

## CHAPTER 5

### INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter will focus on the interpretation of the collected data. Highlighting the results of the study will help the researcher to determine if the basic aims of the research have been achieved. The interpreted results will also enable comparisons with other studies. Kidder and Judd (1986: 313) maintain that "interpretation has to do with the search for broader meanings of those answers yielded, by linking them to other available knowledge". The chapter will outline the demographic characteristics of the population and look at the type of leadership style/s used and the level of worker motivation in the company. The integration of the findings and the theoretical framework for this study, which is Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory, will be highlighted.

#### 5.1 Demographic and other characteristics of respondents

- The majority of the respondents were females.
- Most of the respondents fell in the age category 21-30 years.
- Most of the respondents had Standard 10 as their highest qualification. This is attributed to the fact that no formal education or skills are required at the operational level of the organisation. The respondents were shown how to do the work.
- The majority of the respondents fell in the category R1 001 to R1 500.
- The majority of the respondents were in non-supervisory positions.

#### 5.2 Type of leadership style used

Supervisors (leaders) at Falke Hosiery use a variety of leadership styles. The respondents' perception was that their supervisors used all four of the leadership styles – telling, selling, participating and delegating, as proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1982). According to the respondents, the telling

leadership style was largely employed in the organisation under study. Most of the respondents responded positively to the statements characterising the telling leadership style:

- Supervisor assigns subordinates particular tasks. In other words, the supervisor is rated high in task behaviour – the S1 quadrant in the situational leadership model.
- Supervisor establishes standards of job performance.
- Supervisor informs subordinates of job requirements, for instance telling them to do quality checks on hoses.
- Supervisor encourages the use of uniform procedures.

Given the nature of Falke Hosiery, the telling leadership style is employed as certain procedures have to be followed and corporate standards met for greater profitability and productivity, and also to enable the company to compete internationally. The selling leadership style is also used at Falke as the supervisors have good two-way communication with their subordinates, thus ensuring that they know how to carry out their daily tasks.

The participating and the delegating leadership styles are used to a lesser extent, as the nature of work does not call for creative ideas from the employees. The work at Falke Hosiery is mechanised and standardised, and work procedures and structures are aimed at producing quality products and generating good profits.

### **5.3 Level of worker motivation at Falke Hosiery**

Questions about why people do the things they do, are at the heart of the concept of motivation. Behaviour is complex and diverse. It can be, and often is, multi-determined. A single causal factor can lead to different kinds of behaviour in different individuals and to different behaviours in the same individual at different times. Hence the difficulty of defining motivation. The

complexity of motives also posed a problem in this study, but certain inferences had to be drawn from the responses given with regard to motivational factors, as mentioned in the questionnaire.

Agreement with the positively constructed statements meant high motivation with regard to the specified motivational factor, and disagreement with the positively constructed statements means low motivation with regard to the specified motivational factor. Likewise, agreement with the negatively constructed statements means low motivation with regard to the specified motivational factor, and disagreement with the negatively constructed statements means high motivation with regard to the specified motivational factor. The results on worker motivation will be presented by considering the different motivational factors obtained from the factor analysis process.

### 5.3.5 Achievement

#### 5.3.1 Job security and money

With regard to the job security and money factor, most of the respondents felt that the extrinsic rewards they were getting were unsatisfactory. This is attributed to the fact that no formal skills are required in the general functioning of Falke Hosiery.

#### 5.3.2 Working conditions

Most of the respondents indicated that their working conditions were good, for example they said there were no physical dangers in the workplace. It is therefore evident that the safety needs of the employees are given attention at Falke.

#### 5.3.3 Job itself

Relations between workers are good in the company. The respondents indicated that they worked harmoniously in functional teams and that there was a good team spirit in the different sections. The flow of work in the

company calls for good teamwork as work moves from one section to another, for example knitting of hoses to distribution. The tasks in each section have to be completed accurately before the product moves to the next section. On the downside, employees are kept too long in their sections, which can be attributed to the specialisation in each section. The respondents also felt they were restricted from making inputs in respect of their daily work, and this is also due to the fact that the work at Falke Hosiery is mechanised and standardised.

#### **5.3.4 Recognition from supervisors**

The respondents agreed that their hard work was recognised by their supervisors.

#### **5.3.5 Achievement**

Most of the respondents felt that they had not achieved much since working for the company, and that their potential was not fully utilised. This is due to the fact that they participate minimally in the working structures of the company; and their potential cannot be realised because they have to follow specified procedures and standards.

#### **5.3.6 Responsibility**

Most of the respondents felt that they were part of the organisation and that they were working towards the achievement of organisational goals. Paradoxically, most of them said they were not given increased responsibilities in the company.

#### **5.3.7 Personal growth**

Most of the respondents felt that there was no scope for personal growth in the company because (1) there were no opportunities for improving their skills and (2) there were no opportunities for promotion. This is also due to

the fact that employees are trained specifically to do the work in each section of the organisation. No specialised skills are needed. The level of motivation in the company differs from one motivational factor to the other, and it is neither particularly low nor particularly high. The critical issue at this stage is the relationship between the different leadership styles and worker motivation, that is the tendency of each leadership style to promote the specified motivational factors as postulated by Hersey and Blanchard in the theoretical framework of this study.

#### **5.4 Integration of the findings and the theoretical framework of the study**

The theoretical framework of this study proposes that the leadership styles S1 (telling) and S2 (selling) tend to provide goals consistent with hygiene factors, which are working conditions, pay and security, company policies, relationships with supervisors and interpersonal relationships (Daft, 1995: 407), and which are physiological, safety and social needs in terms of Maslow's Theory of Motivation. The S3 (participating) and S4 (delegating) leadership styles tend to facilitate the occurrence of motivators which, according to Herzberg's theory, are achievement, recognition, responsibility, personal growth and which, according to Maslow's theory, are the self-esteem needs and self-actualisation needs of employees.

Thus the aim of this study was to investigate the consistency of the specified leadership styles in promoting the specified motivational factors. This was done by analysing the qualitative and quantitative results obtained from the research. The telling leadership style promotes the physiological factors to a fairly low extent. The selling leadership style, also fairly widely used at Falke, motivates employees to a greater extent. The participating and the delegating leadership styles are minimally used in the company due to the nature of the production process. It can therefore be concluded that the

basic aims of the study were achieved as the study identified the leadership style/s used at Falke Hosiery, the level of worker motivation and the consistency and inconsistency of certain leadership styles in impacting on the level of worker motivation in the company.

### **5.5 Integration of the findings and the model for the study**

The principal assumption of the model is that the manager, supervisor (leader) is the driving and significant force in any organisation. The results of the study revealed that four leadership styles are employed at Falke Hosiery and that the telling style is used the most widely owing to the nature of work in the company.

The research results validate the assumptions of the model in numerous ways. The supervisor (leader) is at the centre of the model. He/She is the person who drives individual and organisational goals. Bateman and Zeithmahl (1990: 481) maintain that "a leader is one who influences others to attain goals. The greater the influence, the greater the number of followers. The more successful the goal attainment, the more evident the leadership". The work structures at Falke call for supervisors to be directional and autocratic in order to achieve organisational and individual goals. For supervisors, reaching organisational goals means being more productive and more profitable. The achievement of individual goals differs from one person to another. The results of the study revealed that the leadership styles as mentioned by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) are practised in the company even if their tendency to promote certain motivational factors is fairly low.

It is the supervisors who develop organisational structures. Tunstall (1983: 15) quoted in Brown (1995: 7) maintains that corporate culture can be described as a general constellation of beliefs, mores, customs, value systems, behaviour norms, and ways of doing business that are unique to

each corporation, that set a pattern for corporate activities and action, and that describe the implicit and emergent patterns of behaviour and emotions characterising life in the organisation. The organisational culture governs the way a company processes information, its internal relations and its values. In more specific terms, the most significant functions of any organisation include conflict reduction, co-ordination and control, the reduction of uncertainty, motivation and competitive advantage (Brown, 1995: 57). At Falke the level of worker participation is low, which is ascribed to the organisational structures and processes (company policies). Even if workers were allowed to provide some input in respect of organisational developments, the supervisors have the final say. They are responsible for the way work is done through their leadership styles, and can therefore influence workers' level of motivation.

Andriole (1985: 11) argues that "the environment is the single most important factor affecting the activities of contemporary organisations. Modern organisations need to be externally oriented if they are to survive and be successful since crisis quite often originates from a firm's inability to cope with changes emanating from the external environment". The employees at Falke Hosiery generally compare themselves with their peers in the labour market. Some of the respondents were in agreement and some in disagreement with the statement: "I believe that the remuneration package I receive is in line with that of my peer group in other companies." This is an economic factor that is external to the organisation but nevertheless affects employees in one way or another. Therefore it can be concluded that irrespective of the external factors, supervisors are major determinants of the level of motivation in organisations. They assess situations brought to their attention and apply appropriate leadership styles, which may promote motivation to a lesser or to a greater extent.