values-based judgements in varying contexts by systematically and holistically working through the various situations that one finds oneself in. This supports Karecki’s (2002, p146) view on reflexive competence, that it is “the ability to reflect on various components on a learning experience so as to be able to make meaning for oneself, interiorise that meaning and apply that mean in other real life context, in a way that is transformative for the individual and his/her social context.” It also supports Barge’s (2004, p.71) view on reflexive practice as, a “relational activity that highlights issues of situated judgement, timing and rhythm within conversation.”

Pfeffer and Fong (2002, p.84) claimed that what is lacking on the MBA programme is “Communication ability, leadership, interpersonal skills, and wisdom,” – “the ability to weave together and make use of different kinds of knowledge,” (Mintzberg and Gosling, 2002, p.28).” Based on the findings on reflexive competence, it verifies that this is indeed what Pfeffer and Fong (2002) and Bennis and O’Toole (2005) have highlighted as lacking.

The ability to have a high degree of emotional intelligence, in particular self awareness and self knowledge, came through from most of the respondents. As one respondent pointed out, “It’s more about the behavioural – attitudinal and intangible dynamics between people

and across business – 1 strengthening of the EQ and social and spiritual – yes, reflexive competence.” Boyatzis *et al* (2002), indicates that self management or intrapersonal abilities and relationship management or interpersonal management make up the emotional intelligence competencies as originally defined by Goleman (1998) and as alluded to by the respondents. These competencies are also captured in Cheetham and Chivers’ (1998) model (Figure 4), within the third component of competence: personal/behavioural competence. Respondents also highlighted that reflexive competence is about dealing with adversity and change as well as being flexible and agile. This ties in with the behavioural competences of thinking on your feet and control of emotions and stress highlighted by Cheetham and Chivers (Figure 4).

As respondents were probed further on performing in varying contexts and making judgements, it became apparent that these judgements had to be made based on values and that it had to be ethical and take various stakeholders into consideration. This is the practical wisdom, practical reasoning, prudence or *phronesis*, called for by Aristotle (1999); Eisner (2002); Mintzberg and Gosling (2002); Bennis and O’Toole (2005) and Simpson (2006). As one respondent highlighted, it’s the “Ability to judge with that fine line – that’s the right thing and that’s not the right thing.”

This finding relates firstly to the fourth component of values/ethical competence, Cheetham and Chivers (1998) (Figure 4), as well as the additional ingredient identified by Boyatzis *et al* (2002) of motivational drivers. Interestingly, sensibility to needs and values of others, acknowledging boundaries of own competence, duty to keep up to date which are all seen as ethical competence by Cheetham and Chivers, tie in with comments made by respondents (Chapter 5 and Appendix 6) about taking into consideration all stakeholders, working with diverse groups of people, ability to know your own capabilities and potential, self learning ability and ability to have a future orientation. Archer (2002), on whose work



the term reflexive competence is finding by defining reflexive as “someone who has the properties and powers to monitor their own life, to mediate structural and cultural properties of society and thus contribute to societal reproduction and transformation.

The findings suggest that elements of both components three and four of Cheetham and Chivers and the behavioural competencies and motivational drivers of Boyatzis *et al* (2002) can be identified as reflexive competence.

6.2.1 Reflection

According to Dewey (1933, p.12) cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.199), “reflective thinking is distinct from other forms of thought because it involves (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty in which thinking originates, and (2) an act searching, hunting, inquiring to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose perplexity.”

In all the interviews, the ability to reflect was seen as being critical to the development of reflexive competence, as it helps the individual to actually take a moment to stop, go back and consider what exactly is going on, work through information, synthesise, analyse, seek options and then finally act. The benefit of reflection was highlighted by Schon (1983, 1987) cited in Cheetham and Chivers (1998, p.267) as, “important for additional development, day to day practice and continuous improvement.” Cheetham and Chivers (1998, p.270) go on to say that, “Reflection (about past and current action) may lead to some kind of behavioural modification and hopefully to an improvement in professional competence.”

As one respondent pointed out, “The organisation doesn’t encourage formal reflection – (but) if you don’t do it you are condemned to making a high proportion of bad judgments.” This is supported by Brookfield (1995) cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.119) who claims that, “where reflection is absent, there is a constant risk of making poor decisions and bad judgments.”

In conclusion, reflexive c

- make a judgement, decision or choice in varying contexts based on values and ethics
- be discerning
- work with diverse groups of people
- synthesise and analyse information
- be self aware and have self knowledge, i.e. being emotionally intelligent
- conduct self learning
- have a future orientation
- be flexible and agile
- acknowledge and learn from failures
- deal with adversity and change
- think holistically and in an integrated manner
- manage interpersonal relationships
- recognise the impact of your decisions on other stakeholders
- think rationally and apply practical reasoning
- know your own capabilities and potential.

6.3 Research Question 2 – How does the CHE assure and support the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA?

Research Question 2 sought to establish how the CHE supports the development of reflexive competence in a MBA.

Due to the proliferation of MBAs in South Africa, the Minister of Education and other stakeholders expressed concerns about the quality, cost and benefits as well as relevance to South Africa's needs, (CHE, 2004). The CHE, and in particular the HEQC, responded through reaccrediting all MBA programmes in South Africa. This re-accreditation took place

against set criteria as per the accreditation was done, the CHE took on the role to continue to monitor and review MBA programmes against these criteria. As mentioned by the CHE respondent, “Now we will monitor and review.”

Trank and Rynes (2003) slated the AACSB for their standards that are based on a self selected “mission” rather than a professional body of knowledge or standardised outcomes. When probed about the mission and the focus it gets in the criteria (Table 1), the CHE were unable to recall exactly if the business schools’ missions showed a commitment to ethics and values. However, they believed they were very direct in their accreditation report that ethics, social responsibility and transformation be part of the curriculum and this, they said, they will continue to monitor. In fact, Criterion 13 (Table 1) is dedicated to context, which focuses on the external environment and assesses if the business schools contribute to the improvement of management in society.

In terms of how they can make sure that business schools develop reflexive competence, the respondent suggested that, “Business schools must set tasks that simulate the workplace in an integrated way,” and that they should, “Develop ethics, values and decision making through in-depth case study approach.” This represents a huge part of Criterion 10 which looks at “Teaching and Learning” and Criterion 11 which looks at “Assessment”, (Table 1).

A key point raised by one of the business school respondents, is that the CHE can support the acquisition of reflexive competence by setting guidelines for supervision. In the MBA monitor report (CHE, 2004) the CHE stated that the two criteria critical to the future of the MBA in business schools were research and the ability to build a relationship between business and society. Criterion 12 is dedicated to research and the CHE have made it quite explicit that the research should contribute to the knowledge base of the field of

management. Delving further into the literature, the minimum standards listed include (CHE, 2004, p.136):

- Postgraduate supervision procedures and processes that must be on par with all other postgraduate degrees
- That there are monitoring mechanisms in place to check progress of students, codes and guideline on supervision, and training and development opportunities for new supervisors.

Despite these minimum standards, three of the five business schools commented on the ineffectiveness of supervision and the lack of development for supervisors. This, perhaps, lends itself to further research.

In conclusion, the CHE supports the development of reflexive competence in a MBA by:

- Setting the standards for MBA programmes
- Monitoring and reviewing these standards
- Encouraging reflective learning by monitoring the learning methodologies and assessment
- Encouraging and monitoring progress against a curriculum that shows a commitment to ethics and values
- Setting clear guidelines for managing the research process and supervision of students.

6.4 Research Question 3 – How do business schools develop reflexive competence?

Research Question 3 sought to establish how business schools develop reflexive competence in a MBA.

The key themes that emerged in Chapter 5 are:

- Curriculum Design
- Assignments and Syndicate Work
- Case study approach
- Lecturers and Style of lectures
- Reflection
- Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics
- Research project
- Role of the MBA student.

6.4.1 Curriculum Design

The curriculum was highlighted by Doria *et al* (2003) as an area of change for business schools. They claimed that schools should give more and better grounding in theory to help students go beyond case studies; change the curriculum to allow students to integrate learning and apply multiple disciplines on the job; encourage students to take courses outside the traditional core curriculum, and commit themselves to differentiation in the curriculum. All respondents mentioned the role of curriculum design in developing reflexive competence. Yaruch and Leeming (1996), found that typical MBA programmes consist of core, specialist, elective and an integrated business project: similar to what business schools today are using.

Contradictory to Mintzberg's view (2004b), the respondents saw the core or fundamental courses as important to lay a foundation for the rest of the MBA, which supports the change areas indicated by Doria *et al* (2003). The respondents felt that, just as Mintzberg's (2004b) IMPM programme goes through the various stages, so too should their MBA curriculum. This would allow the individual to be able to integrate what they have learned and think holistically. As one respondent pointed out, "If you speak to lecturers on the MBA, the first semester is very much operational, about calculations - then the second semester it is

different and a bit broader than the first year, in the second year and they do the leadership and the strategy and all that, the growth that you actually see in that individual occurs from being so operationally focused, and moving beyond to that strategic focus. It's the one thing you do see with an MBA student - that ability to stand back and see the big picture. And that is where the reflexive competence comes in."

6.4.2 Assignments and Syndicate Work

The benefits of individual and syndicate assignments was seen by all respondents as being useful in developing reflexive competence, as it placed the student in a work environment and forced the application of the learning. Anderson *et al* (1995) indicated that where new learning is integrated with experience, the meaning is more effectively integrated into the learner's values and understanding. Pfeffer and Fong (2004, p.89), indicate that some business schools have started to "couple learning with the application of that learning, sometimes in groups, and invariably in ways relevant to the individual's current job and company."

This is the expectation that respondents had of both the individual and syndicate assignments. As one respondent claimed, "Our program is so geared to making sure students reflect from day 1, because all our assignments are based on their own companies, so, in effect, because they have to do assignments on their own companies (it) forces them to reflect with (the) reality that they face, so their companies become the laboratories of practice, and most of the companies have found that to be very helpful as their students are able to raise the level of discussion."

Syndicate work was found to be particularly useful, in that it taught learners how to work in diverse teams and allowed them to reflect on ethical or unethical behaviour within the team. Brookfield (1995) cited in Densten and Gray (2001, p.119) supports this by saying the

reflexive process is enhanced where students have three attributes: open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness. The expectation is that these attributes are developed through syndicate work and this enhances critical reflection which develops reflexive competence.

6.4.2.1 Feedback

Several of the respondents mentioned the importance of giving students feedback to develop reflexive competence. This they said should be done on individual and syndicate assignments. Further to this they stressed the importance of giving feedback to syndicate members. Most business schools, encouraged students to set up a charter in terms of how they would work as a syndicate and how they would address various issues that might arise. That feedback develops reflexive competence is supported by Barge's (2004, p.71) findings that, "Reflexive practice emphasizes inclusive, respectful, and safe communication. The safe space for conversation is created by establishing clear accountability and responsibility in teams by offering feedback, setting clear agenda's and actively inviting people to speak." Brockbank and McGill (1998), suggest that both giving and receiving feedback is an important facilitation skill needed for reflective dialogue. By making reference to Dearing (1997), they explain that feedback and assessment are important in helping students to progress and learn from their mistakes. Although the business schools saw this as important, some of them did admit that the feedback on the assignments might not be adequate.



6.4.3 Case study approach

Contradictory to the findings in the literature review, about the case study approach (Mintzberg, 2004b; Leavitt, 1999 cited in Pfeffer and Fong, 2002), many of the respondents claimed that the case study approach was a key tool for developing reflexive competence, as it placed the learner in a simulated business world. This is perhaps explained by the fact that the case study approach is only one of the methodologies adopted on the programme and that the curriculum design focuses on a strong theoretical understanding as well, whereas some business schools might only use case studies to facilitate learning. As indicated by Doria *et al* (2003), business schools must give better theoretical grounding so that students can go beyond the case study and analyse problems and craft solutions in situations which they have not encountered before.

6.4.4 Lecturers and Style of lectures

It was Bennis and O'Toole (2005) who indicated that business schools are hiring professors with very little real-world experience and hence the students are not equipped to handle the "stuff of management", (p.96). They go on to say that "Today it is possible to find tenured professors of management who have never set foot inside a real business, except as customers", (p.100).

As one respondent commented, "We have the privilege that all our lecturers are real time consultants. So firstly our selection criteria are that they must have the academic qualification and secondly is in consultation - is real business. So they bring proper regulated case studies to the table, but they bring a lot of the real life input into it." Business schools, saw the business experience of lecturers as critical to the development of reflexive competence as well as continued professional development in their field. However, very few were convinced that they were doing enough about faculty learning and development or peer reviews.

The style of the lecture developing reflexive competence and the participative style of lectures that engenders debate and discussion was seen as instrumental. This is supported by Brockbank and McGill (1998) as well as Pfeffer and Fong (2002, p.85) who indicate by citing Boyatzis, Cowen and Kolb (1995, p.9), that “The focus on teaching incorporates an input orientation. A focus on learning requires an output orientation”. Further highlighted was the need for the lecturer to discuss work place issues in the classroom. This is similar to Mintzberg’s (2004b) IMPM, where the philosophy of the programme is really to bring work experience into the classroom, rather than teach people more theory. As Mintzberg claims “They engage them in the best of their ideas, while managers engage the faculty in the most interesting of experiences.” (p.35).

6.4.5 Reflection

The ability of lecturers to facilitate the discussion and enable reflection was also seen as important to develop reflexive competence, and, as one respondent pointed out, “(The) Role of the lecturer is much less about giving answers than it is about asking the right questions, which forces the student to think and reflect - ask the right questions and the student will transform!” Densten and Gray (2001, p.120) support this by saying, “Thus, an important function of leadership education is to provide opportunities for student reflection so that students gain understanding of how they perceive and interpret their observations.”

Further to this, the respondents were probed into how students can reflect and capture their thoughts. Learning journals were seen as effective in achieving this. This is supported by (Walker, 1985; Brockbank and McGill, 1998; Densten and Gray, 2001; and Loo and Thorpe, 2002). Only one respondent indicated that students were using learning journals but was not certain as to the extent of its use. Two other respondents commented that they were seriously considering implementing them in the future. A personal development or personal leadership course was also mentioned as important to promote reflection and self

awareness. This lends (2006), who claims that MBA programmes neglect the softer management skills.

6.4.6 Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education

The AACSB International (2004) indicated the importance of everyone in management education thinking deeply and creatively on how to advance the awareness and principles of ethical behaviour. This led to the discussion on incorporating ethics into the MBA curriculum, (Crane and Matten, 2004).

Although Crane and Matten indicate the business ethics curriculum should be shaped by various forces, as shown in Figure 1, four of the five business school respondents argued against a specific course on ethics but rather an integration of ethics throughout the modules.

The respondents were prompted, using the criteria laid out by the AACSB International (2004) that can be used to evaluate oneself and to assess the commitment to ethics. None of the respondents were aware of the criteria. Key findings from sharing the criteria with the respondents were that social responsibility was learned in all courses and in discussions with peers. The discussions also indicated that the business school had to set an example and should invite students to participate in social responsibility projects. This, they believed, would enhance reflexive competence. As highlighted by the CHE (2004, p.117), "If teaching on corporate social responsibility doesn't come in a fairly short time, business will lose interest – not in the topic, but in business schools."

Further to this was the issue of mission. Although not clearly articulated by all respondents, the general feeling was that their mission showed a commitment to ethics and values and that the business school set an example of ethical behaviour. This is important as, "students

learn ethical behaviour in their respective business school,” (AACSB International, 2004, p.12).

6.4.7 Research Project

Various literature stressed the importance of research adding value to management practice, (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Ghoshal, 2005; Bennis and O’Toole, 2005). The respondents believed that the research process and the role of supervision played a role in developing reflexive competence.

Respondents expressed concern about the quality of supervision, but overall the supervisor was seen as important in helping students to reflect and to apply their learning in a research context. One respondent pointed out that, “The interesting thing is that this reflection, sometimes you can do on your own, sometimes you get so involved in what you are busy with that you lose track and that is where the role of the supervisor is so incredibly important.” This is supported by Brockbank and McGill (1998) who highlights that supervision is an important tool to engage in reflective dialogue with postgraduate students.

6.4.8 Role of the MBA student

The respondents all indicated the important role that the MBA student themselves played in their development of reflexive competence. Their individual needs, their willingness and openness to change and transformation, their ability to want to learn, make a difference, contribute to society and help the team were seen as important. Wanting a promotion or salary increase was seen as detrimental to the development of reflexive competence. Adler (2002); Werhane (2005) as well as Knights and O’Leary (2005); suggested that misdeeds occurred because individuals are driven by self interest, private gain or a preoccupation with self. Ferrell (2005), Figure 3, also argues that individual factors such as personal moral philosophy and stage of moral development impact ethical decision making. The three

attributes identified by Gray (2001, p.120), (open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness) impact critical reflection and could also support this finding. Compared with Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, the individual needs highlighted that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence range from social to self actualisation

6.4.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the business schools develop reflexive competence by:

- Ensuring that faculty and staff show a commitment to ethics and values
- Ensuring that their mission shows a commitment to ethics
- Giving students individual and syndicate assignments that are workplace based and allowing students to work with diverse teams
- Providing students with feedback on assignments and encouraging syndicate members to give each other feedback on performance
- Designing a curriculum that provides foundational, discipline-specific and integrated learning opportunities as well as continued learning opportunities in the form of forums and guest speakers
- Providing ethics education that incorporates ethics, values and social responsibility
- Using well-facilitated case studies to simulate the business environment
- Providing a well-managed research process with strong research supervision
- Using a learning style that is participative and engenders thinking, debate and discussion
- Encouraging use of learning journals to enable students to reflect and capture their thoughts and learning
- Encouraging reflection in the classroom
- Encouraging the discussion of business issues in the classroom
- Ensuring that faculty have both academic and business exposure

- Providing learning opportunities for the faculty and conduct regular peer reviews.

6.5 Research Question 4– How do SA organisations support the development of reflexive competence?

Research Question 4 sought to establish the various views from the CHE, business schools and organisations on how organisations can support the development of reflexive competence.

The key themes that emerged in Chapter 5 were:

- Commitment to ethics and values
- Organisation Climate
- Performance Management
- Mentoring
- Career Development and Succession Planning
- Learning and Development
- Role of the MBA student.

6.5.1 Commitment to ethics and values

Leadership commitment to ethics and values, role models and organisational alignment to vision and values were seen as important in supporting the development of reflexive competence. As one respondent pointed out, “By example setting and intolerance of unethical issues and governance issues and really demonstrating - the senior managers have to walk the talk.” The AACSB International (2004) support this by indicating that it is important for business leaders to understand their actions affect not only themselves, but other stakeholders like customers, employees, investors, suppliers, governments, citizens and the very communities in which they operate. Albion (2006b) further supports this by

saying that a personal characteristic is that the leader is able to translate the mission and values of the organisation into practice, creating a values-based context for all decision making. Freeman (2005) indicates that ethical leaders should articulate and embody the purpose and values of the organisation as well as create vibrant conversations about ethics and values. Trevino *et al* (2003), cited in McAlister and Ferrell (2005, p.75) (Table 2), clearly point out that ethical leaders serve as role models of ethical conduct which is consistent and predictable.

6.5.2 Organisation Climate

The following key organisational climate variables were thought to be supportive of the development of reflexive competence: safe environment where individuals trust each other, open and honest communication, diversity, a questioning culture as well as an empowering and accountable work climate.

This is supported by Barge's (2004) findings on reflexive practice where safe communication, clear accountability and responsibility, feedback, actively inviting people to speak and empowerment were seen as important. Ferrell's (2005) model on ethical decision making, Figure 3 also claims that organisational factors influence whether a person will make an ethical or unethical business decision.

6.5.3 Performance Management

Feedback was seen as an important tool to support the development of reflexive competence, and many of the respondents saw the performance management process as enabling this feedback. The role of feedback in developing reflexive competence has been explained in 6.4.2.1 above and, as mentioned, is supported by Brockbank and McGill (1998) and Barge (2004). Many respondents reflected on the fact that performance management could be detrimental to the development of reflexive competence if the environment is too competitive or performance driven. Several respondents highlighted the

need for performance r behaviour just as much as the achievement of goals.

6.5.4 Mentoring

Mentoring was identified in supporting the development of reflexive competence as it created a safe environment for the individual to reflect and learn. This is supported by Brockbank and McGill (1998) who say that mentorship incorporates reflective dialogue and can therefore offer a context to encourage reflective learning.

6.5.5 Career Development and Succession Planning

SAQA (2000) claim that learners must gain practical experience in real-world contexts where they will be required to adapt and re-contextualise their learning so as to enable the development of reflexive competence and self improvement. Several respondents indicated that career development and succession planning, with a supporting learning and development plan, could be (and was) used to provide varying work contexts for individuals.

Although respondents agreed that shadowing and job rotation could also create the opportunity to practice in varying contexts, most of the business respondents indicated that they would be difficult to implement.

6.5.6 Learning and Development

Adapting to change is an important component of reflexive competence (SAQA, 2005), and providing continuous learning and development opportunities was seen as important to support the development of reflexive competence. Respondents also indicated the importance of providing learning and development opportunities on ethics, values and the various legislations as supported by the AACSB International (2004).

Further to this, respondents' and project work either locally or internationally was useful in developing reflexive competence. Smith (2001) supports this philosophy and contends that action learning forms a sound setting for leadership development, reflective inquiry and for building a learning organisation.

6.5.7 Role of the MBA student

All of the organisation respondents also indicated that the MBA student had a role to play in developing reflexive competence. Similar sentiments as highlighted in 6.4.8 above were expressed. The organisations expressed concerns that MBA students were only interested in themselves and just wanted a promotion or to be recognised as someone with an MBA. However, the respondents also commented that they should to start showing an interest in their employees who were studying MBAs.

6.5.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, organisations support the development of reflexive competence by:

- Providing learning and development opportunities including action learning, international assignments and learning on ethics, values and legislation
- Ensuring that the organisation has a coherent set of values; that top management show a commitment to values and ethics; providing role models, and ensuring organisational alignment to vision and values
- Providing the opportunity for individuals to practice in varying work contexts through career development and succession planning, job rotation and shadowing
- Providing mentoring opportunities for individuals
- Promoting a performance management process that encourages feedback and rewards behaviour



- Providing an organisational climate that encourages feeling safe; trust; open and honest communication; diversity; a questioning culture, and an empowering and accountable work climate
- Showing an interest in the progress of their employees on a MBA.

6.6 Conclusion

In summary, reflexive competence is predominantly about making values-based judgements in varying contexts by systematically and holistically working through the issue or problem. Links between reflexive competence and literature on behavioural and ethical competence and motivational drivers were made. Reflection and feedback were identified as key tools that enable an individual to develop reflexive competence that should permeate every context. Environmental factors such as open and honest communication, a safe environment and trust were found to be necessary to promote reflection and feedback.

The qualitative study showed that business schools develop reflexive competence through: curriculum design, assignments and syndicate work, a case study approach, use of lecturers with business experience and different styles of lectures, values, social responsibility and ethics education and the research project.

Organisations support the development of reflexive competence through a commitment to ethics and values, development of an organisation climate (questioning culture, empowerment and accountability, a diverse culture and work autonomy), career development and succession planning, mentoring and learning and development. The role of the CHE was found to be that of monitoring and reviewing. It was further found that the individual needs and self interests played a huge part in developing reflexive competence.

As indicated in Chapter 3 and 4 the findings from this phase of the study, in particular the

methods and processes that support the acquisition of reflexive competence and the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence were used to design the survey (Appendix 7) and test the propositions posited in Chapter 3 of:

Research Proposition 1: The individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.

Research Proposition 2: The methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the descriptive statistical analyses carried out on the survey. As indicated, the overall sample was used in the analysis. The sections that follow, contain the demographics of the sample and the results per section of the survey

7.2 Section 1: Demographics of the sample

The survey was sent to 635 final year MBA students. A total of 201 responses were received. The data was checked for incomplete responses resulting in a 28% response rate.

Table 6: Response Rate per Business School

Participating School	No. of responses	Response Rate
Business School 1	64	58%
Business School 2	30	15%
Business School 3	44	31%
Business School 4	28	25%
Business School 5	14	20%
Total	180	28%

The gender, race, age and years in current job profiles of the entire sample is:

Table 7: Gender, Race, Age, Years in Organisation Profiles

DEMOGRAPHICS			
Gender	%	Age	%
Male	70	20-30	14
Female	30	31-35	46
		36-46	37
		46+	3
Race	%	Years in current job	%
African	18	Self Employed	7
Indian	14	Unemployed	4
Coloured	3	Less than 1 year	14
White	64	2-5 years	34
Other	1	6-11 years +	41

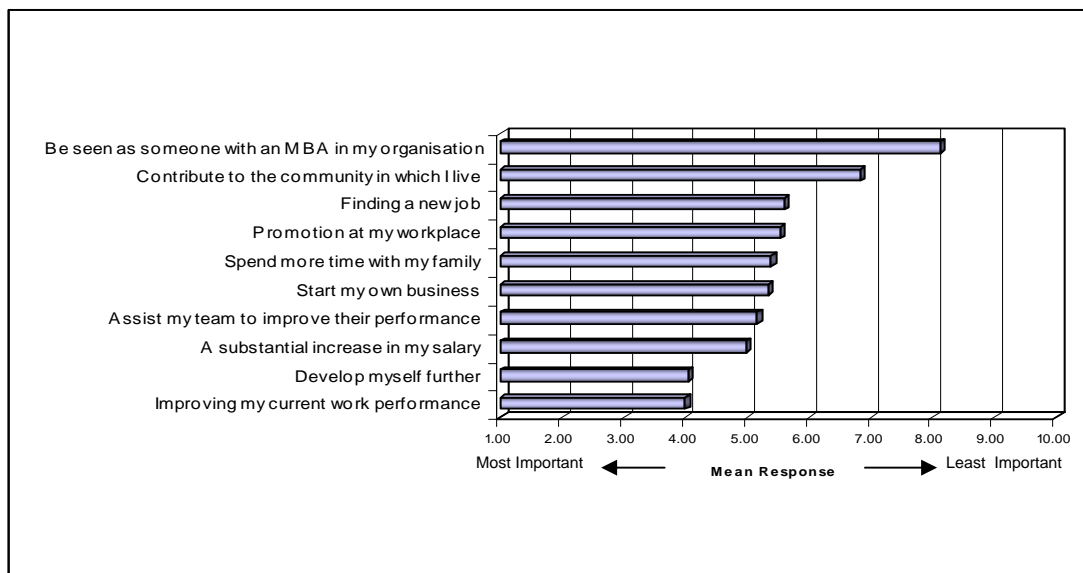


7.3 Section 2: Individual

Question 1: When I complete my MBA the following is important to me:

Students were asked to rank order the statements from most important (1) to least important (10). The response mean per statement for the overall sample is presented in Figure 8. Improving my current work performance, develop myself further and a substantial increase in my salary are ranked as the top three most important.

Figure 8: Most Important when I complete my MBA



Based on the findings from the qualitative study (Chapter 6), six of the ten statements in this section reflected the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence. Four of the ten statements reflected individual needs that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence. Aggregate means are calculated to normalise the means and aid comparison. The means and aggregate means for the statements in each category are presented below (Table 8). Based on the ranking scale of most important (1) to least important (10) used, it is seen from Table 8, that the statements that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence are more important than the statements that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence.



Individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence	Mean	Individual needs that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence	Mean
Improving my current work performance	3.99	A substantial increase in my salary	4.99
Develop myself further	4.04	Promotion at my workplace	5.52
Assist my team to improve their performance	5.16	Finding a new job	5.61
Start my own business	5.33	Be seen as someone with an MBA in my organisation	8.13
Spend more time with my family	5.39		
Contribute to the community in which I live	6.82		
Aggregate Mean	5.12	Aggregate Mean	6.06

7.4 Section 3: Business School

This section of the survey comprised of 26 questions and students were asked to respond to statements using a range from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Internal reliability was determined for this section using Cronbach's alpha. The test was run on NCSS statistical package which stipulates that as a rule, a value of at least 0.8 should be achieved for widely used instruments. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 was achieved. The questions were grouped into the following themes as identified in Chapter 5:

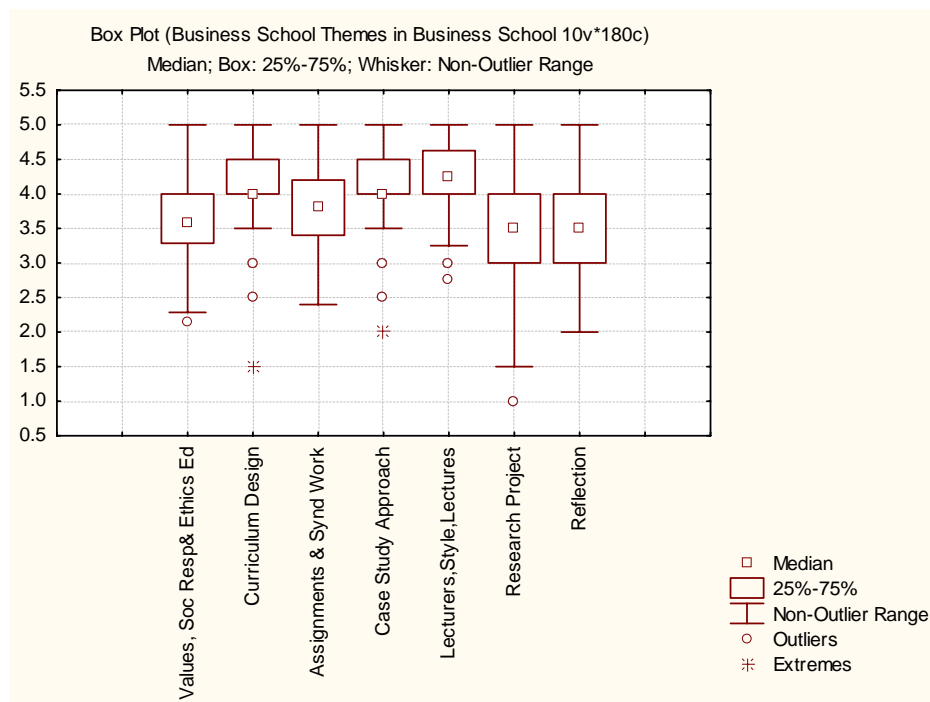
- Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education
- Curriculum Design
- Assignments and Syndicate Work
- Case Study Approach
- Lecturers and Style of lectures
- Research Project
- Reflection

7.4.1 Box Plots

The box plot shows three main features about a variable: its center, its spread, and its outliers. Median box plots for each question within each theme are found in Appendix 8.

The box plot for each theme is represented below, (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Median Box Plot : Section 3 (All themes)



7.4.2 Percentage Responses

The percentage responses for each point on the Likert scale were calculated. The percentage responses per question within each theme are presented in Appendix 9. The table below shows the mean percentage response per theme and overall for Section 3. The greatest percent response per question is indicated as **bold**.

Theme	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Values, Soc Responsibility & Ethics Education	2%	17%	18%	44%	18%
Curriculum Design	1%	5%	8%	52%	34%
Assignments & Syndicate Work	3%	14%	13%	44%	26%
Case Study Approach	0%	3%	7%	56%	33%
Lecturers & Style of Lectures	0%	4%	6%	55%	34%
Research Project	5%	11%	35%	33%	16%
Reflection	7%	19%	11%	38%	25%
Section 3: Business School	3%	11%	14%	46%	26%

7.4.3 One Sample t-test

The one sample t-test was used to compare the mean of each question and theme to a target mean of 3. The one sample t-test results for each question within each theme are found in Appendix 10. The one sample t-test results for each theme and overall for Section 3 are presented in Table 10 below. For each question, theme and overall section the hypotheses were:

$$H_0: \text{Mean} = 3$$

$$H_A: \text{Mean} \neq 3$$

Table 10: One sample t-test results (Themes, Overall Section 3)

Theme	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
Values, Social Responsibility & Ethics Education	3.59	0.55	0.00	Reject Ho
Curriculum Design	4.13	0.64	0.00	Reject Ho
Assignments & Syndicate Work	3.75	0.59	0.00	Reject Ho
Case Study Approach	4.18	0.61	0.00	Reject Ho
Lecturers & Style of Lectures	4.19	0.53	0.00	Reject Ho
Research Project	3.44	0.90	0.00	Reject Ho
Reflection	3.55	0.68	0.00	Reject Ho
Section 3: Business School	3.78	0.44	0.00	Reject Ho

As shown, all means are significantly different from 3 and have p-values less than 0.05.



7.5 Section 4: Organizational Climate

This section of the survey comprised of 25 questions. In this part of the survey students were first asked if they were “employed” or “unemployed”. If they answered “unemployed” they were directed to the end of the survey. Of the 180 responses, 30 responses were from unemployed students. Hence, the results of this section are for the 150 responses received. A Cronbach’s alpha of 0.95 was achieved suggesting internal reliability and consistency.

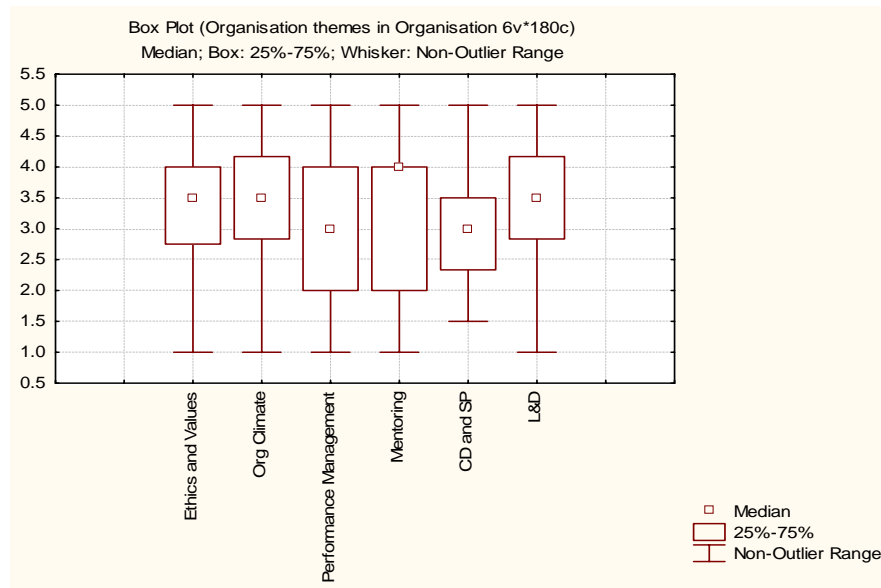
The questions were grouped into the following themes:

- Commitment to Ethics and Values
- Organisation Climate
- Performance Management
- Mentoring
- Career Development and Succession Planning
- Learning and Development

7.5.1 Box Plots

Median box plots for each question within each theme are found in Appendix 11.

The box plot for each theme within Section 4 is represented below.



7.5.2 Percentage Responses

The percentage responses for each point on the Likert scale were calculated. The percentage responses per question within each theme are presented in Appendix 12. The table below shows the mean percentage response per theme and for Section 4 overall.

Table 11: % responses (Themes, Overall Section 4)

Theme	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Commitment to Ethics & Values	9%	17%	17%	37%	20%
Organisation Climate	6%	21%	10%	43%	19%
Performance Management	11%	28%	15%	36%	10%
Mentoring	9%	23%	10%	43%	15%
Career Development & Succession Planning	16%	29%	12%	28%	16%
Learning & Development	10%	16%	15%	38%	21%
Section 4: Organisation	10%	22%	13%	37%	17%



7.4.3 One Sample t-test

The one sample t-test was used to compare the mean of each question and theme to a target mean of 3. The one sample t-test results for each question within each theme are found in Appendix 13. The one sample t-test results for each theme and overall for Section 3 are presented in Table 12 below. For each question, theme and overall section the hypotheses were:

$$H_0: \text{Mean} = 3$$

$$H_A: \text{Mean} \neq 3$$

Table 12: One sample t-test results (Themes, Overall section 4)

Theme	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
Ethics and Values	3.42	0.92	0.00	Reject Ho
Org Climate	3.47	0.91	0.00	Reject Ho
Performance Management	3.04	1.06	0.65	Fail to reject Ho
Mentoring	3.32	1.23	0.00	Reject Ho
CD and SP	2.99	0.82	0.88	Fail to reject Ho
L&D	3.45	0.87	0.00	Reject Ho
Section 4: Organisation	3.30	0.80	0.00	Reject Ho

Two of the six themes: Performance Management and Career Development and Succession Planning show means that are not significantly different from 3. However, overall Section 4 shows a mean of 3.30 that is significantly different from 3 and greater than 3.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

8.1 Introduction

Below is an interpretation of the results in Chapter 7 and Appendices 8 – 13 against the findings in the qualitative study.

8.2 Section 2: Individual

It was highlighted in the qualitative study that the individuals' needs when they embark on and complete an MBA impacts on the development of reflexive competence. The literature review further highlighted that 2 of the 4 main reasons why misdeeds occur, are:

- Human nature and self-interest – motivated and pre-occupied by self-interest
- Disregard for others – focusing on own personal gain, (Werhane, 2005).

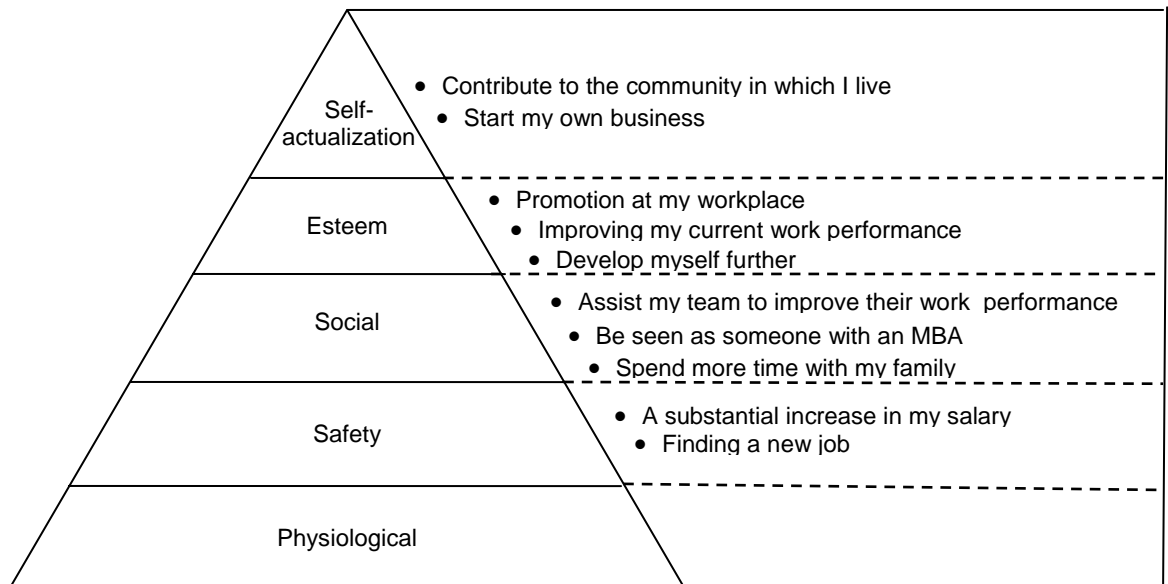
In order to ascertain the extent of the needs of MBA students once they complete their MBA, the statements in Table 8 (Chapter 7) were first transposed onto Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954). This is represented below in Figure 11.

As can be seen from Figure 8 and Table 8 (Chapter 7), the response mean calculations placed "Improving my current work performance" as most important with a mean of 3.99. This is closely followed by "Develop myself further" with a mean of 4.04. Both these needs fall under esteem needs, which "includes internal esteem factors such as self respect, autonomy, and achievement; and external esteem factors such as status, recognition, and attention," (Robbins, 2005, p.171).



Figure 11: M

s important to me



“A substantial increase in my salary” is the third most important with a mean of 4.99. This suggests that MBA students do have safety or security needs in terms of money once they complete the MBA. Two social needs, “Assist my team to improve their work performance” and “Spend more time with my family” are placed in fourth and sixth place with means of 5.16 and 5.39 respectively. “Start my own business”, classified in Figure 12 as a self actualisation need, is ranked fifth with a mean of 5.33.

Many of the organisation respondents in the qualitative phase of the study highlighted that MBA students expect a promotion or higher level job and often leave when they finish their MBA. However, “Promotion at my workplace” and “Finding a new job” are placed in seventh and eight positions with means of 5.52 and 5.61 respectively.

MBA students don’t attach as much importance to “Contribute to the community in which I live” as the previous statements once they complete their MBAs. This statement is ranked ninth with a mean of 6.82.

The statement that received the lowest mean ranking was, “Be seen as someone with an MBA”, which received a mean of 8.13. Again the organisation perceptions of MBA students’

attitudes and their need is not what the MBA students feel is important.

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 highlighted that self learning ability and continued learning were seen as important to contributing to developing reflexive competence. The top two needs are esteem needs and are focused on learning. So, following two to three years of intense study on the MBA, students appear to have become more self aware of their needs to further develop themselves and to improve their current work performance. Overall, the statements that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence (Table 8), show an aggregate mean of 5.12 as compared to the statements that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence with an aggregate mean of 6.06. As the ranking scale ranged from (1) most important to (10) least important, the results show that the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence are more important to MBA students than the individual needs that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence. This leads us to conclude that the research proposition 1 is met.

8.3 Section 3: Business Schools

Results for each of the themes in Section 3 of the survey are interpreted below.

8.3.1 Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education

A mission statement that shows a commitment to ethics and values; a climate where students feel safe; open and honest communication; a faculty and staff at the business school who show a strong commitment to values and ethics; a curriculum that covers the issues of ethics; ethical decision making and social responsibility, and a school that encourages students to participate in social responsibility projects were all seen as important in developing reflexive competence (Chapter 5).

As per Figure 9, this theme, 75% of the responses rated 4 and below. Table 9 shows that, on average, 44% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 3.59 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$).

Delving deeper into the individual questions within this theme, Figure 24 (Appendix 8), shows that Questions 19, 20 and 21 are of concern with 75% of the respondents rating them 4 and below. Table 14 (Appendix 9) shows that 41% of respondents agreed that the MBA curriculum adequately covered the issues of ethics and ethical decision making (Question 19). However, 27% disagreed with this. It is also found that 41% thought that business schools should be covering more issues related to social responsibility (Question 20). Further to this, although 35% agreed that their business schools encouraged them to participate in social responsibility projects (Question 21), 34% disagreed. This particular question further produced a mean of 3.14 which is found to be not significantly different from 3 ($p=0.10$), (Table 21, Appendix 10). This ties in with the findings from both Aspen BSP (2003) and Opperman (2005), where students responded that business schools should cover more issues relating to social responsibility. Despite these findings, it appears that business schools are still not addressing this issue adequately.

On a more positive note, Table 14 (Appendix 9) shows that 56% of respondents agreed that the faculty and staff at their business school showed a strong commitment to values and ethics. Regarding the climate at business schools, 51% agreed that they felt safe to raise issues of concern and 42% agreed that there is always open and honest communication by their business school.

8.3.2 Curriculum Design

As indicated in Chapter 5, a well planned and designed curriculum is seen as important to

develop reflexive competence through interviews that the continued development of MBA students and business leaders through forums and short courses would be of benefit. As per Figure 9, this theme has a small range from 3.5 to 5, with a median of 4. Seventy five percent of the respondents rated this question 4 and above. Table 9 shows that, on average, 52% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 4.13 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$).

8.3.3 Assignments and Syndicate Work

Individual and syndicate assignments are seen as being critical in the development of reflexive competence in Chapter 5. The argument is that these assignments allow students the opportunity to practice the learning in the workplace. Further to this, syndicate assignments are seen as hugely beneficial as they force students to work and appreciate the diverse nature of teams and tackle the unethical behaviour of other syndicate members. Feedback is identified as a key success factor of assignments and syndicate work.

As per Figure 9, this theme has a range from 2.5 to 5. Table 9 shows that on average, 44% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 3.75 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$). Concerns lie with Question 5 (Figure 26, Appendix 8) with 50% of respondents rating it between 2 and 4. This question focused on feedback on assignments. As per Table 16 (Appendix 9), 35% agreed that they had received feedback on their assignments to allow them to improve their performance, but 23% disagreed that this had happened.

The use of syndicate work in teaching students how to work in diverse teams, received a 45% agree and 41% strongly agree response. Fifty one percent agreed that their members

showed a commitment to providing feedback to non-performing syndicate members. They had given open and honest feedback to non-performing syndicate members.

8.3.4 Case Study Approach

Case studies were seen an important tool to develop reflexive competence, as it placed the individual in work contexts. As such, by recalling the learning from the case study, individuals were able to apply it in the similar context. Further to this, as highlighted in Chapter 5, it was equally important to manage the way in which the case study was facilitated in the class.

Regarding the case study approach and its effectiveness in assisting students to apply learning in the workplace, Figure 9 shows that this theme has a small range from 3.5 to 5, with a median of 4. Looking at Table 9, one sees that, on average, 56% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 4.18 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$).

8.3.5 Lecturers and Style of Lectures

Business experience was seen as being important for all lecturers. Respondents in the qualitative phase of the study indicated that lecturers were encouraged to consult and conduct business research. This was seen as important to the development of reflexive competence as lecturers were then close to business practice and could transfer this experience to the students. The style of the lectures was also seen as being important to develop reflexive competence. It was found in Chapter 5 that participative lectures, sharing of work experiences in class and learning methodologies that engender thinking, debate and discussion all contributed to the development of reflexive competence.

Figure 9 reveals that 75% of the respondents rated this theme 4 and above. Looking at Table 9, one sees that, on average, 55% of the respondents agreed with the questions

within this theme. The c strong mean of 4.19 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$).

Table 18 (Appendix 9) revealed that 55% and a further 35% of respondents, agreed and strongly agreed respectively, that their lecturers have had the adequate current business experience to teach them. Regarding the style of the lectures, 58% agreed that their lectures have been participative, 56% agreed that the lecturers encouraged them to share work experiences in the classroom and 53% agreed that the learning methodologies employed, engendered thinking, debate and discussion.

8.3.6 Research Project

The research project was identified as playing an important part in the development of reflexive competence and a well managed research process, as well as quality supervision, was seen as important.

Figure 9 reveals that 75% of the respondents rated this theme 4 and below. Looking at Table 9, one sees that, on average, 35% of the respondents were not sure and 33% agreed with the questions within this theme. Although, the one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 3.14 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$); the concern lies with Question 26, which looks at whether supervision has helped students with their research project. This question produced a median of 3 and 50% of respondents rating this question between 3 and 4, Figure 29 (Appendix 8).

As per Table 19 (Appendix 9), 41% were not sure that supervision has helped them and 24 % agreed. This could be due to the fact that final year MBA students are still busy with their research and cannot comment at the moment or that some students have deferred their research and will only be able to comment once the research is completed. This lends itself to further research.

8.3.7 Reflection

A course on personal development or leadership, relevant questions asked by the lecturer to encourage reflection as well as learning journals were all seen to contribute to the development of reflexive competence. The one sample t-test (Table 10) shows a mean of 3.55 which is significantly different from 3 ($p=0.00$). Overall, 38% of respondents agreed with the questions in this theme (Table 9). Chapter 5, revealed that although business schools were not using learning journals they still saw potential in its use in developing reflexive competence. This was supported by the student responses where 33% agreed and a further 21% strongly agreed that business schools should encourage students to use learning journals to reflect and capture their thoughts (Table 20, Appendix 9).

8.4. Section 4: Organisation

Results for each of the themes in Section 4 of the survey are interpreted below.

8.4.1 Commitment to ethics and values

Creating a context of ethics and values was seen as important to supporting the development of reflexive competence. Leadership, in particular, was seen as having the critical role of setting an example and showing a commitment to ethics and values.

As per Figure 10, this theme has a median of 3.5 with 75% of the responses ranging from 1 to 4. Table 11 shows that, on average, 37% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 12) shows a mean of 3.42 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$). Of concern within this theme is Question 18, which dealt with role models, with a median of 3 (Figure 31, Appendix 11). As per Table 28 (Appendix 12), 27% disagreed that their organisation has role models that they can aspire to be like. Further to this, this particular question produced a mean of 2.99 which is not

significantly different from 3 (Table 11, Appendix 13), suggesting that organisations could do more to promote role models within the organisation.

When asked if the leadership / top management in their organisation showed a strong commitment to ethics and values, 38% agreed and a further 21% strongly agreed, suggesting that for the most part, MBA students were working in organisations where there was a commitment to values and ethics (Table 28, Appendix 12).


It was highlighted in Chapter 5, that if individuals knew what they had to do when they got to work and within what values context, their chances of unethical behaviour becomes limited. It was found that 44% agreed that they knew how their work contributes to the vision and goals of the organisation (Table 28, Appendix 12). Further to this, 35% agreed that their organisations have a coherent set of values that employees know and live.

8.4.2 Organisation climate

The following were identified in Chapter 5 as supporting the development of reflexive competence: a safe environment, open and honest communication, diverse teams, a questioning culture, empowering of people to take accountability, and the opportunity to work autonomously.

As per Figure 10, this theme has a median of 3.5 with 75% of the responses ranging from 1 to 4. Table 11 shows that, on average, 43% of the respondents agreed with the questions within this theme. The one sample t-test (Table 12) shows a mean of 3.47 which is significantly different from 3 ($p = 0.00$).

Of concern are Questions 1, 2 and 20, where 75% of responses range from 1 to 4, Figure 32 (Appendix 11). In particular Questions 1 and 20 both have medians of 3. Question 1 seeks to ascertain if open and honest communication thrives in their organisations and

Question 20 seeks to  an organisation that has a questioning culture. Table 35 (Appendix 13) shows that Question 1 has a mean of 3.12 and Question 20 has a mean of 3.16. Further to this, both questions were found to be not significantly different from 3, with $p=0.21$ and $p=0.13$ respectively. These findings provide improvement opportunities for organisations.

8.4.3 Performance Management

This theme produced a median less than 3 and 75% of the responses ranged from 1 to 4, Figure 10. Further to this, this theme produced a mean of 3.04 and a p-value of 0.65. Hence, the decision taken is fail to reject the null hypothesis (Table 12).

Concerns arose in the qualitative study that performance management could be detrimental to the development of reflexive competence if the environment is too competitive or performance driven. The feeling was that by being competitive, the focus is on what people achieve rather than on how they go about achieving it and this could lend itself to unethical behaviour. This is supported by the respondents, with 35% disagreeing that their organisation rewarded people for not only what they achieve but how they go about achieving, Table 30 (Appendix 12). This suggests that organisations are still predominantly goal driven rather than behaviour driven.

Regarding the issue of feedback on their performance, it was found that 45% agreed and 21% disagreed that they received constructive feedback on their performance, Table 30 (Appendix 12).

8.4.4 Mentoring

Mentoring was seen as an extremely valuable tool to assist in developing competence as it created the safe context where individuals can reflect on their behaviour. This theme produced a median of 4 (Figure 10). Further to this 43% on average agreed with this theme.

The one sample t-test () which is significantly different from 3 ($p=0.00$).

8.4.5 Career Development and Succession Planning

Reflexive competence is the demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations, (SAQA, 2005). Based on this broad definition, the qualitative study supported the career development and succession planning processes in developing reflexive competence as it created the opportunity for individuals to know where there they were going and what development they would need to get there. It was strongly argued that career development and succession planning would only work if the individual had a development plan in place. It was further highlighted that succession planning probably works for a few people in the organisation who held positions higher up.

Figure 10 shows that this theme has a median of 3 and 75% of responses range from 1 to 3.5. The one sample t-test (Table 12) resulted in a mean of 2.99 which is not significantly different from 3 ($p=0.88$). Hence, the decision taken is: fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Delving deeper into the individual questions, it can be seen, that Questions 7, 8, 13 and 15 are of particular concern, Figure 35 (Appendix 11). These questions have means of 2.79, 2.93, 2.17 and 2.59 respectively, Table 38 (Appendix 13)

As per Table 32 (Appendix 12), 28% disagreed that they knew what their next position will be and 38% disagreed that they had a development plan in place to ensure that they are ready for their next position.

Chapter 5 showed that shadowing could be useful in developing reflexive competence. Despite this, only two of the five respondents in the qualitative study were practising job shadowing and the others found it might not work in their organisation due to time



constraints and the need for them to be able to shadow senior managers/ executives during their MBA. These questions were built into the questionnaire to assess if MBA students would like to shadow senior managers/executives during their MBA. It was no surprise that 46% disagreed that their organisations encouraged them to shadow a senior manager/executive (Table 32, Appendix 12). Regarding whether they felt that MBA students should be provided with the opportunity to shadow a senior manager/executive during their MBA; 49% agreed and a further 39% strongly agreed with this (Table 32, Appendix 12).

Job rotation serves a similar purpose as career development in providing the opportunity for the individual to get exposure to different contexts, work with different people and face different challenges. Again the qualitative study highlighted that this worked for certain positions in the organisations but that there was value in practicing it. It was found that 41% disagreed that they were provided with job rotation opportunities (Table 32, Appendix 12).

8.4.6 Learning and Developing

As indicated in Chapter 5, the continuous learning and development of staff was seen as important to support the development of reflexive competence as reflexive competence is impacted by change. To ensure ethical decision making, providing leaders and managers with the appropriate training on ethics and legislative requirements was seen as important.

Overall, the one sample t-test resulted in a mean of 3.45 for this theme, which is significantly different from 3, (Table 12).

Of key concern within this theme is Question 25 which looked at the MBA students' organisation showing an interest in their progress on the MBA. The one sample t-test (Table 39, Appendix 13) resulted in a mean of 3.07 which was found to be not significantly different from 3 ($p=0.55$). During the interviews, the respondents did reflect on their involvement with employees studying MBAs and agreed that they should start showing an

interest. It would appear that there is a significant difference in their involvement with the MBA.

8.5 Conclusion

It has been shown that the statements that reflect the individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive have a aggregate mean that is more important than the statements that reflect the individual needs that discourage the acquisition of reflexive competence. As such research proposition 1: The individual needs that encourage the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students, is met.

Regarding the business schools, the one sample t-test resulted in all themes showing means that are significantly different from 3 and greater than 3. Overall this section, resulted in a mean of 3.78 which was found to be significantly differently from 3 ($p=0.00$) and greater than 3.

Regarding the organisations, the one sample t-test resulted in 4 of the 6 themes with means significantly different from 3 and greater than 3. Two of the themes; performance management and career development show means that are less than 3 and not significantly different from 3. However, overall this section of the survey resulted in a mean of 3.30 which was found to be significantly different from 3 ($p=0.00$).

As such, research proposition 2: The methods and processes that develop and support the acquisition of reflexive competence exist for MBA students, is met.

CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter the main findings from the study are pulled together to propose a framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA. This is then followed by recommendations for the key stakeholders and recommendations for further research.

9.2 A framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence

It is clear from the preceding chapters, that the development of reflexive competence is not the responsibility of just the business school. Other stakeholders: the MBA student, organisations and the CHE have a role to play in developing or supporting the development of reflexive competence. Based on the findings of this research, a framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence is therefore proposed, to show the role that each stakeholder has to play and the linkages between them (Figure 12). The framework builds on the work of competencies and motivational drivers by Boyatzis *et al* (2002) as well as Cheetham and Chivers' (1998) model for professional competence.

The framework may be explained as follows:

- At the centre of the framework is the individual, the first critical stakeholder, who brings to the learning a certain need or intent. The extent to which reflexive competence is developed depends on the individual's needs, commitment to change, attitude to learn, desire to transform, openness to feedback and want to make a difference to self and wider society.
 - Reflection and feedback were seen as critical tools to assist in the development of reflexive competence. The individual has to find

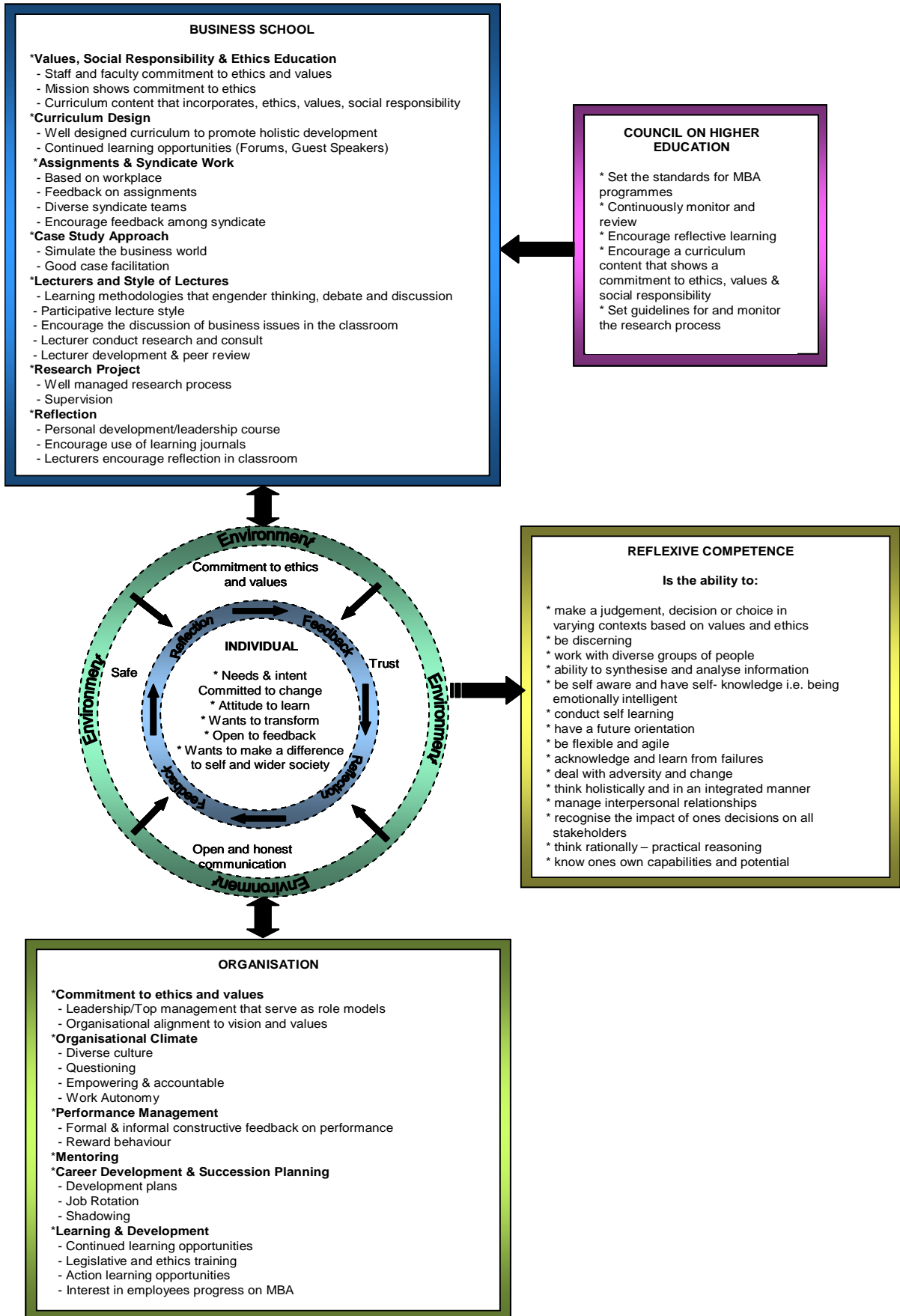
himself/herself, and the provision of instruction and feedback in order to assess the varying contexts and make decisions and judgements that are values-based

- Open and honest communication, a safe environment and trust were seen as fundamental to allowing the individual to reflect, as well as to give and receive feedback, which helps to develop reflexive competence. These environmental conditions have an impact on the individual and his/her ability to reflect or give and receive feedback, as shown by the arrows
- The second critical stakeholder in the framework is the business school. The key themes that were identified as contributing to the development of the reflexive competence are presented. Within each theme are the critical methods or processes that assist in developing reflexive competence. The individual and business school interact with each other and, provided the environment and individual needs exist, reflexive competence is developed
- The third critical stakeholder in the framework is the organisation in which the MBA student is employed. Here again, the key themes that were identified as contributing to the development of reflexive competence are presented. Within each theme, the critical methods or processes to be used by the organisation are shown. The individual interacts with the organisation and, together, they both contribute to developing reflexive competence
- The CHE is the fourth stakeholder, interacting directly with the business school. Through setting guidelines and continued monitoring and reviewing of the business schools, the CHE supports the development of the reflexive competence
- The key outcome of the model is a MBA student who demonstrates reflexive competence. The key findings on reflexive competence are shown.



Figure 12: A fra

of reflexive competence



9.3 Recommendation

As indicated, there are four stakeholders in the framework, and as such recommendations are made below for each of them.

9.3.1 Recommendations to Business Schools

The corporate scandals have left many business schools, scurrying in an attempt to find out how they can produce MBA students who are able to perform in the workplace and, more importantly, who are capable of making ethical business decisions. The framework provides business schools with the opportunity to revisit their programmes, and include or enhance the various methods and processes that help develop reflexive competence.

Current shortcomings, as found in Chapter 7, are the feedback that individuals receive on their assignments, courses on ethics, ethical decision-making and social responsibility, use of learning journals to promote reflection and supervision of the research project. Lecturers must be guided in providing in-depth feedback on student assignments. Although most business schools have chosen to integrate ethics, ethical decision-making and social responsibility within each course, they need to investigate the benefits of offering a stand alone course on ethics and social responsibility. This is critical if business education is to be seen as important in developing ethical leaders, who consider their responsibility to all stakeholders. The use of learning journals must be implemented for future MBA students. Some business schools indicated that they were already thinking of implementing the use of journals and this study provides a substantial business case for its use.

9.3.2 Recommendations to the CHE

Despite the suggestions made by the CHE for business schools on a curriculum that embraces ethics, values and social responsibility, MBA students feel that not enough is being done. It is recommended that during the next reviews, the CHE revisit what business



schools have been doing for the “external environment” criterion. If society, organisation and business education are to work in harmony with each other they require a guided approach to their responsibilities to each other and this framework should be adopted to assist in forming these synergies.

Further to this, the minimum standard set for research within a MBA, leaves many of the accredited business schools that did not use this as a criteria for obtaining the degree, in the early stages of implementation. The concerns over the quality of supervision were not verified by this study. The research study is a substantial component of the MBA and students and organisations must both benefit from this component. This requires a well managed research process and quality supervision. Mention is made of providing students with a course to prepare them to handle the research project, but no specific criteria are laid out for training of supervisors. This must be addressed in the next review sessions.

9.3.3 Recommendations to Organisations

The framework provides organisations with an idea on what MBA students will demonstrate if they have acquired reflexive competence. This assists organisations in planning their learning interventions to meet the competence gaps of managers and leaders within their organisation.

It is recommended that if organisations want to see the benefit of an employee studying a MBA, they should show more interest in the employee and their progress on the MBA. Organisations must pay more attention to the career development of these MBA students and, as such, provide opportunities for the student to develop and enhance their reflexive competence by being exposed to varying contexts. Most students claimed that they did not have development plans in place for their next position. Considering that developing themselves further and improving their current work performance were the needs found to

be most important for | sh to retain this talent, must provide development plans and career opportunities for MBA students. Shadowing and job rotation opportunities must be explored.

The consequences of a competitive environment in which individuals are driven by the need to achieve their goals, rather than pay attention to how they go about achieving the goal, has been highlighted. It is recommended that, based on this framework, organisations revisit their performance management process and investigate how best they can reward people for their achievement of goals as well as their behaviour and alignment to the values of the organisation.

Organisation climate, in particular open and honest communication as well as promoting a questioning culture must be addressed in order to enhance reflexive competence.

It is also recommended that organisations investigate the use of role models to promote the kind of behaviour that demonstrates the culture and values required within the business.

9.3.4 Recommendations to the MBA student

An understanding of what you will know, will do and how you will act after a learning intervention is important for any learner. It is recommended that MBA students are exposed to this framework at the outset of their study, so that they can assess themselves and determine where their gaps are. Thereafter, they can make use of the methods and processes found to close those gaps. Where these methods or processes are not assisting in closing the gaps, feedback should be provided to the stakeholders. This engages the stakeholders in discussions on the individuals' development resulting in all students benefiting from the MBA study.



9.4 Future Research

There are opportunities for further research which can be conducted in order to compliment, refine or expand the findings of this study. These may be described as follows:

- This study was only conducted on business schools and MBA students in Gauteng. The survey could be tested on a larger sample size, taking all South African MBA students into consideration. This larger sample size might also lend itself to testing if there are differences in business schools, gender, age and race groups
- As mentioned, not many studies have been done on MBA students within organisations. Organisations complained about not seeing the benefit of the MBA as students left the organisation due to not receiving a promotion or salary increase. These were found to be less important to MBA students. The actual reasons as to why MBA students, in particular, leave organisations should be explored. These findings should then be compared with the methods and processes that develop reflexive competence to assess which aspects of the framework were lacking
- The findings on research supervision, lends themselves to further research. The actual preparation of research supervisors and quality of research supervision in promoting reflective dialogue requires investigation
- The use of learning journals on a MBA to develop reflexive competence requires further investigation
- The extent to which lecturers are receiving continued learning and development opportunities and peer review assessments was not verified in this study and could lend itself to further research
- A comparison of the benefits of goal driven performance management processes against behaviour driven performance management processes to the development of reflexive competence requires further research.

9.5 Conclusion

It is clear from the evidence presented in Chapter 1 that business school graduates have been driven by self interests and, hence, have been unable to make judgements that are values-based and take into consideration all stakeholders. Chapter 1 highlighted that what could be lacking is practical wisdom or *phronesis* or reflexive competence and through this research, it is shown that this is what has been lacking.

It is further evident that the domain of reflexive competence from a South African perspective has been unexplored, with many focusing on functional and practical competence. The research has provided a deeper understanding into what reflexive competence actually is. A framework that supports the acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA has been proposed, that takes into consideration key stakeholders and the role that each has to play in developing reflexive competence. The methods and processes highlighted in the framework were tested and although these methods and processes were found to exist for MBA students, it also highlighted opportunities for improvement for both business schools and organisations.

It is hoped that this research will assist educators and organisations to contribute to the development of business school graduates, who are able to lead ethically and contribute to the wider societal needs. Graduates who are able to think critically, reason, reflect and make wise decisions.

“In a time when society’s moral questions are polarizing, emotionally laden, and associated with partisan politics, *phronesis* speaks an alternative voice for the place of ethics in education.” (Birmingham, 2004, p.322)

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Appendix 1: Competence definitions

Table 13: Competence Definitions

Definitions	Source
“demonstration of the capacity to apply knowledge, competencies and skills in appropriate circumstances”	CHE (2004, p.103)
Applied competence : “the learner’s ability to integrate concepts, ideas and actions in authentic real-life contexts”	SAQA (2005)
“application of knowledge, skills and values in a specific context to a defined standard of performance”	SAQA (2000, p.16)
“integration of knowledge, skills, attributes and value orientation, demonstrated to a defined standard in a specific context”	Meyer (1996, p.34)
“demonstration of an integration of knowledge, skills, personal attributes and value orientation”	Meyer and Semark (1998)
Reflexive competence: “the demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations. “	SAQA (2005, p3)
Reflexive competence: “the ability to reflect on the various components of a learning experience so as to be able to make meaning for oneself”	Karecki (2002, p146),
Graduate Attributes and Key Competencies : “enable us to transform what we know and can do to enhance and manage our performance outside of formal learning situations”	Down, Martin, Hager and Bricknell (1999, p2)
Key Competencies: “fundamental to the process of humans making judgements...”	Hager (1998) cited in Down, Martin, Hager and Bricknell (1999)
MCEETYA Key Competencies : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Collecting and Analysing Information 4. Communicating Ideas and Information 5. Planning and organizing activities 6. Working with others and in teams 7. Using mathematical ideas and techniques 8. Solving Problems 9. Using Technology 	Cited in Down, Martin, Hager and Bricknell (1999, p3)
SAQA’s CCFO: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Identifying and solving problems using critical and creative thinking 11. Collecting, analyzing and critically evaluating information 12. Working effectively with others as a member of a team or group 13. Communicating effectively, verbally and in writing 14. Ability to see the world as a set of interrelated systems 15. Organising and managing oneself responsibly 	Cited in Carmichael and Sutherland (2005, p65)



and effectively 16. Using technology effectively	
Seven separate concepts are combined in various ways to define competence: Skills, Abilities, Actions, Behaviours, Attributes, Personal qualities/characteristics, Performance	Stewart and Hamlin (1992, p23)
Metacompetencies: “embraces the higher order abilities which have to do with being able to learn, adapt, anticipate and create. Metacompetencies are a prerequisite for the development of capacities such as judgement, intuition and acumen upon which competences are based and without which competences cannot flourish”	Brown and McCartney (1994, p43)
Generic competencies : “Cognitive, Influencing, Managing and Personal”	Bethell-Fox (1992) cited in Brown and McCartney (1994, p48)
Competency : “Any personal trait, characteristic or skill which can be shown to be directly linked to effective or outstanding performance”	Boyatzis (1982) cited in Brown and McCartney (1994, p48)
Professional Competence: include knowledge/cognitive competence, functional competence, personal/behavioural competence and values/ethical competence	Cheetham and Chivers (1998, p268)
Metacompetencies : include such things as creativity, analysis, problem solving and self development	Cheetham and Chivers (1998, p 268)
Competencies: include cognitive or intellectual ability, such as systems thinking, self management or intrapersonal abilities such as adaptability, relationship management or interpersonal abilities such as networking. Self management and relationship management make up emotional intelligence competencies	Boyatzis, Stubbs and Taylor (2002, p150)
“Competency can be taken to comprise two elements – the actual performance of a required skill and the personal attributes which underlie such competence”	Birkhead, Sutherland and Maxwell (2000, p99)



Appendix 2 : Correspondence

Vasinthee Moodley
7 Blackburn Street
Blue Valley
Tel:011-5120091
Fax:011-5120096
Cell:0848118144



25 July 2006

MBA Programme Director
Business School
Illovo

Dear

Thank for agreeing to participate in the interview. As discussed, my research topic is on: "The acquisition of reflexive competence in a MBA". This research relies on your in-depth knowledge and experience of the MBA programme and adult learning principles to explore this domain of competence.

Definitions for competence abound. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) suggests that applied competence comprises of foundational competence, practical competence and reflexive competence. Reflexive competence, which is the core of my research, is further defined as "the demonstrated ability to integrate our performances with our understanding so that we are able to adapt to changed circumstances and explain the reason behind these adaptations".

What exactly is reflexive competence in a MBA? How is it developed at various business schools? How can organisations assist MBA students to acquire reflexive competence? What role can the CHE play to support the acquisition of reflexive competence? These are the questions that this research will endeavour to answer.

Methodology

The research consists of two phases. The dominant phase is the qualitative part of the research and will comprise of semi-structured interviews with the Council on Higher Education, Business Schools in Johannesburg and various medium to large organisations in the financial, manufacturing and telecommunications sector.

The less dominant phase, will consist of a quantitative survey on MBA students and their perceptions on the various themes highlighted during the qualitative phase.

Some topics for discussion:

- Corporate scandals and the impact on business education
- Reflexive competence. What is it in an MBA? How is it developed?
- Ethics Education in business schools
- Reflective Learning and Tools
- Role of Business in Society
- Organisation support to MBA students in acquiring reflexive competence

Timing

Date : 3 August 2006

Time : 4:30pm

Venue : ...

If you have any queries or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Vasinthee Moodley

MBA Student at the Gordon Institute of Business Science

Appendix 3: Interview Guide (CHE)

TOPIC 1: Role of the CHE

Probing Questions

1. How have the corporate scandals affected your role?
2. What factors in your view contributed to these scandals
3. How have you accounted for this in your accreditation criteria
4. Do you believe that the mission of business schools in SA addresses the commitment to ethics

TOPIC 2: Reflexive Competence

Probing Questions

5. What is your definition of competence?
6. In your view what is incorporated in the reflexive competence domain?
7. What is reflexive competence for a MBA
8. How should it be developed by business schools?

TOPIC 3 : Ethics education in Business Schools

Probing Questions

9. What is your view on ethics education?
10. Do you believe that SA MBAs have addressed this adequately in their criteria
11. The Ethics Task Force have submitted the report to the AACSB International on Ethics in Business Schools. Do you agree with their list of criteria?
12. How should business schools be assisting students to address this issue of ethics

TOPIC 4: Organisation support for MBAS

Probing Questions

13. How should organisations be assisting MBAs in acquiring reflexive competence?
14. What are some of the key processes that should be in place?

Appendix 4: Interview Guide (Business Schools)

<p>TOPIC 1: Corporate Scandals</p>
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How have the corporate scandals affected this business school 2. What factors in your view contributed to these scandals? 3. What have you done to address this in your MBA? 4. What is your mission or purpose for the business school and in particular the MBA?
<p>TOPIC 2: Reflexive Competence</p>
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What is your definition of competence? 6. In your view what is incorporated in the reflexive competence domain? 7. What is reflexive competence for a MBA? 8. How are you developing it on the MBA? 9. What reflective learning tools are you employing? What should be employed? 10. How do business schools assist/support students to acquire this?
<p>TOPIC 3 : Ethics education in Business Schools</p>
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. What is your view on ethics education in a MBA? 12. How have you addressed this in your curriculum? 13. What learning methodologies do you employ in the business school to facilitate ethical decision making in MBAs? 14. The Ethics Task Force have submitted the report to the AACSB International on Ethics in Business Schools. Do you agree with their list of criteria? 15. How do you measure up to these criteria? 16. How can you support students to address the issue of ethics?
<p>TOPIC 4: Organisation support for MBAS</p>
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. How should organisations be assisting MBAs in acquiring reflexive competence 18. What are some of the key processes that should be in place

Appendix 5: Interview Guide (Organisation)

TOPIC 1: Corporate Scandals
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How have the corporate scandals affected this organisation? 2. What factors in your view contributed to these scandals? 3. What have you done to address this in your organisation? 4. What is your mission and purpose for the business? 5. What do you think business schools should be doing?
TOPIC 2: Reflexive Competence
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What is your definition of competence? 7. In your view what is incorporated in the reflexive competence domain? 8. What is reflexive competence for an MBA/manager/leader? 9. What have you been doing to support MBA students in your organisation? 10. What processes in your organisation support the acquisition of reflexive competence?
TOPIC 3 : Ethics education
<p>Probing Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. What is your view on ethics education? 12. How have you addressed this in your organisation? 13. How are you assisting MBAs/employees to make ethical business decisions? 14. How do you deal with unethical behaviour in your organisation?



Appendix 6: Data Maps



Figure 13: Data Map 1 - CHE Interview

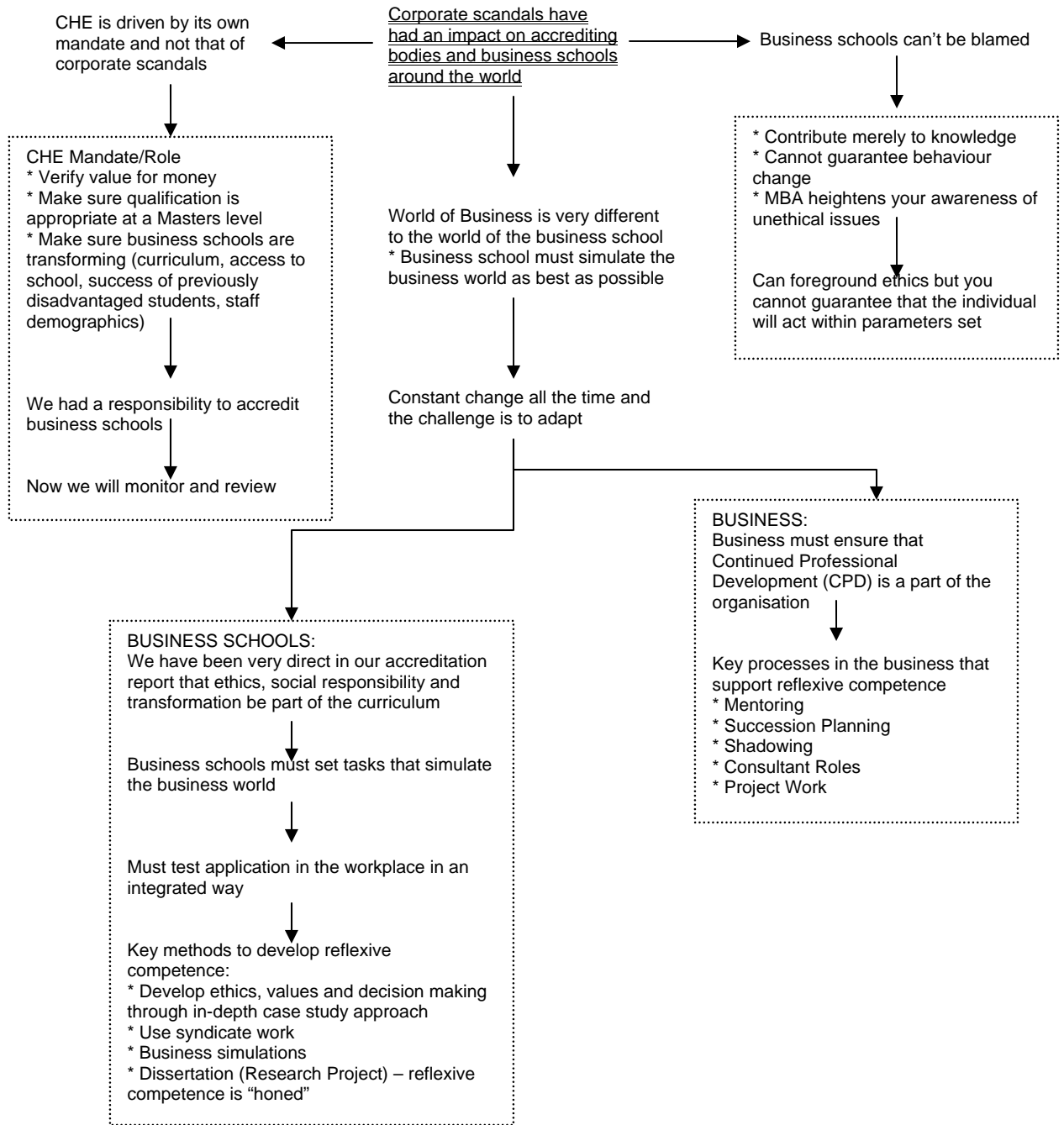




Figure 14: Data Map 2: Organisation Interview 1

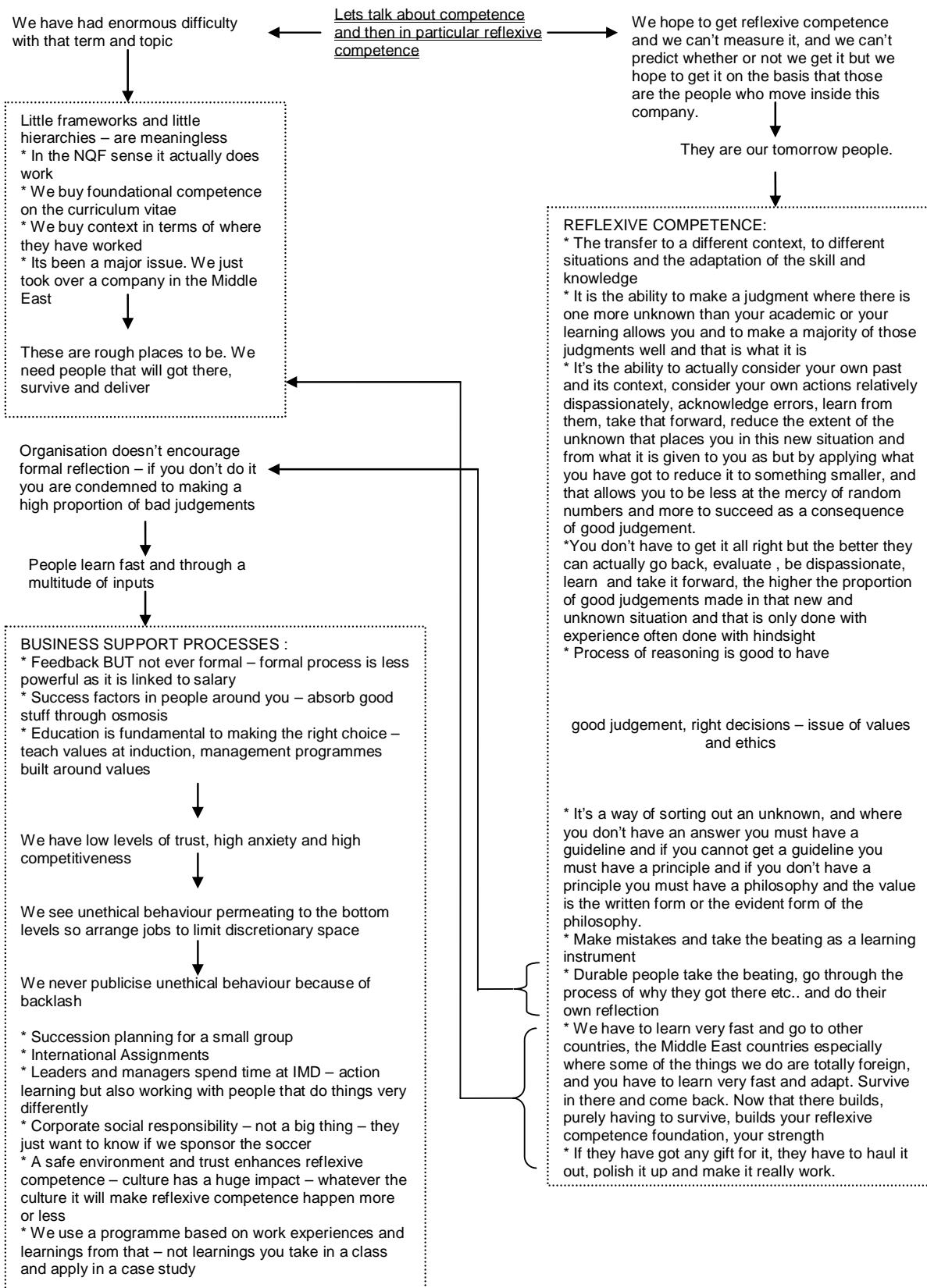




Figure 15: Data Map 3: Organisation Interview 2

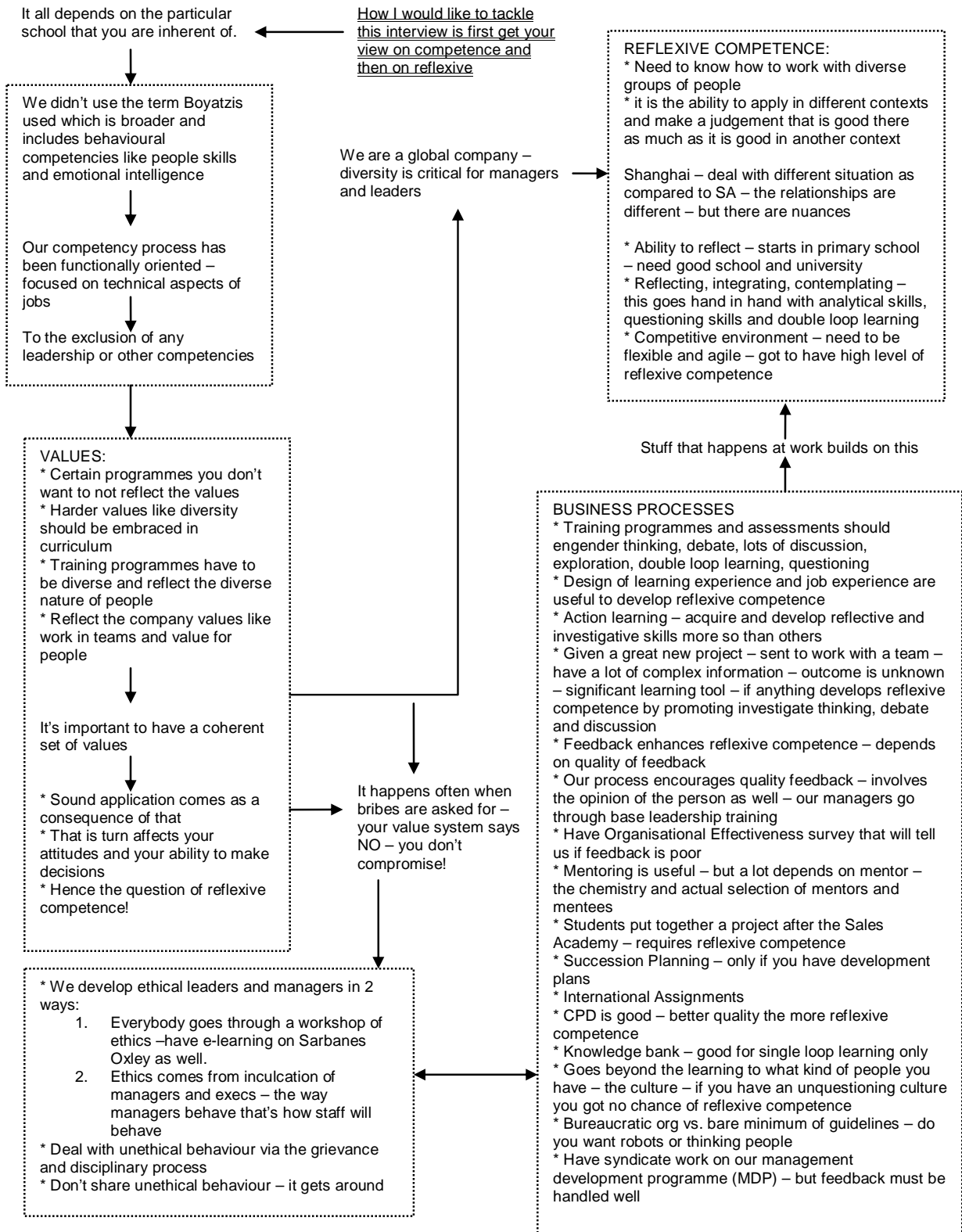




Figure 16: Data Map 4 - Organisation Interview 3

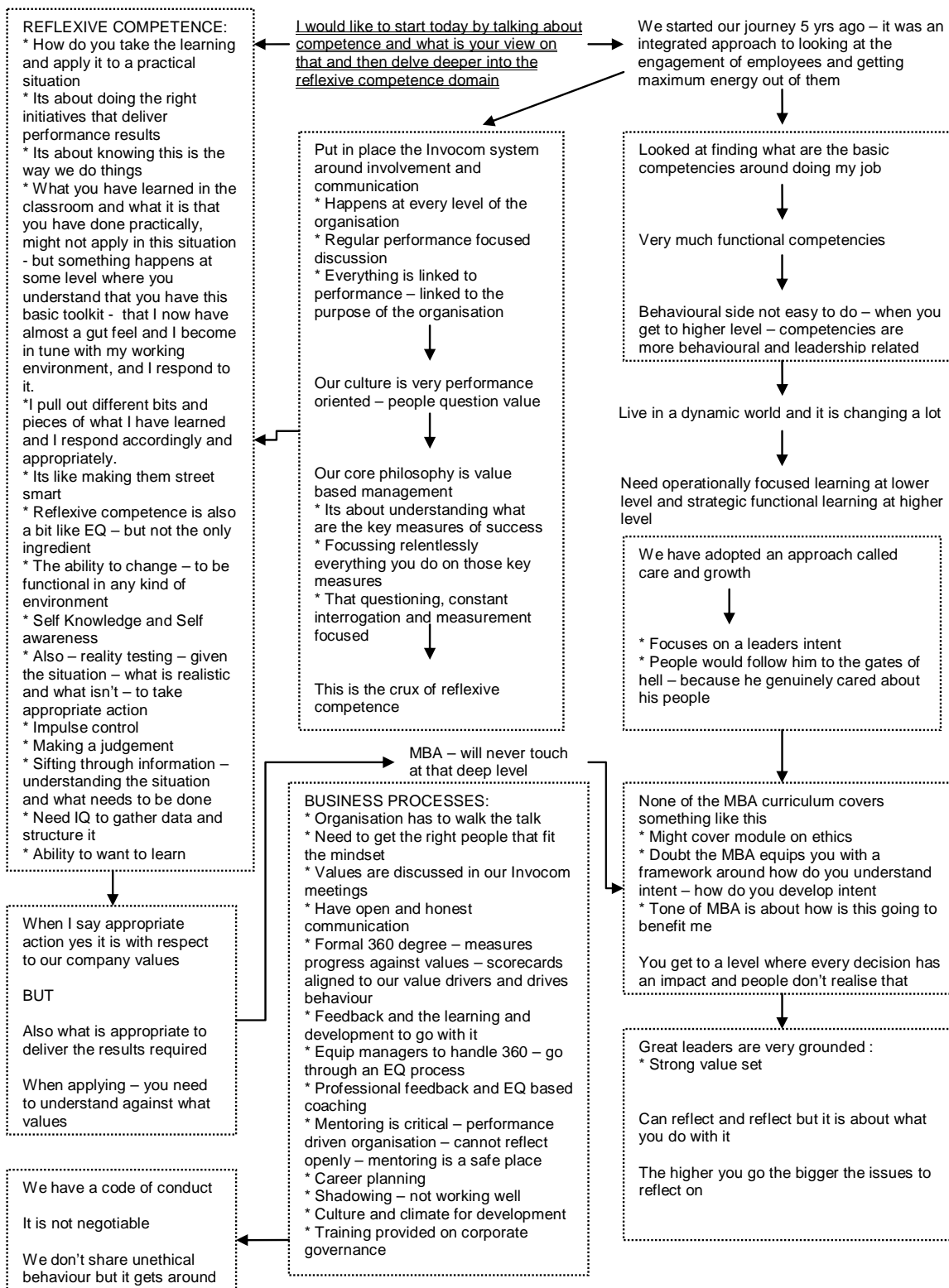




Figure 17: Data Map 5: Organisation Interview 4

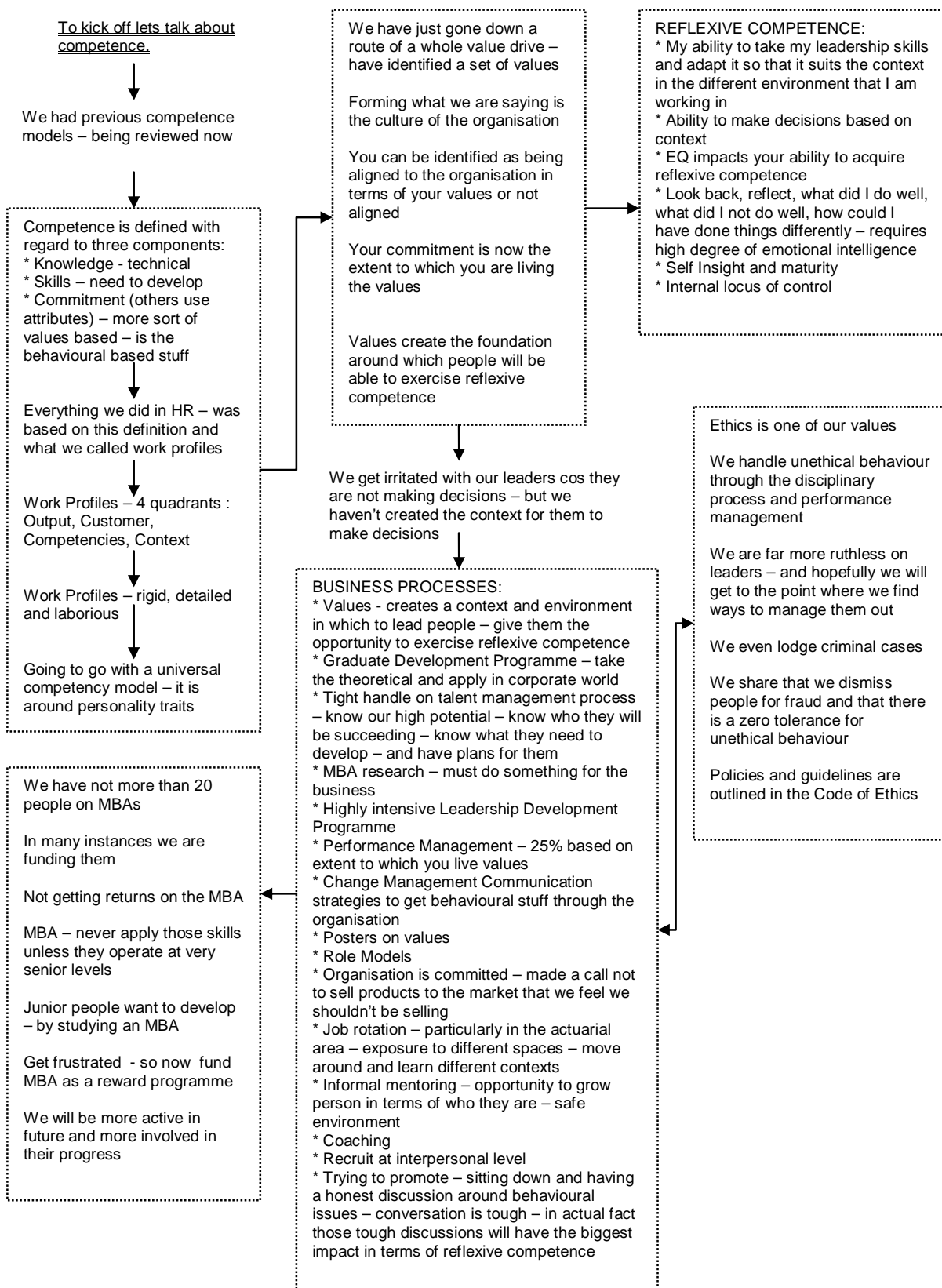




Figure 18: Data Map 6 - Organisation Interview 5

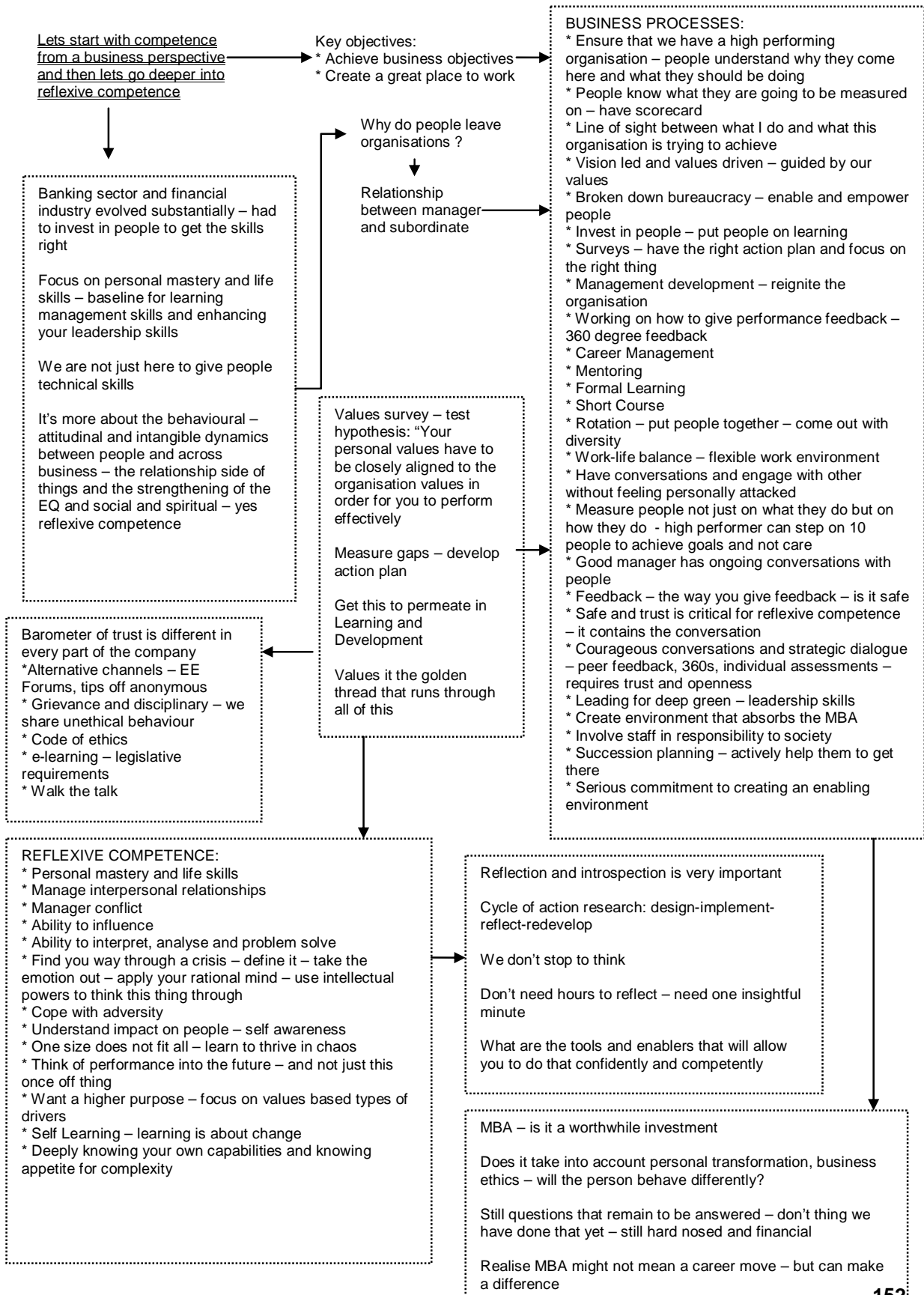




Figure 19: Data Map 7 - Business School Interview 1

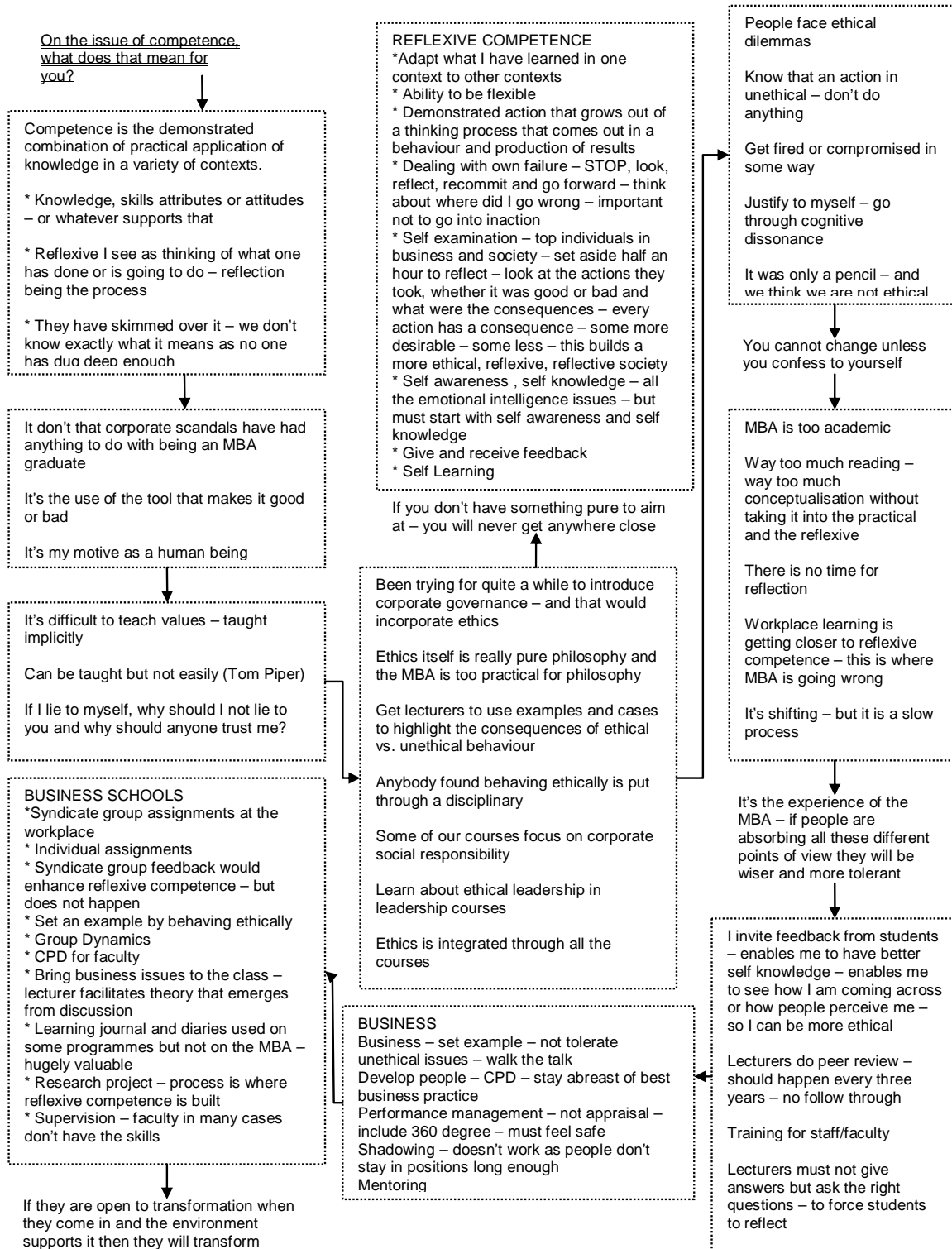




Figure 20: Data Map 8 - Business School Interview 2

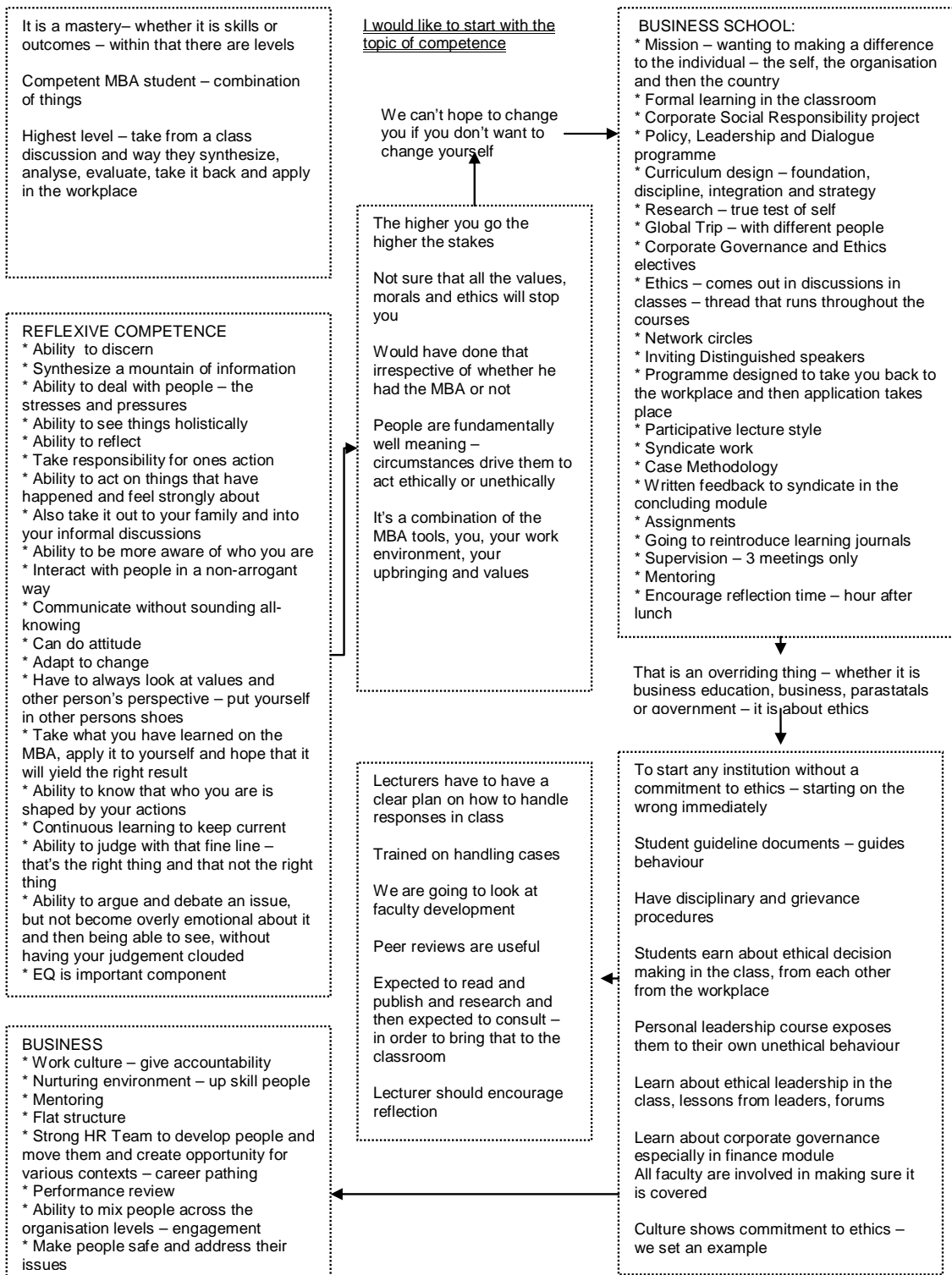




Figure 21: Data Map 9 - Business School Interview 3

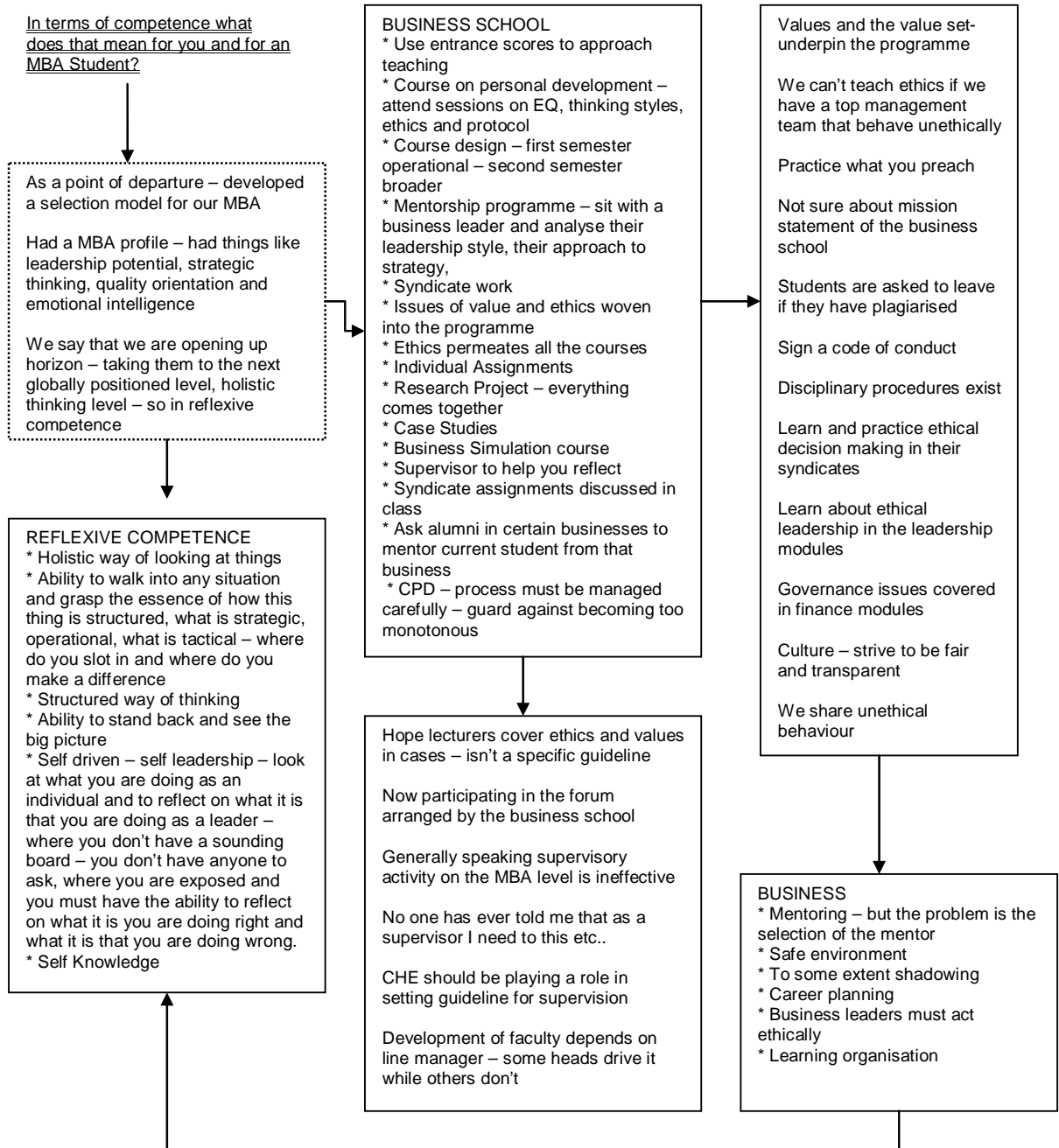




Figure 22: Data Map 10 - Business School Interview 4

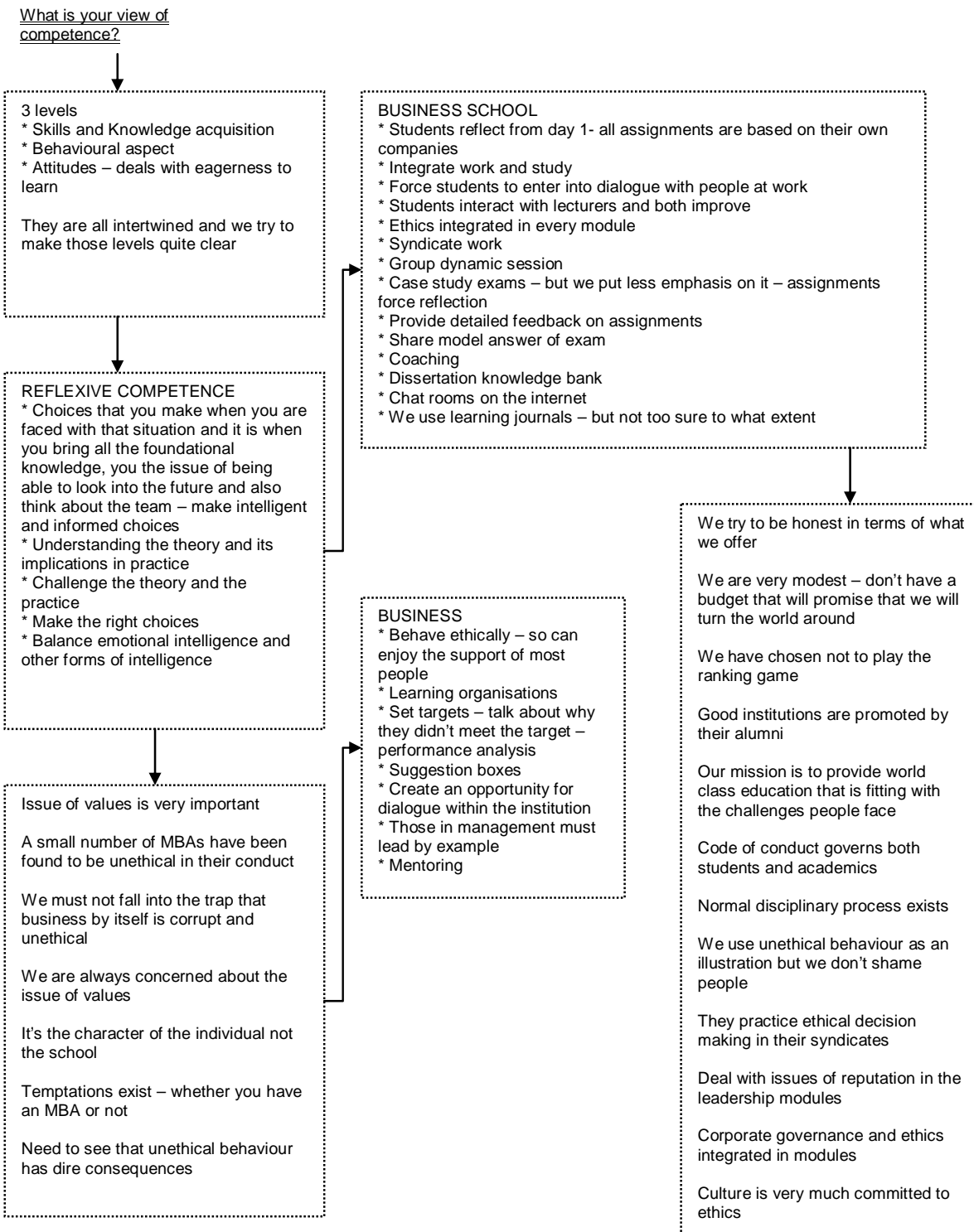
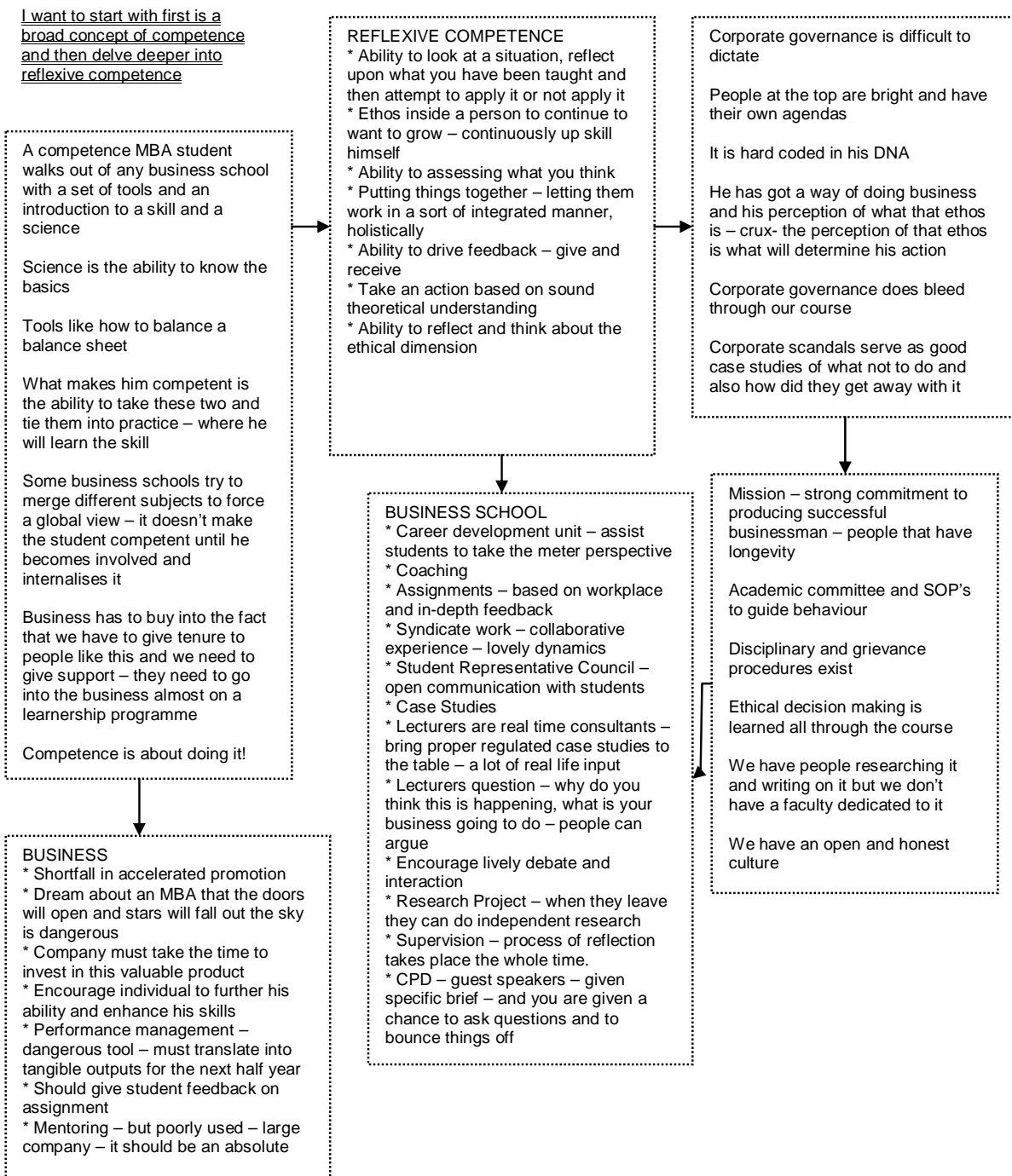




Figure 23: Data Map 11 - Business School Interview 5



Appendix 7: Survey

MBA Learning

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please note that all responses will remain confidential.

The information from this survey will be used to investigate the factors that support a MBA students learning experience

This research will be submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA)

There are 4 sections and the questionnaire shouldn't take you more than 10 minutes to complete so please go with your initial responses.

Section 1 : DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Gender	X
Male	
Female	

Please indicate which business school you are attending	
	X
Business School 1	
Business School 2	
Business School 3	
Business School 4	
Business School 5	

Please indicate your race group	
RACE	X
African	
Coloured	
Indian	
White	
Other (please specify)	

Please indicate your age (years)	
AGE	X
20-30	
31-35	
36-45	
46+	

Please indicate your no of years in you current job	
YEARS	X
Self Employed	
Unemployed	
Less than 1	
2-5 years	
6-10 years	
11 years +	



Section 2: INDIVIDUAL

When I complete my MBA the following is important to me :

(Please rank order the following statements. Select a 1 for the statement you found to be most important to you, select 2 for the next most important, and so on down to 10 for the least important. No two statements can be given the same ranking)

• Finding a new job	
• Promotion at my workplace	
• A substantial increase in my salary	
• Improving my current work performance	
• Contribute to the community in which I live	
• Assist my team to improve their performance	
• Be seen as someone with an MBA in my organisation	
• Start my own business	
• Spend more time with my family	
• Develop myself further	



Section 3: MY BUSINESS SCHOOL

The questions below relate to the business school that you are currently attending.

Please check (X) the box that most closely reflects your answer to each question below.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
BUSINESS SCHOOL					
1. The faculty and staff at my business school show a strong commitment to values and ethics					
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern at my business school					
3. There is always open and honest communication by my business school					
4. Individual and syndicate assignments have allowed me the opportunity to practice my learning in the workplace					
5. I have received adequate feedback on my assignments to allow me to improve my performance					
6. Syndicate work has taught me how to work in a diverse team					
7. I have given open and honest feedback to non-performing syndicate members					
8. Syndicate members have shown a high level of work ethic					
9. The MBA curriculum has been well planned and designed					
10. The case study approach has been a valuable learning methodology that has assisted me to apply my learning at the workplace					
11. My lecturers have managed the case study discussion and learning well					
12. My business school often run short courses and forums to encourage continued learning and development					
13. The research process has been well managed at my business school					
14. My lecturers have had the adequate current business experience to teach me					
15. My lecturers have often asked the relevant questions in the lectures for me to reflect on my own behaviour and values					
16. Lectures have been highly participative					
17. The curriculum has covered a module on personal development and leadership that has allowed me to attain self awareness					
18. My lecturers have often encouraged us to share our work experiences in the classroom					
19. The MBA has adequately covered the issue of ethics and ethical decision making in the curriculum					
20. More discussion in issues related to social responsibility should be covered					
21. My business school has encouraged me to participate in social responsibility projects					
22. The learning methodologies used on the MBA engenders thinking, debate and discussion					
23. The mission statement of my business school shows a commitment to ethics and values					
24. I have used a learning journal as a tool to reflect and capture my thoughts while on the MBA					
25. Business schools should encourage MBA students to use a learning journal to reflect and capture their thoughts					
26. Supervision has helped me greatly with my research project					



Section 4: MY ORGANISATION

The following questions are related to organisation/company that you are currently working at.

Are you unemployed ?	YES	NO
----------------------	-----	----

If you answered "YES" you do not need to complete the section below. If you answered "NO" please continue.

Please check (X) the box that most closely reflects your answer to each question below.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
MY ORGANISATION					
1. Open and honest communication thrives in my organisation					
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern in my organisation					
3. Leadership/Top Management show a strong commitment to ethics and values					
4. My organisation always provides me with learning and development opportunities					
5. I know how my work contributes to the vision and goals of the organisation					
6. My organisation shows an interest in my career development					
7. I know what my next position will be in the organisation					
8. I have a development plan in place to ensure that I am ready for my next position in the organisation					
9. I have the opportunity to build a mentor relationship at my workplace					
10. My organisation rewards people not only for what they achieve but how they have gone about achieving it.					
11. I often receive constructive feedback on my performance					
12. My organisation will consider me for an international assignment when the opportunity arises					
13. My organisation has encouraged me to shadow a senior manager/executive during my MBA					
14. MBA students should be provided with the opportunity to shadow a senior manager/executive during their MBA					
15. My organisation has provided me with job rotation opportunities					
16. I am part of a diverse team in my organisation					
17. My organisation encourages me to work with teams on various projects					
18. My organisation has many role models that I can aspire to be like					
19. I am provided with the appropriate learning on ethics and various legislative requirements					
20. I belong to an organisation that has a questioning culture					
21. My organisation empowers people to take accountability					
22. My organisation allows me the opportunity to work autonomously					
23. My organisation has a coherent set of values that employees know and live					
24. My MBA research project will benefit my organisation					
25. My organisation has shown an interest in my progress on the MBA					

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.

Appendix 8: Section 3: Median Box Plots (per question per theme)

Figure 24: Median Box Plot : Values, Social Responsibility & Ethics Education

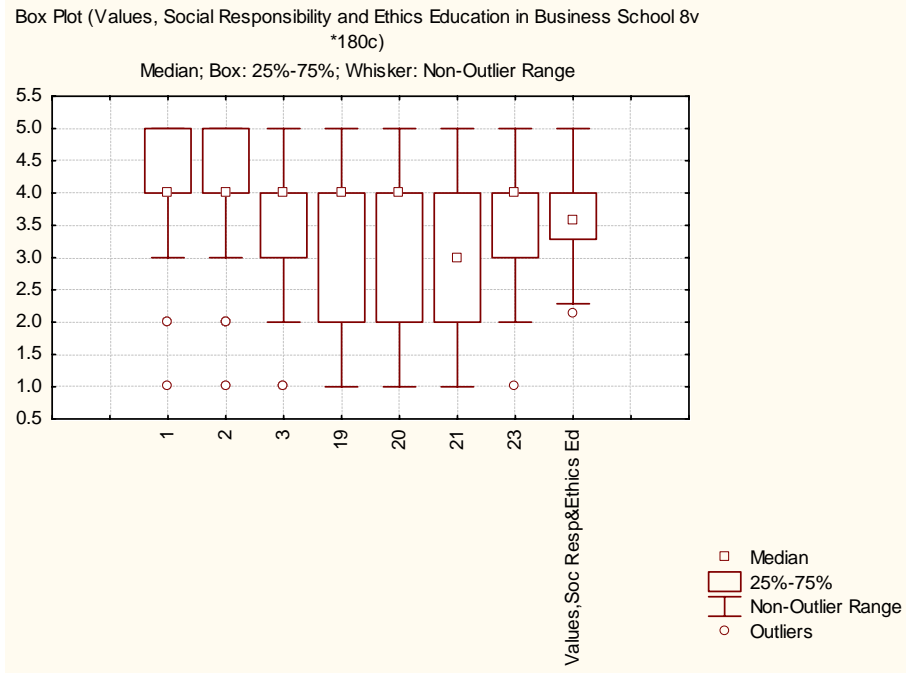


Figure 25: Median Box Plot: Curriculum Design

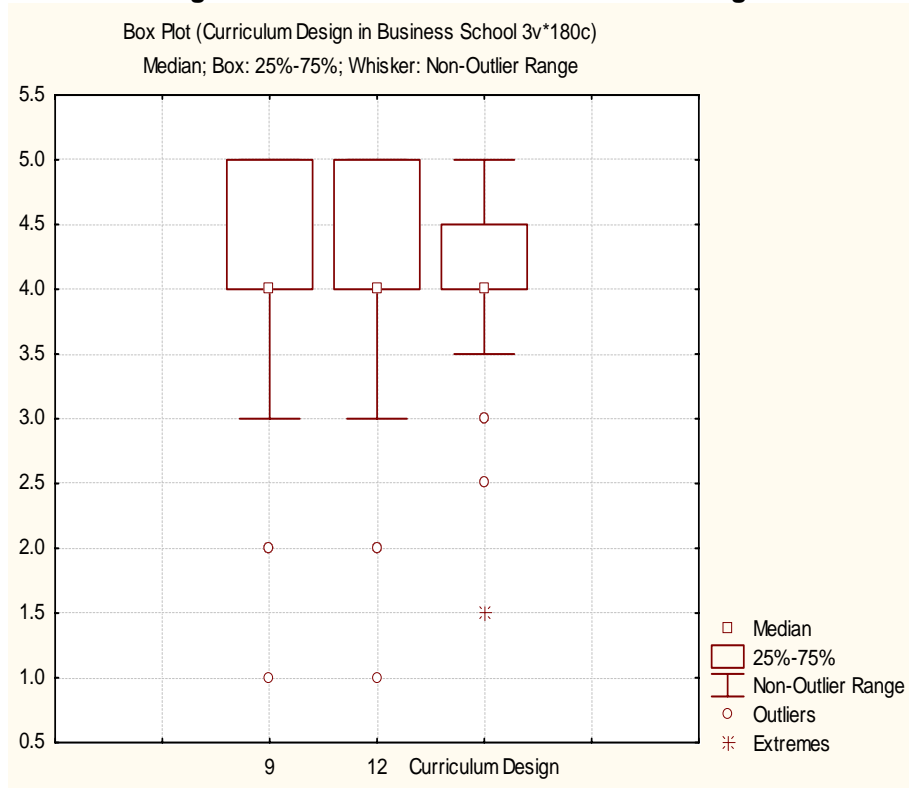




Figure 26: Median Box Plot: Assignments and Syndicate Work

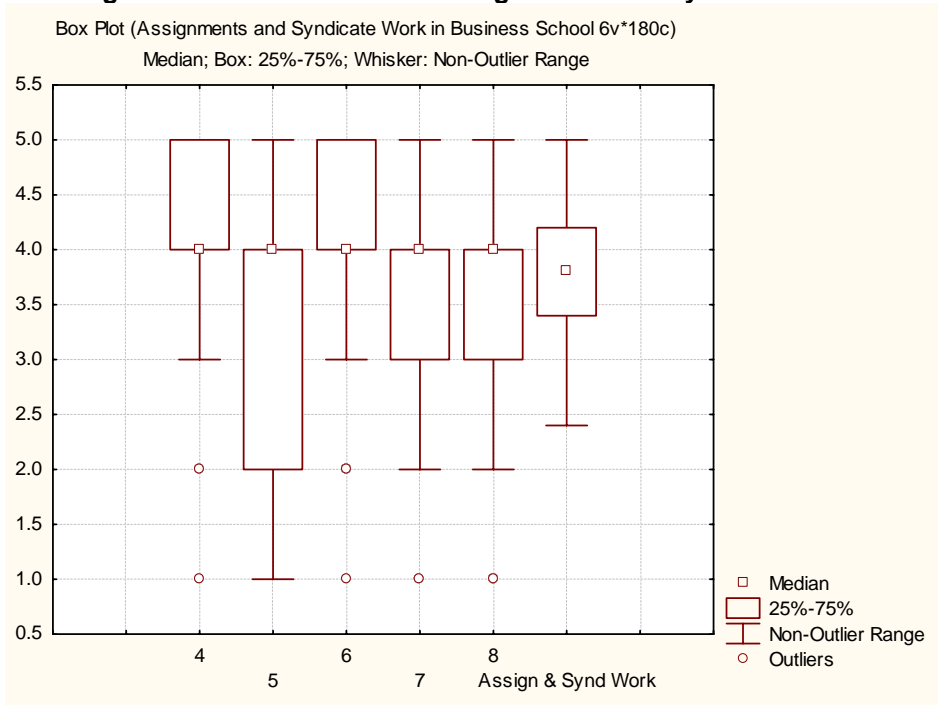


Figure 27: Median Box Plot: Case Study Approach

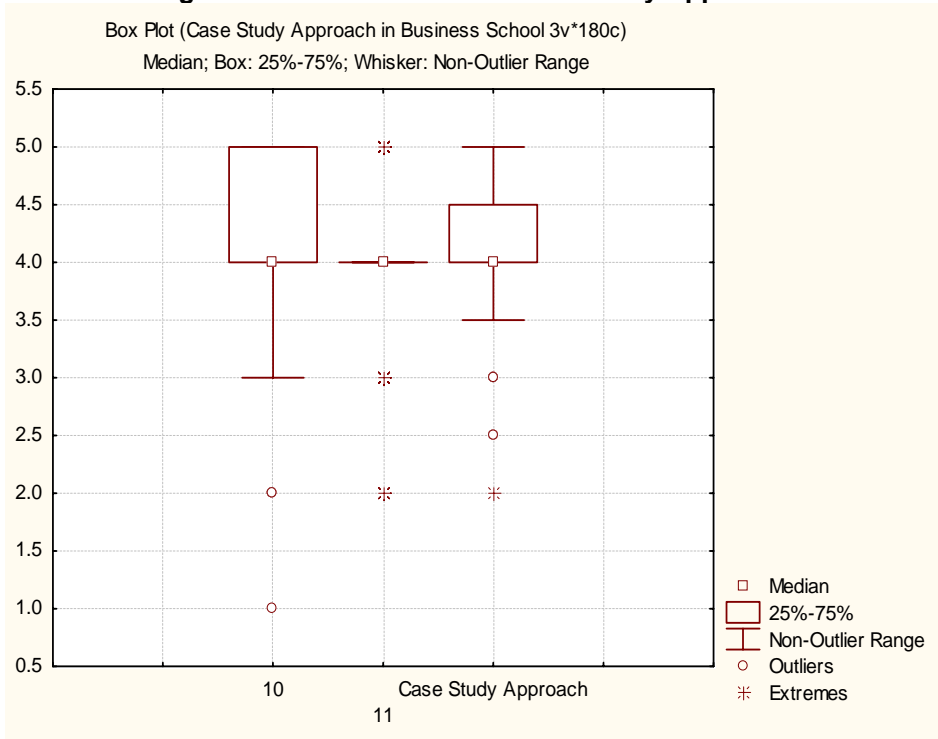




Figure 28: Median Box Plot: Lecturers & Style of Lectures

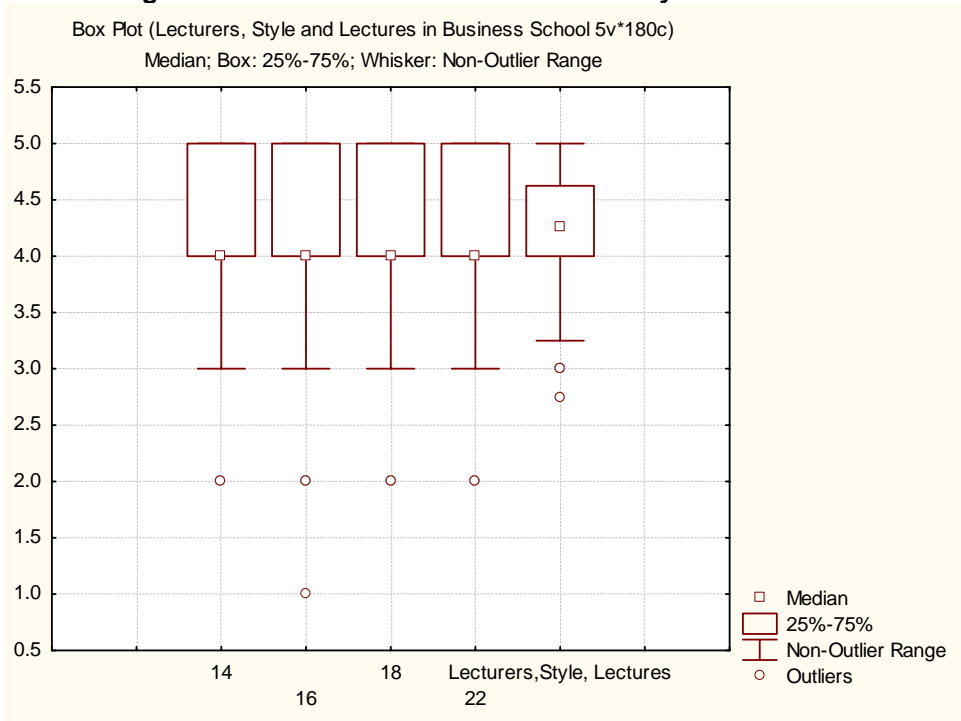


Figure 29: Median Box Plot: Research Project

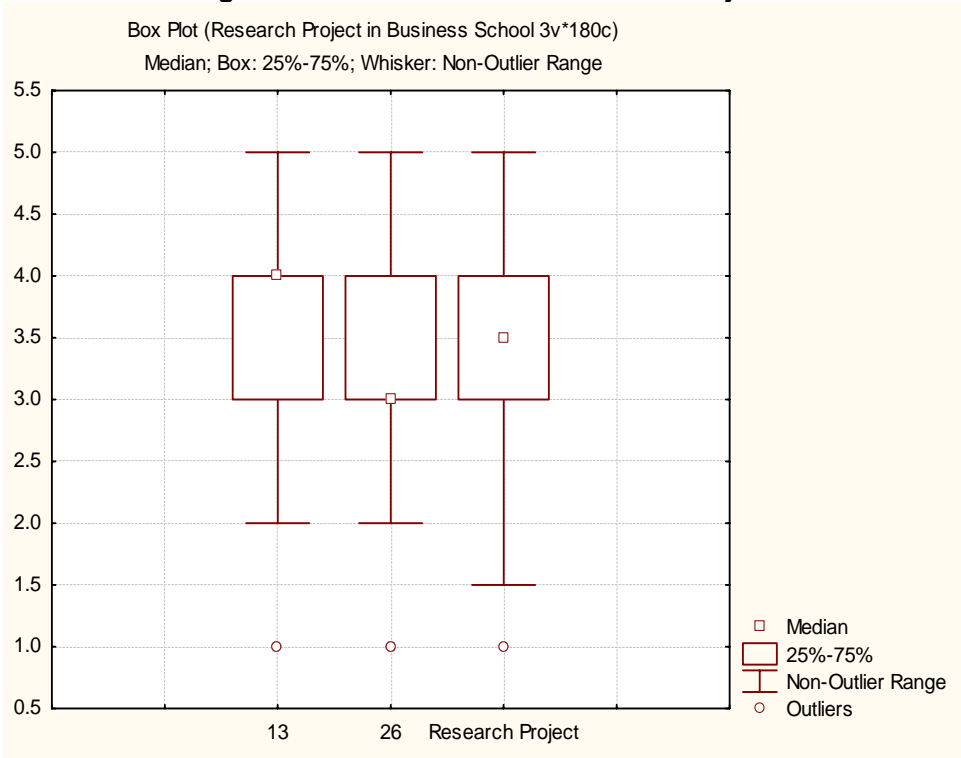
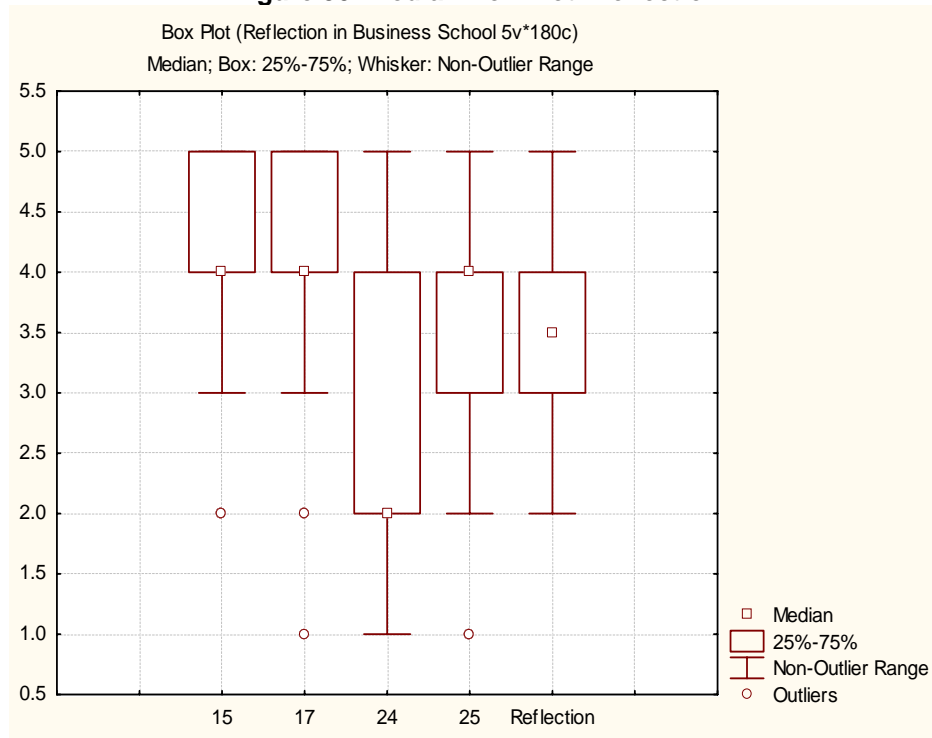


Figure 30: Median Box Plot: Reflection



Appendix 9: Section 3: % responses (per question per theme)

1. Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education

Table 14: % responses (Values, Social Responsibility & Ethics Education)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The faculty and staff at my business school show a strong commitment to values and ethics	1%	3%	9%	56%	30%
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern at my business school	2%	11%	10%	51%	27%
3. There is always open and honest communication by my business school	3%	19%	18%	42%	18%
19. The MBA has adequately covered the issue of ethics and ethical decision making in the curriculum	2%	27%	17%	41%	13%
20. More discussion in issues related to social responsibility should be covered	2%	25%	21%	41%	12%
21. My business school has encouraged me to participate in social responsibility projects	6%	34%	13%	35%	12%
23. The mission statement of my business school shows a commitment to ethics and values	1%	2%	36%	46%	15%

2. Curriculum Design

Table 15: % response (Curriculum Design)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. The MBA curriculum has been well planned and designed	1%	5%	9%	58%	27%
12. My business school often run short courses and forums to encourage continued learning and development	1%	6%	8%	46%	40%



3. Assignments and Syndicate Work

Table 16: % responses (Assignments and Syndicate Work)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
4. Individual and syndicate assignments have allowed me the opportunity to practice my learning in the workplace	1%	2%	8%	48%	41%
5. I have received adequate feedback on my assignments to allow me to improve my performance	7%	23%	16%	35%	19%
6. Syndicate work has taught me how to work in a diverse team	1%	5%	8%	45%	41%
7. I have given open and honest feedback to non-performing syndicate members	2%	20%	18%	43%	17%
8. Syndicate members have shown a high level of work ethic	4%	19%	15%	51%	11%

4. Case Study Approach

Table 17: % responses (Case Study Approach)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. The case study approach has been a valuable learning methodology that has assisted me to apply my learning at the workplace	1%	3%	4%	48%	44%
11. My lecturers have managed the case study discussion and learning well	0%	4%	10%	65%	21%

5. Lecturers and Style of Lectures

Table 18: % responses (Lecturers & Style of Lectures)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. My lecturers have had the adequate current business experience to teach me	0%	2%	8%	55%	35%
16. Lectures have been highly participative	1%	4%	7%	58%	31%
18. My lecturers have often encouraged us to share our work experiences in the classroom	0%	7%	8%	56%	29%
22. The learning methodologies used on the MBA engenders thinking, debate and discussion	0%	4%	2%	53%	42%

6. Research Project

Table 19: % responses (Research Project)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
13. The research process has been well managed at my business school	3%	11%	29%	42%	16%
26. Supervision has helped me greatly with my research project	8%	11%	41%	24%	17%

7. Reflection

Table 20: % responses (Reflection)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
15. My lecturers have often asked the relevant questions in the lectures for me to reflect on my own behaviour and values	0%	6%	8%	58%	28%
17. The curriculum has covered a module on personal development and leadership that has allowed me to attain self awareness	2%	6%	7%	42%	43%
24. I have used a learning journal as a tool to reflect and capture my thoughts while on the MBA	21%	49%	3%	19%	7%
25. Business schools should encourage MBA students to use a learning journal to reflect and capture their thoughts	4%	16%	26%	33%	21%

Appendix 10: Section 3: One Sample t-test results (per question per theme)

1. Values, Social Responsibility and Ethics Education

Table 21: One sample t-test results (Values, Social Responsibility & Ethics Education)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
1. The faculty and staff at my business school show a strong commitment to values and ethics	4.11	0.79	0.00	Reject Ho
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern at my business school	3.89	0.98	0.00	Reject Ho
3. There is always open and honest communication by my business school	3.52	1.08	0.00	Reject Ho
19. The MBA has adequately covered the issue of ethics and ethical decision making in the curriculum	3.34	1.08	0.00	Reject Ho
20. More discussion in issues related to social responsibility should be covered	3.37	1.04	0.00	Reject Ho
21. My business school has encouraged me to participate in social responsibility projects	3.14	1.18	0.10	Fail to reject Ho
23. The mission statement of my business school shows a commitment to ethics and values	3.73	0.76	0.00	Reject Ho
Values,Social Resp & Ethics Education	3.59	0.55	0.00	Reject Ho

2. Curriculum Design

Table 22: One sample t-test results (Curriculum Design)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
9. The MBA curriculum has been well planned and designed	4.07	0.78	0.00	Reject Ho
12. My business school often run short courses and forums to encourage continued learning and development	4.19	0.85	0.00	Reject Ho
Curriculum Design	4.13	0.64	0.00	Reject Ho



3. Assignments and Syndicate Work

Table 23: One sample t-test results (Assignments & Syndicate Work)

	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
4. Individual and syndicate assignments have allowed me the opportunity to practice my learning in the workplace	4.24	0.79	0.00	Reject Ho
5. I have received adequate feedback on my assignments to allow me to improve my performance	3.35	1.23	0.00	Reject Ho
6. Syndicate work has taught me how to work in a diverse team	4.20	0.87	0.00	Reject Ho
7. I have given open and honest feedback to non-performing syndicate members	3.53	1.04	0.00	Reject Ho
8. Syndicate members have shown a high level of work ethic	3.44	1.05	0.00	Reject Ho
Assignments and Syndicate Work	3.75	0.59	0.00	Reject Ho

4. Case Study Approach

Table 24: One sample t-test results (Case Study Approach)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
10 The case study approach has been a valuable learning methodology that has assisted me to apply my learning at the workplace	4.33	0.74	0.00	Reject Ho
11. My lecturers have managed the case study discussion and learning well	4.03	0.68	0.00	Reject Ho
Case Study Approach	4.18	0.61	0.00	Reject Ho

5. Lecturers and Style of Lectures

Table 25: One sample t-test results (Lecturers & Style of Lectures)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
14. My lecturers have had the adequate current business experience to teach me	4.23	0.68	0.00	Reject Ho
16. Lectures have been highly participative	4.15	0.75	0.00	Reject Ho
18. My lecturers have often encouraged us to share our work experiences in the classroom	4.07	0.80	0.00	Reject Ho
22. The learning methodologies used on the MBA engenders thinking, debate and discussion	4.32	0.70	0.00	Reject Ho
Lecturers and Style of Lectures	4.19	0.53	0.00	Reject Ho

6. Research Project

Table 26: One sample t-test results (Research Project)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev.	p	Decision
13. The research process has been well managed at my business school	3.58	0.97	0.00	Reject Ho
26. Supervision has helped me greatly with my research project	3.31	1.11	0.00	Reject Ho
Research Project	3.44	0.90	0.00	Reject Ho

7. Reflection

Table 27: One sample t-test results (Reflection)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
15. My lecturers have often asked the relevant questions in the lectures for me to reflect on my own behaviour and values	4.09	0.76	0.00	Reject Ho
17. The curriculum has covered a module on personal development and leadership that has allowed me to attain self awareness	4.18	0.96	0.00	Reject Ho
24. I have used a learning journal as a tool to reflect and capture my thoughts while on the MBA	2.42	1.22	0.00	Reject Ho
25. Business schools should encourage MBA students to use a learning journal to reflect and capture their thoughts	3.50	1.12	0.00	Reject Ho
Reflection	3.55	0.68	0.00	Reject Ho

Appendix 11: Section 4: Median Box Plots (per question per theme)

Figure 31: Median Box Plot (Commitment to Ethics and Values)

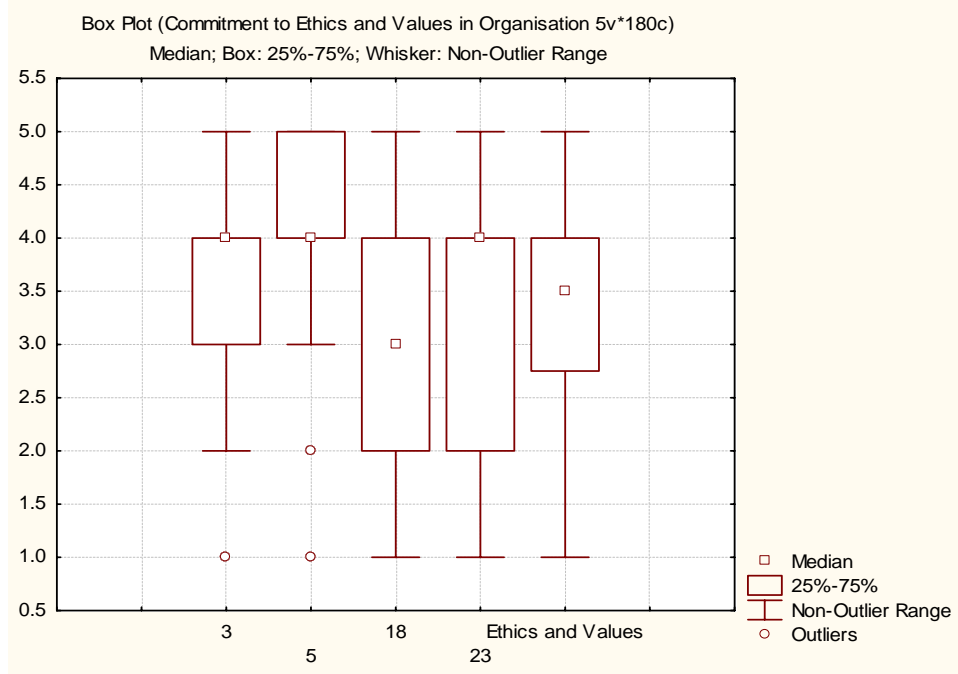


Figure 32: Median Box Plot (Organisational Climate)

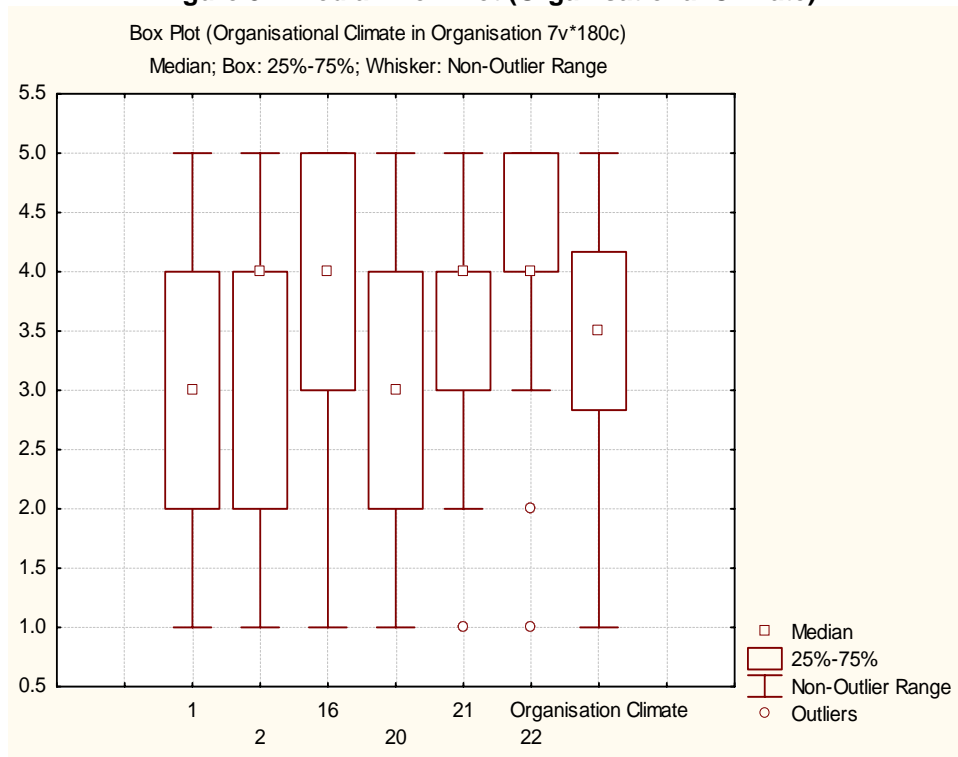




Figure 33: Median Box Plot (Performance Management)

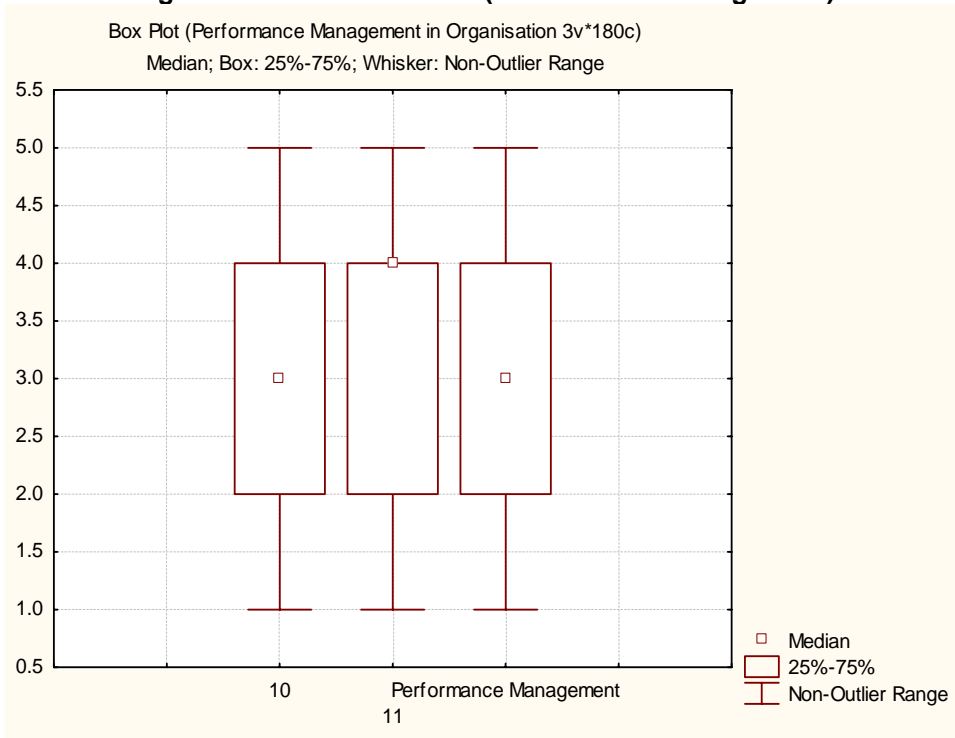


Figure 34: Median Box Plot (Mentoring)

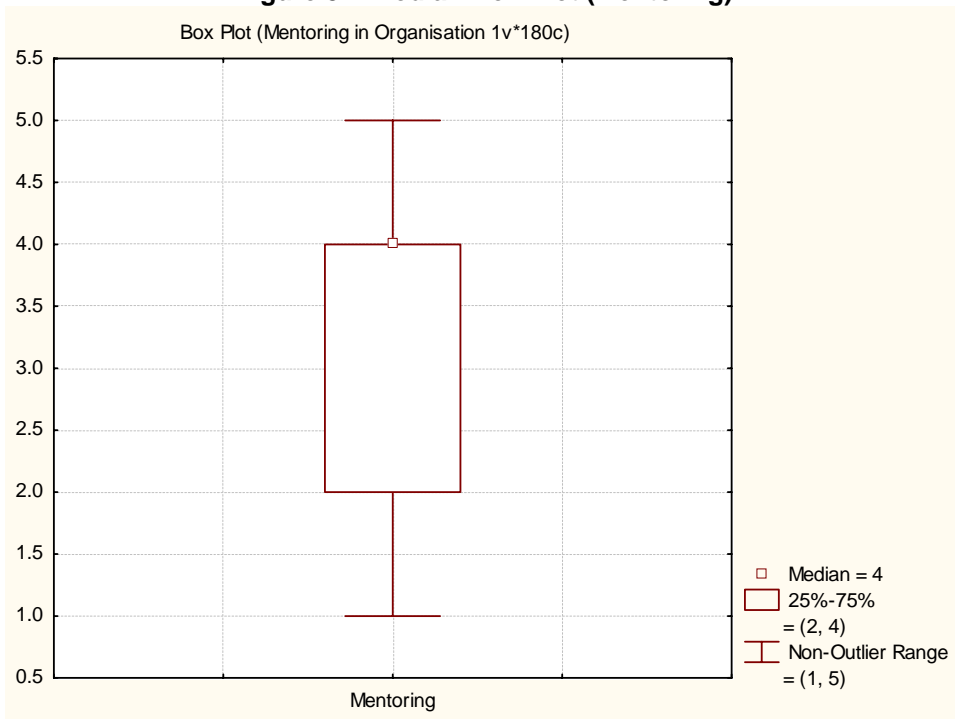




Figure 35: Median Box Plot (Career Development)

Box Plot (Career Development and Succession Planning in Organisation 7v*180c)

Median; Box: 25%-75%; Whisker: Non-Outlier Range

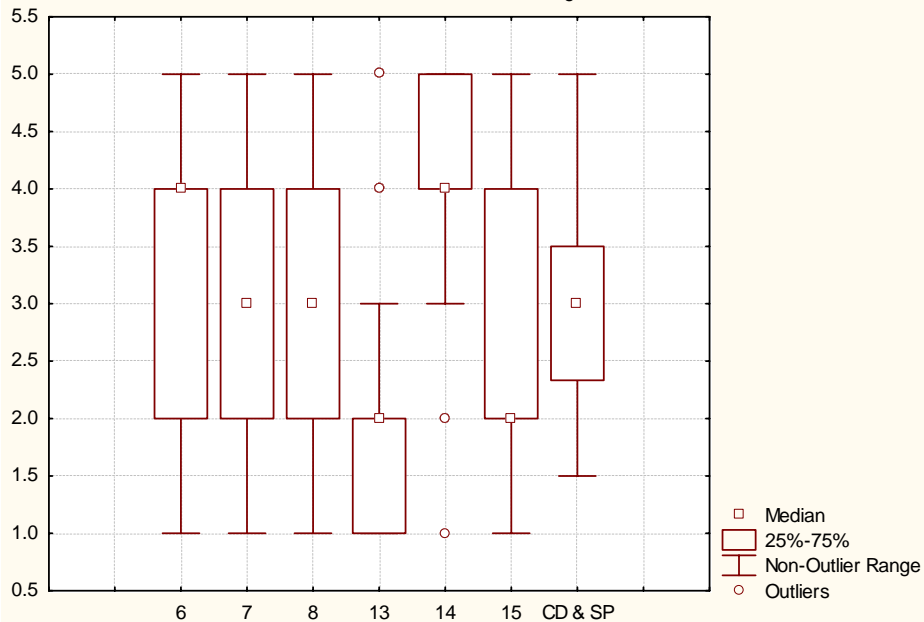
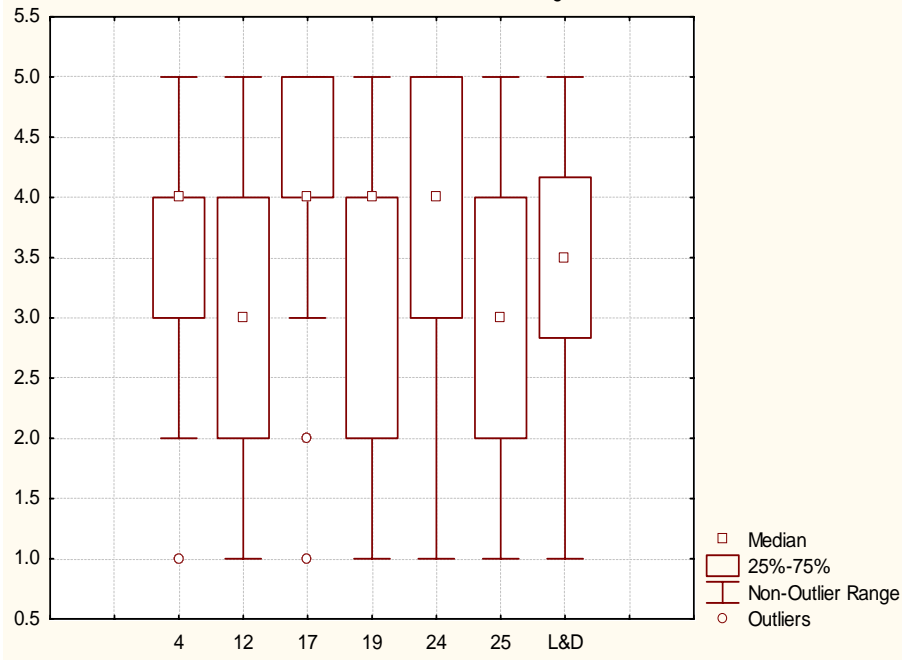


Figure 36: Median Box Plot (Learning & Development)

Box Plot (Learning and Development in Organisation 7v*180c)

Median; Box: 25%-75%; Whisker: Non-Outlier Range



Appendix 12: Section 4: % responses (per question per theme)

1. Commitment to Ethics and Values

Table 28: % responses (Commitment to Ethics and Values)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
3. Leadership/Top Management show a strong commitment to ethics and values	7%	14%	19%	38%	21%
5. I know how my work contributes to the vision and goals of the organisation	5%	8%	11%	44%	31%
18. My organisation has many role models that I can aspire to be like	13%	27%	19%	33%	9%
23. My organisation has a coherent set of values that employees know and live	12%	18%	18%	35%	17%

2. Organisation Climate

Table 29: % responses (Organisation Climate)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Open and honest communication thrives in my organisation	6%	34%	12%	38%	10%
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern in my organisation	5%	26%	15%	41%	13%
16. I am part of a diverse team in my organisation	5%	16%	6%	44%	29%
20. I belong to an organisation that has a questioning culture	11%	27%	13%	33%	16%
21. My organisation empowers people to take accountability	7%	17%	13%	42%	21%
22. My organisation allows me the opportunity to work autonomously	4%	7%	5%	58%	27%



3. Performance Management

Table 30: % responses (Performance Management)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. My organisation rewards people not only for what they achieve but how they have gone about achieving it.	14%	35%	16%	26%	9%
11. I often receive constructive feedback on my performance	9%	21%	14%	45%	11%

4. Mentoring

Table 31: % responses (Mentoring)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. I have the opportunity to build a mentor relationship at my workplace	9%	23%	10%	43%	15%

5. Career Development and Succession Planning

Table 32: % responses (Career Development)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. My organisation shows an interest in my career development	12%	19%	16%	37%	16%
7. I know what my next position will be in the organisation	18%	28%	23%	20%	11%
8. I have a development plan in place to ensure that I am ready for my next position in the organisation	11%	38%	10%	28%	13%
13. My organisation has encouraged me to shadow a senior manager/executive during my MBA	30%	46%	7%	11%	6%
14. MBA students should be provided with the opportunity to shadow a senior manager/executive during their MBA	1%	4%	7%	49%	39%
15. My organisation has provided me with job rotation opportunities	21%	41%	7%	20%	11%

6. Learning and Development

Table 33: % responses (Learning and Development)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
4. My organisation always provides me with learning and development opportunities	6%	12%	13%	45%	24%
12. My organisation will consider me for an international assignment when the opportunity arises	13%	13%	25%	32%	17%
17. My organisation encourages me to work with teams on various projects	5%	13%	7%	50%	25%
19. I am provided with the appropriate learning on ethics and various legislative requirements	10%	23%	13%	35%	19%
24. My MBA research project will benefit my organisation	10%	10%	19%	35%	26%
25. My organisation has shown an interest in my progress on the MBA	17%	23%	13%	31%	16%

Appendix 13: Section 4: One Sample t-test results (per question per theme)

1. Commitment to Ethics and Values

Table 34: One sample t-test results (Commitment to Ethics & Values)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
3. Leadership/Top Management show a strong commitment to ethics and values	3.52	1.19	0.00	Reject Ho
5. I know how my work contributes to the vision and goals of the organisation	3.88	1.10	0.00	Reject Ho
18. My organisation has many role models that I can aspire to be like	2.99	1.22	0.95	Fail to reject Ho
23. My organisation has a coherent set of values that employees know and live	3.27	1.28	0.01	Reject Ho
Commitment to Ethics and Values	3.42	0.92	0.00	Reject Ho

2. Organisation Climate

Table 35: One sample t-test results (Organisation Climate)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
1. Open and honest communication thrives in my organisation	3.12	1.16	0.21	Fail to reject Ho
2. I feel safe to raise issues of concern in my organisation	3.31	1.15	0.00	Reject Ho
16. I am part of a diverse team in my organisation	3.75	1.19	0.00	Reject Ho
20. I belong to an organisation that has a questioning culture	3.16	1.30	0.13	Fail to reject Ho
21. My organisation empowers people to take accountability	3.54	1.20	0.00	Reject Ho
22. My organisation allows me the opportunity to work autonomously	3.97	0.97	0.00	Reject Ho
Organisation Climate	3.47	0.91	0.00	Reject Ho

4. Performance Management

Table 36: One sample t-test results (Performance Management)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
10. My organisation rewards people not only for what they achieve but how they have gone about achieving it.	2.80	1.22	0.05	Fail to reject Ho
11. I often receive constructive feedback on my performance	3.28	1.17	0.00	Reject Ho
Performance Management	3.04	1.06	0.65	Fail to reject Ho

5. Mentoring

Table 37: One sample t-test results (Mentoring)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	p	Decision
9. I have the opportunity to build a mentor relationship at my workplace	3.32	1.23	0.00	Reject Ho
Mentoring	3.32	1.23	0.00	Reject Ho

6. Career Development and Succession Planning

Table 38: One sample t-test results (Career Development)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev	Std.Err.	Decision
6. My organisation shows an interest in my career development	3.27	1.27	0.1039	Reject Ho
7. I know what my next position will be in the organisation	2.79	1.27	0.1039	Reject Ho
8. I have a development plan in place to ensure that I am ready for my next position in the organisation	2.93	1.27	0.1041	Fail to reject Ho
13. My organisation has encouraged me to shadow a senior manager/executive during my MBA	2.17	1.16	0.0945	Reject Ho
14. MBA students should be provided with the opportunity to shadow a senior manager/executive during their MBA	4.20	0.84	0.0682	Reject Ho
15. My organisation has provided me with job rotation opportunities	2.59	1.31	0.1067	Reject Ho
Career Development & Succession Planning	2.99	0.82	0.0671	Fail to reject Ho

7. Learning and Development

Table 39: One sample t-test results (Learning & Development)

Question	Mean	Std.Dev.	p	Decision
4. My organisation always provides me with learning and development opportunities	3.69	1.14	0.00	Reject Ho
12. My organisation will consider me for an international assignment when the opportunity arises	3.27	1.27	0.01	Reject Ho
17. My organisation encourages me to work with teams on various projects	3.78	1.11	0.00	Reject Ho
19. I am provided with the appropriate learning on ethics and various legislative requirements	3.30	1.29	0.01	Reject Ho
24. My MBA research project will benefit my organisation	3.57	1.26	0.00	Reject Ho
25. My organisation has shown an interest in my progress on the MBA	3.07	1.36	0.55	Fail to reject Ho
Learning & Development	3.45	0.87	0.00	Reject Ho