CORE AND PERIPHERAL CULTURAL VALUES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF SOUTH AFRICAN MANAGERS

By

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: Core and peripheral cultural values and their relationship to transformational leadership attributes of South African managers.

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Due to the changing demographics of South African organisations after the 1994 elections and the subsequent sub-cultural diversification, the working environment is becoming the primary place where the different South African sub-cultural groups, with their different value systems, are in interaction with each other. The consequent lifting of sanctions exposed South African organisations to globalisation and international competition. This forced managers to improve organisational processes and operations, not only to protect their own domestic markets, but also to become internationally competitive. At the same time, they had to adhere to newly created labour legislation, which dramatically changed the face of the South African labour market. The complex combination of several sub-cultures in the South African work environment can adversely affect organisational effectiveness if not properly understood and managed by effective transformational leaders. The concept of cultural values was used to explore the differences, as well as the similarities, between the various sub-cultural groups in the South African environment.

This study examined cultural differences and similarities between 477 junior and middle managers in the financial services sector, who belonged to the four South African sub-cultural groups (Black, Coloured, White, and Indian), and between South African male and female managers. It also investigated whether cultural values change indiscriminately during the acculturation process, or whether certain cultural values, labelled peripheral values, change easier or before other cultural values, labelled core values. Due to the importance of transformational leadership in the work environment, this study also explored the differences

and similarities of South African managers on Bass and Avolio's Full Range Model of Leadership. (Avolio & Bass, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1997).

A moderate social constructionist theory was used as a framework for this study, to analyse and describe quantitative results obtained with the various measuring instruments. Firstly, it was found that although there were statistically significant differences between most of the cultural value dimensions of the various sub-cultural groups, not all of these differences were practically significant. Results indicated that these groups could often be clustered together on specific cultural value dimensions, sometimes consisting of a Black, White, and Coloured cluster, sometimes as a Black, Coloured, and Indian cluster, and so forth.

Secondly, independent variables other than sub-cultural group, gender, and age also showed practically significant relationships with some of the cultural value dimensions.

Thirdly, the results indicated that the cultural values are very stable, even in the dynamic and multi-cultural South African environment, and as such, no core or peripheral values could be identified.

Finally, the results also indicated that the transformational-transactional leadership model is cross-culturally endorsed within the South African financial services sector. It pointed out that irrespective of gender, junior or middle management level, age, educational level, number of years full-time work experience, number of years as manager, or having been exposed to formal Western management training, all managers evaluated themselves as more transformational than transactional.

Keywords:
Afrocentric leadership, assertiveness, cross-cultural leadership, collectivism, cultural values, diversity, female leadership, future orientation, gender egalitarianism, humane orientation, individualism, masculinity/femininity, new economy leadership, power distance, social constructionism, transformational leadership, *Ubuntu*, uncertainty avoidance, Western leadership.

OPSOMMING

TITEL:	Kern en perifere kulturele waardes en hulle verband met transformasionele leierskapeienskappe van Suid-Afrikaanse bestuurders.
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Weens die verandering in demografiese veranderlikes in Suid Afrikaanse organisasies sedert die 1994 verkiesing en die daaropvolglike sub-kulturele diversifisering, het die werksomgewing die plek geword waar die verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse sub-kultuurgroepe met hulle verskillende waardesisteme in interaksie is. Die gevolglike opheffing van sanksies na die verkiesing het Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies blootgestel aan globalisering en internasionale kompetisie wat bestuurders genoop het om organisatoriese prosesse te verbeter, nie net om die plaaslike mark te beskerm nie, maar ook om internasionaal kompeterend te word. Terseldertyd, moes hulle voldoen aan nuwe arbeidswetgewing wat die aanskyn van die Suid-Afrikaanse arbeidsmark dramaties verander het. Die komplekse kombinasie van verskeie sub-kulture in die Suid-Afrikaanse werksomgewing kan 'n negatiewe impak hê op organisatoriese effektiwiteit indien dit nie behoorlik deur effektiewe transformasionele bestuurders verstaan en bestuur word nie. Die konsep van kulturele waardes is gebruik om nie net verskille nie, maar ook ooreenkomste tussen die onderskeie sub-kultuurgroepe in die Suid-Afrikaanse omgewing te ondersoek.

Hierdie studie het die kulturele verskille en ooreenkomste van 477 mans en vroue, junior en middelvlakbestuurders van die vier Suid Afrikaanse sub-kultuurgroepe (Swart, Kleurling, Wit en Indiër) in die finansiële sektor ondersoek. 'n Verdere doelstelling was ook om te bepaal of kulturele waardes onbepaald tydens die akkulturasieproses verander en of sekere waardes (perifere waardes) makliker of voor ander waardes (kernwaardes) sal verander. Weens die belangrikheid van transformasionele leierskap in die werksomgewing, het hierdie studie ook

die verskille en ooreenkomste van Suid-Afrikaanse bestuurders op Bass en Avolio se sogenaame "Full Range Model of Leadership" ondersoek (Avolio & Bass, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1997).

'n Matig sosiaal-konstruksionistiese teorie is as 'n raamwerk in die huidige studie gebruik, ten einde die kwantitaiewe resulate wat met die onderskeie meetinstrumente bekom is, te analiseer en te beskryf. Alhoewel daar statistiese betekenisvolle verskille tussen die meeste van die kulturele waardes van die onderskeie sub-kultuurgroepe was, was al hierdie verskille nie altyd prakties betekenisvol nie. Resultate het gewys dat hierdie groepe dikwels saamgegroepeer kon word op spesifieke kulturele waardes. Dié groepe het soms bestaan uit 'n Swart-, Wit- en Kleurlinggroep, soms uit 'n Swart-, Kleurling- en Indiërgroep, ensovoorts. Nog 'n gevolgtrekking was dat ander onafhanklike veranderlikes, behalwe sub-kultuurgroep, geslag en ouderdom, ook praktiese betekenisvolle verbande met sommige van die kulturele waardes getoon het. Resultate het ook aangedui dat kulturele waardes baie stabiel is, selfs in die dinamiese en multi-kulturele Suid-Afrikaanse omgewing en gevolglik kon geen kern of perifere waardes geïdentifiseer word nie.

Resultate het, laastens, aangedui dat die transformasionele-transaksionele leierskapsmodel transkultureel ondersteun word deur bestuurders in die Suid Afrikaanse finansiële sektor. Resultate het verder daarop gedui dat alle bestuurders hulself meer transformasioneel as transaksioneel geevalueer het, sonder aansien van geslag, bestuursvlak, ouderdom, opvoedkundige vlak, aantal jare werkservaring, aantal jare as bestuurder, of blootstelling aan formele Westerse bestuursopleiding.

Sleutelterme:

Afrosentriese leierskap, diversiteit, geslagsgelykheid, individualisme, kulturele waardes, kollektivisme, magsafstand, manlikheid/vroulikheid, menslikheidsoriëntering, nuwe-ekonomie leierskap, selfgeldendheid, sosiale konstruksionisme, toekomsoriëntering, transformasionele leierskap, transkulturele leierskap, *Ubuntu*, vermyding van onsekerheid, vroulike leierskap, Westerse leierskap.

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