CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1   INTRODUCTION

The analysis of cultural and value-related differences and the development of a workable and effective leadership culture for business in South Africa takes place against the backdrop of a unique socio-political history. The process of political and social transformation that has occurred since 1992, and that affects all organisations in South Africa, including the civil service, is a process of radical change and involves the unification of individuals from many diverse cultures. The change, from a society of "apartheid" in the past to a fully democratic, multi-racial society for the future, has far-reaching implications for most organisations. As a result the most critical challenge for leaders has become one of enabling these people with their different backgrounds, preferences and needs to work together effectively and productively. The public service, directed by the principles of reconciliation, restructuring and development, finds itself within a process of both structural and cultural transformation. Seen against the background of the fundamental political change after the 1994 election and the resulting integration of military personnel in the SANDF, the Department of Defence (DOD) is currently undergoing a process of transformation through which the SANDF will also adopt a new organisational paradigm (as discussed in Chapter 2). The SAAF, one of the Arms of Service, is committed to these changes implemented by the Department of Defence and is the organisation on which this study focussed. In reaction to all the change imperatives, the SA Air Force has already been restructured according to the image of the new transformed DOD organisation. Institutionalising appropriate leadership practices became more and more important in bringing the organisation in line with the guidelines of the DOD. The SAAF's culture change interventions also involve the transformation of policies, practices and behaviour (especially leadership practices) towards a culture being much more transformational and participative than what it was in the past. However, the question that arose was whether a transformational leadership approach is suitable for the African social and work environment. This study served to determine, in terms of work- related values and locus of control, which practices and principles need to be included in such a culture to ensure effective and successful leadership. The researcher wished to confirm whether the decision to opt for a transformational approach to leadership in the (South) African environment is the appropriate one.

The study of culture and leadership in South Africa is faced with the unique characteristic of the ethnic diversity of people making up the potential work

force. Ethnic differences are predominantly culturally based and employees bring these differences to the work place. The fact that ethnic groups differ in their perceptions of work and the work environment has resulted in the demands on effective leadership being increasingly complex. Being aware of cultural and ethnic differences is not enough; a proper analysis of those values that are required to accomplish organisational goals and to take South African companies successfully into the global market is required. A South African approach to the development of business leadership is critically needed. To achieve this, an understanding of the effect of cultural and value differences on the selection of appropriate leadership approaches and styles is essential. Uncovering the common ground between eurocentric and indigenous African philosophies and values (which underlie the SA reality) should be the first step in this process. The challenge for South African leaders is to transform existing leadership and management practices and knowledge to suit the unique African situation.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the main aim of this study was to conduct a comprehensive study of work-related values, expressed by both the Survey of Work Values and the Value Survey Module, locus of control as expressed by Duttweiler's (1984) Internal Control Index (ICI) and the interaction between these variables and leadership behaviour as expressed by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire of Bass et al (1997). A specific part of the SAAF's labour force, being leaders from all levels, was involved. The six value dimensions of the Survey of Work Values, the four dimensions of the Value Survey Module, the leadership styles of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, as well as Internality (as measured by the ICI), served as dependent variables. The independent variables consisted of two groups. The first group of independent variables was those factors reflecting cultural differences, viz language, religion, gender, population group and age, while the second group consisted of organisational factors, viz occupational level, educational qualifications, and work experience. Both independent and dependent variables were observed to determine their impact on the development and implementation of effective leadership practices and policies in a transformational organisation paradigm.

Adonisi (1993) notes that a tragic fact about South Africa is that in management's pursuit of excellence they have trampled upon the dignity of the majority of our people and in the process ignored the basic values that underlie their needs and aspirations. Task orientations still dominate many leadership philosophies and practices and there is little evidence of a human side to business. The guidelines for changes in management philosophy and practice for the public sector, as laid down by the White Paper on Transformation in the Public Sector, require the implementation of a more participative and transformational culture in human resources management and leadership practices. These guidelines include the development of an empowering organisational culture in which both the achievement of tasks and

the meeting of employee needs are emphasised through a more creative use of consultation and teamwork. This research investigated the appropriateness of the elements of a transformational leadership approach (as opposed to the task focussed transactional approach) in introducing this human focus in the African world of work. It served as an attempt to contribute towards helping leaders and followers in developing a sensitivity and understanding for human differences in the work place. Determining the implications of culture-related differences for transformational behaviour displayed by leaders, was a specific research focus.

11.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

11.2.1   THE RESEARCH METHOD

The information required for the analysis as described in Chapters 1 and 2, was obtained from a sample of subjects by using the survey method of data gathering. The method was selected due to the fact that the researcher was able to visit all the SAAF bases personally and could therefore have personal contact with each of the subjects participating in the survey. A sample of 509 respondents were selected from all the leaders in the SAAF ranging from junior supervisors (mostly sergeants) to senior management (colonels and generals). Members of all the bases as well as SAAF Headquarters were included.

11.2.2   ADMINISTERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Self-administered questionnaires were used to obtain information about subjects' personal preferences and behaviours regarding work-related values, locus of control and leadership. Two standardised questionnaires were used for measuring work-related values (as described above), one for locus of control and one for leadership behaviour. Information regarding the biographical variables was obtained through the inclusion of a separate questionnaire.

The questionnaires in this survey were not distributed into the research field. Instead, the questionnaires were administered to a group of randomly selected leaders at each SAAF unit, by the researcher personally. The purpose of the research was explained and complete anonymity was guaranteed. The questionnaires were received back immediately upon completion.

11.2.3   REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE SAMPLE

The population on which the study was directed is made up of all the so-called uniformed or military leaders of the SAAF, a total of 6 781 members. Leaders in this case are defined as all non-commissioned officers holding a rank of sergeant or higher, all warrant officers as well as all officers (excluding candidate officers) having followers reporting directly to them. The sample taken provided useful scientific information, although showing some limitations. For example, in doing further research on the topic of work-related values in a cross-cultural setting, more respondents from the African ethnic groups should be included. In many cases the number of Asians involved in the study proved to be too small to reach any significant conclusions. Although the SAAF's total population consists of only 15% females, attempts should also be made to secure a higher percentage of female respondents.

The leadership-related information used in this research was obtained through self-assessments of the leaders included in the sample. In future, research of this nature should also include ratings provided by followers to ensure more accurate and objective information about leadership behaviour. Further culture-related research should also stretch across organisational boundaries outside the military to include a wider spectrum of the South African work force.

If the percentages of groups in terms of gender, age, occupational level, seniority, and population group in the total SAAF population are taken into account, the sample is proportional to the occurrence of these groups in the population as a whole.

11.3   CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE LITERATURE STUDY

During the last decade the issue of appropriate management models for Africa has become a key point of many discussions and debates. The appropriateness and application of Western-centric leadership and management theories and philosophies in all other cultures are increasingly challenged. For many years (and even today) the South African business community have ignored the fact that the largest proportion of the population is African and not European or American. As a result many employees, mostly previously disadvantaged, cannot identify with systems, structures and processes in their organisations and they find that there is a big gap and little congruence between the goals of employees and those of the organisation. Due to South African organisations being conceptualised and structured in a largely Western mould (Khoza, 1993), there is always the possibility of introducing more Western bias into the development of possible business models for corporate South Africa. The value that could be contributed by indigenous world-views to improve the world of work is not taken account of.

Corporate South Africa is still making itself guilty of the fallacy to believe that a business culture can be imposed on people and made to work without taking into account the cultural archetypes of the people it is imposed on. Apart from the fact that the South African community at large is characterised by social values, customs and beliefs vastly different to those of western cultures, the country is also experiencing a period of dramatic (and often traumatic) transitions as it positions itself as a fully democratic nation. Problems associated with these changes are, amongst others, high rates of unemployment and population growth on the one hand with a low education base on the other. Although business organisations worldwide are faced with turbulent environments, Adonisi (1993) argues that changes in Africa are probably not only greater in magnitude and more varied, but also occur more frequently than anywhere else. Leaders will have to play a critical role in responding to and addressing the strong expectations of inclusion and involvement following the many years of apartheid during which a large component of the potential workforce has been alienated and excluded from the business world. This alienation of African workers was even continued after the fall of apartheid due to the attempts of South African organisations to merely assimilate black employees into white cultures, rather than to Africanise itself. The gap between the expectations of society and reality is a large one, representing challenges which other nations took centuries to achieve.

The notion that "West is best" and that there is one best way to manage or to lead human resources, is questioned throughout literature. It was found that the current softer and transformational ideal of effective leadership (built on the principles of power sharing and status equality, high levels of trust, the sharing of feelings and emotions and the importance of team work, and which enjoys more and more support in western organisations) could be translated into the following Hofstede-values: low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, low individuality and medium masculinity. It should be noted that these cultural prerequisites do not match the cultural profiles of many countries, in fact, they do not even fit the cultural profile of the USA (Hofstede, 1980), which is characterised by values such as medium power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, high masculinity and high individualism.

In terms of the research findings it cannot be argued that all tested and proven western business principles and philosophies should be rejected when developing a workable South African approach, but the reality is that a total misunderstanding of (and a substantial resistance to) the free enterprise economic system has developed, mainly because of the fact that the systems of apartheid, separation and suppression have been associated with capitalism. Leaders will be required to facilitate the process of overcoming this inherent resistance firstly, and then integrating the appropriate values and beliefs of both Western and African perspectives – this within the constraints of the available limited financial, technical and human resources available.

The requirement is to harmonise leadership practices and organisational values so that much larger numbers of blacks can be included into South African organisations, in such a way that these organisations can still remain productive and competitive. Instead of trying to determine which of "Western" or "African" management and leadership models should dominate organisational cultures in future, the focus should be on establishing harmony and synergistic cooperation between the various cultures. The study have shown that, to ensure South Africa becoming and remaining internationally competitive, there is no other option.

The literature study emphasised the importance of understanding culture in Africa where society is characterised by ethnic diversity and "non-western" traditions and values. These values typically include those associated with and rooted in the African concept of ubuntu, for example the value of inclusivism. While the workplaces designed and created by whites in the previous apartheid dispensation, are primarily exclusive in nature with the emphasis on individual ambition, development and achievement, leaders now realise that the majority of black employees hold inclusivistic beliefs that the individual's behaviour cannot be interpreted from a pure individualistic perspective. For them, individuals are expected not to live for themself, but for the community. Self-interest is always seen as being subjective to communal interest. It became clear that, especially in the military environment where these differences bear substantial significance, an understanding of the effect of cultural differences on the selection of appropriate leadership practices and approaches is essential. The underlying challenge is the accommodation of different cultures in an organisational system where employees are satisfied and motivated on the one hand, whilst also productive and committed to reaching the objectives of the organisation on the other.

Despite the need for acknowledging culture-specific elements, the research has shown the existence of culture-universal values impacting on effective leadership processes. The higher Survey of Work Values - scores obtained (for all the population groups) on the dimensions Pride in Work, Job Involvement and Upward striving, as opposed to the generally lower tendency towards Earnings and Social Status of the Job, confirm that followers want to be involved, and that they find more reward in the intrinsic aspects of work than from those aspects associated with extrinsic needs. They want to be trusted and prefer leaders demonstrating support and concern. In fact, with regards to follower preferences, many of the so-called humanistic African values proposed, can be reported not to be truly African, but rather universal in nature. It was found that many of these culture-universal characteristics could be associated with the principles of transformational leadership. These principles have already proven (Bass et al, 1994) to result in effective and productive follower behaviour when applied across many cultures internationally.

Although it became clear that the eurocentric approach of explaining the behaviour of all cultural groups in terms of western knowledge and paradigms will not provide the best solution in a multi-cultural South Africa, the research findings do not support the argument of building a unique African leadership model which is purely based on indigenous African values. Some of the authors referred to in the study, even question the practicability of traditional African values in the modern workplace. Most evidence found in this study call for the meaningful integration of similarities and differences between cultures within proven theoretical frameworks in such a way that it make sense for the members of all the cultures involved. The debate of whether ubuntu as a social concept is applicable to the improvement of workplace performance and therefore organisational productivity and success in Africa, should also manifest in the principles of careful selective integration. As stated earlier, what remains important in the study of leadership, are those factors leading to effective behaviour of individuals and teams, and if the social principles of ubuntu are contributing to this, they cannot be excluded from African management practices. The challenge for African leaders should not be one of transferring ubuntu as a whole to the workplace, but to identify those ubuntu-related values, beliefs and leader behaviours which could positively influence the performance of followers and the achievement of organisational objectives. As an example, the research findings suggest Africans to be more concerned about relationships and interpersonal issues than individual and organisational effectiveness and performance. While the good manager is expected to be considerate and people-oriented, and is someone who consults subordinates and give support direction, assurance and security, leaders still have the task of creating an awareness that improved productivity, performance and organisational effectiveness are as important as good relationships in order to survive in a competitive environment. When leaders create the conditions for followers to do so, they need to commit themselves to excellence and their own best efforts.

The research has shown that the answer for developing a workable, practical approach for effective leadership in Africa is neither singular, nor simplistic. It is vital to incorporate and reinforce those attributes of both Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives that will enhance organisational effectiveness and competitive performance. This should be done through positive dialogue, where one group does not try to enforce its own culture on the other. The extent to which the application of the principles of transformational leadership might satisfy this dual requirement are discussed under the conclusions based on the empirical research.

11.4   CONCLUSIONS BASED ON EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

In this section a summary of the empirical research results will be discussed in terms of the work-related value dimensions of both the Survey of Work Values

and the Value Survey Module as well as locus of control and leadership behaviour. As far as the value dimensions are concerned, there is a low level of individualism among respondents in general. The scores indicate a tendency towards Masculinity and a high level of Uncertainty Avoidance. The results further show a high Power Distance as experienced between leaders and followers. Respondents indicated a much higher preference for the values associated with intrinsic needs, viz Pride in Work, Job Involvement and Activity Preference than for those associated with extrinsic needs, viz Attitude towards Earnings and Social Status of the Job.

Although significant differences between population groups regarding locus of control were found, the results indicate a tendency towards higher internality. In terms of leadership behaviour, the results reflected a higher preference for all five the elements of transformational leadership, than for transactional leadership styles, viz Management-by-Exception (both active and passive) and Constructive Transaction. A significant positive correlation between the transformational behaviours and the three outcomes, viz Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction was found.

Due to the fact that the study is cross-cultural in nature, it is noteworthy that most of the significant differences reported were found to be between Africans and one or more of the other groups. On all of the dimensions where significant differences were found, Africans differ from at least one of the other three groups, except on Inspirational Motivation. On all these dimensions this group differ significantly from whites and/or coloureds. On two of the leadership outcomes, viz Effectiveness and Satisfaction, as well as both the Idealised Influence dimensions, Africans and coloureds were found to be the only groups differing significantly.

11.4.1   INDIVIDUALISM

The subjects in the study showed a tendency away from individualism towards collectivism. This is applicable, not only for Africans but also for all three other population groups, viz Asians, whites and coloureds. Despite this general tendency towards collectivism, Africans differ significantly from all the other population groups. No differences between whites, coloureds and Indians were found. Individualism is also influenced by occupational level (rank) as well as educational qualifications. There seems to be a gradual move away from individualism along with promotion in rank. Junior supervisors were found to differ significantly from middle management. With regards to education, subjects with grade 10, as well as those with matric or a a diploma, differed significantly from graduates. With higher educational qualifications, a tendency away from individualism towards a more collectivistic orientation was evident. Individualism shows a significant negative correlation with transformational leadership and a significant positive correlation with the

Laissez Faire style. No correlation could be found between Individualism and transactional leadership.

In order to develop and establish a transformational leadership culture, a strong focus on teamwork is required. Transformational leaders inspire followers by communicating high expectations of the team as a whole. They encourage followers to focus away from self-interest towards the good of the group or team. In a leadership approach where participative practices should be encouraged, an individualistic belief system, where only individual performance and achievement is encouraged, might easily be considered to be inhibiting. However, it is important to note that a successful transformational approach should not be based only on collectivistic thinking and principles. A transformational approach does not imply a choice between individualistic or collectivistic values, and individualistic values do not have to be rejected or ignored for the sake of teamwork. Individualism can also be accepted as morally correct. Individualised consideration has been shown to be as important (Bass et al, 1994) as the encouragement of teamwork. According to Davis (2000), the critical factor is teamwork, not teams. Teamwork in itself does not refer to bonding , developing more meaningful relationships or fuller harmony. Although all these things are valuable, they are not regarded as essential for teamwork. Teamwork should be seen as aligned individualism, where everyone (as an individual) takes responsibility for the overall results, not just for individual contributions. As such, transformational leaders should focus on teamwork for accomplishing tasks and objectives together, that individuals cannot accomplish alone, while also ensuring that each individual has the opportunity to develop to the best of his potential through continuous individualised consideration. When teamwork is healthy, it should support individuality.

11.4.2   POWER DISTANCE

None of the population groups have shown significant differences on the dimension 'power distance'. No significant differences could be found on any of the other independent variables either. Awareness of a large power distance is applicable to the members of all four culture groups. This is probably the result of the very essence of the formal hierarchical military rank system where the distribution of power is formalised through many levels of authority. The large power distance between superior and follower may pose a problem for implementing a transformational culture where the empowerment of employees and access to resources, information and problem solving are required to create higher levels of collaboration, involvement and commitment.

The implementation of more participative leadership practices is required to ensure a smaller power distance. Such a participative approach should be

based on a belief system that subordinates inherently have both the willingness and ability (they can and want) to do what needs to be done and that they can be empowered to use their own discretion and make their own decisions about the work they do and know best. The many levels of formalised power do not facilitate the smooth institutionalisation of the SAAF's new values, that require the appreciation of all inherent competencies of all employees. This situation calls for the creative use of power sharing and employee involvement within units and sections. The reduction of a power distance orientation should not be inhibited by the existence of formal hierarchical levels. In fact, the essence of empowerment is the sharing of power between the powerful at a higher level and the powerless at a lower level. In order to improve follower performance, transformational leaders should help them to firstly acquire, and secondly use the power they need to make decisions affecting their own work.

11.4.3   UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

As was the case with power distance, none of the population groups have shown any significant differences in terms of uncertainty avoidance. All the groups show a tendency towards security and stability and a reduced willingness to take risks i.e. to avoid uncertainty. Again, this may be due to the fact that for many years the military was seen as a stable organisation offering good job security. The fast and sometimes radical socio-political changes, which also heavily impacted on the previously stable and predictable work environment of the Department of Defence, created high levels of uncertainty, especially amongst white male employees. The only independent variable where significant differences were observed, is subjects' age. The young group of subjects (20 to 24 years) differed significantly from all the older groups. No correlations between uncertainty avoidance and any of the leadership dimensions of both transactional and transformational leadership could be found.

The relatively high need for stability and security and to avoid uncertainty, poses special challenges to leaders in a transformational paradigm. The SAAF's high degree of uncertainty avoidance could be associated with Handy's (1991) Role-culture which is typically found in organisations where a structured system with strict rules and procedures provide protection and security to employees. This culture will only function well in an environment characterised by stability, predictability, order and consistency, a scenario that is no longer applicable to the current reality of the DOD and the SAAF. One of the characteristics of a transformational leader is his ability to prompt problem solving through questioning assumptions and encouraging followers to look at problems in new ways. This intellectually stimulating behaviour inevitably brings about change. Leadership development in the SAAF should also strongly focus on the ability and willingness of leaders to take risks in a

continuously changing environment. To do this, fewer written rules are required and deviance from set rules should not always be seen as threatening. If rules serve no productive purpose, they should be changed.

11.4.4   MASCULINITY

The masculinity-femininity dimension is related to the values of success, money and things (masculinity), or caring for others and the quality of life (femininity). There is a tendency among subjects towards masculinity. Significant differences between Africans and both Asians and whites were found, with Africans showing more feminine tendencies than whites and Asians. A negative but significant correlation between masculinity and all the transformational leadership elements were identified. Transformational behaviours proved to be more feminine in nature.

Individualised Consideration (one of the transformational leadership elements) have been indicated to contribute towards the required leadership outcomes of extra effort and follower satisfaction, and refers to the importance that leaders assign to supporting, mentoring and coaching individual followers to higher levels of performance. The DOD culture change objectives require that all leadership approaches should, in the first place be people-centred. For the development of a true transformational leadership culture in the SAAF, leadership development interventions should focus on developing these feminine traits. A lower level of masculine traits such as assertiveness, aggression, competitiveness, and an insensitivity to feelings, is required to ensure that humanity is put back into the military workplace. In this research significant support was found for the fact that business success is not only achieved through masculine influence. This holds particular relevance for South Africa, where the humanistic approach was confirmed to be stronger supported and preferred by the black man than the white. In the context of the humanistic values of ubuntu, which is strongly rooted in Africa, and in terms of leadership, where effective transformational behaviour is characterised by (amongst others) the skills of caring, empathy and concern, a biased support of a masculine approach in the work environment could prove to be a blockage for organisational performance. The research confirmed the emphasis of blacks on Lessem's (1993) fourth world – values, i.e. the realisation of the essential dignity and worth of man.

11.4.5   INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC WORK VALUE DIMENSIONS

When the six value dimensions of the Survey of Work Values were analysed in terms of subject preference, it became evident that there is a strong tendency towards the three values associated with intrinsic needs, viz Pride in Work, Job Involvement and Activity Preference. Subjects have shown a

definite need for job satisfaction, involvement in decision-making and to stay busy in their work. There is also a clear need for seeking higher level jobs (Upward Striving). The importance of making money on the job proved to be valued much less than the intrinsic value dimensions. Although the higher tendencies towards the intrinsic value dimensions also apply to blacks, this group were found to score significantly lower on all three these dimensions than whites. In terms of Job Involvement and Activity Preference Africans also scored significantly lower than coloureds. Occupational level also seems to have influenced intrinsic and extrinsic value dimensions scores. The results indicate that middle and senior management have a significant stronger need to be busy in their work (Activity Preference) than is the case with junior supervisors. In terms of subjects' attitude towards earnings as well as the social status acquired by one's job, the opposite was found. The values of making money on the job and earning a high social status through one's job are significantly more important to junior subjects than seniors. A significant positive correlation exists between all three intrinsic value dimensions and transformational leadership behaviour. This is also the case for the dimension Upward Striving (Progress). No significant correlation could be found between the intrinsic value dimensions and Management-by-Exception. Neither could any correlation be found between any of the extrinsic value dimensions and any of the leadership styles.

A high power distance is founded in the theory-X assumptions of McGregor (1967) that workers do not have the inherent creative ability to make job-related decisions, that they are predominantly lazy, do not like their work, and that everything employees do, need to be controlled by superiors. Based on these assumptions, leaders then believe that power cannot be shared with those doing the work. The research findings have rejected the truth of these assumptions. In terms of Upward Striving, Pride in Work and Job Involvement, employees at all levels have indicated that the intrinsic value of doing work means much more to them than the extrinsic rewards that can be associated with doing a job. They have shown that they are willing contributors, that they want to be successful and that they can be allowed to be involved and be part of problem solving and decision-making processes.

11.4.6   LOCUS OF CONTROL

Locus of control was also found to have an influence on leadership and follower behaviour. In this study a person's locus of control was regarded as the extent to which people see the ability to exert control over specific events as being present either in themselves or in the environment. Internality therefore, refers to people's belief that they can control events in their own lives themselves. Differences in terms of locus of control between the various culture groups in South Africa have been confirmed. Despite the general tendency towards Internality, blacks provided significantly lower scores on

internality than all the other population groups. No differences between whites, coloureds and Indians were found. Internality is also influenced by occupational level (rank) as well as work experience. The results indicate that both middle management and senior supervisors have a stronger belief of personal control than is the case with junior supervisors. There seems to be a gradual move away from individualism along with promotion in rank. Junior supervisors were found to differ significantly from middle management. Internality scores were also found to increase with an improvement in educational qualifications. Graduates reported a significantly higher level of internality than members only having matric. The correlation analysis results indicated a significant positive correlation between internality and transformational leadership behaviours. No correlation could be found between internality and transactional leadership.

The lower internality scores of Africans may be attributed to the policies of apartheid and the fact that they were deprived from opportunities, including those of making decisions regarding the issues affecting their lives. For many years the minority white group politically controlled the country and therefore also had an influence on the fate of other culture groups. These people were at the mercy of external factors and as a result believed that they had little control over their desperate situation. It should therefore not be seen (as is often the tendency in western cultures) as a prediction of blacks being less successful than the other groups. An approach of adapting to external pressures and influences could also prove effective. Less inner-directed does not mean fate-directed. Outer-directed may also mean to acknowledge external forces such as direction from customers and to learn from experience, i.e. to be directed by external influences that have proven to be the best options in the past. Therefore, for leaders the best approach is not one of internality or externality, but one where one can position oneself to gain the best advantage from external influences. Participation and involvement of followers should also be seen as part of these external influences. In terms of leadership, the danger is that inner directed individuals could feel successful when they experience that their way of thinking have won over those of others, which is not transformational. In contrast, a transformational leader would stress how much he has learnt from the feedback and inputs from others, including followers, which is outer-directed behaviour. Inner-directed behaviour however, remains important, especially in the SA military environment where followers are looking for direction and where quick decisions (often of a strategic nature) have to be taken. The research has clearly shown that, although internality predicts more natural transformational behaviours, the critical factor remains whether leaders have the ability to ensure the required outcomes of extra effort and employee satisfaction. This can be achieved by both internals and externals. The results of this research have firmly rejected the notion that most organisational behaviour theory is limited to internals only. In formal and informal leadership development sessions, internals should be sensitised towards the fact that in the new SAAF

culture, and in terms of the newly accepted core values, the leader's way should not necessarily and always win over those of followers.

11.4.7   LEADERSHIP

Leadership preferences of subjects were measured in terms of a range of leadership styles, which could be divided into Laissez Faire, transactional and transformational behaviours. In terms of the five elements of transformational leadership, Africans have shown a significant difference from whites and coloureds, except on Inspirational Motivation, where only whites and coloureds differed significantly. On all the transformational dimensions where significant differences were found, Africans scored lower than whites and coloureds. Nevertheless, Africans still indicated a strong tendency towards transformational behaviours away from transactional behaviours. In terms of Inspirational Motivation, coloureds scored significantly higher than whites. Membership of specific population groups proved to have no influence on any of the Laissez Faire, MBE, or Constructive Transaction scores. There is a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and all the leadership outcomes of Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction. Transactional leadership and the Laissez Faire style correlate negatively with the three outcomes.

The constructive transaction (CT) style of leadership takes the form of an exchange process and is only effective when the leader have rewards available to offer for required performance. As members with a higher orientation towards internality hold stronger expectancies that effort will result in good performance and that good performance will lead to rewards, the CT style should be more effective when working with internals. Therefore, in the absence of rewards for performance the expectancy levels for rewards in exchange for performance should show no difference between internals and externals. The research results revealed that, due to the fact that transformational leaders pay more attention to the value of intrinsic rewards, the transformational approach is much more effective, both in terms of resultant follower performance and follower satisfaction, and that this is applicable to both internals and externals. The CT style can only be effective to a limited extent as followers deliver results only to meet the contracted expectations of the leader. The style shows no leader actions that are aimed at inspiring followers to do more than what was expected. This can only be achieved through focussing on the intrinsic value associated with individual and team achievements and doing a job well.

It became obvious that followers with an internal orientation prefer a participative style of supervision. As leaders they also prefer a participative style, while externals were found to prefer a more directive style. Important here is that transformational leadership should not rigidly be associated with

participation, and transactional behaviours with being directive. Bass <u>et al</u> (1994) explain that a transformational leader can also be directive and that a transactional leadership approach may also show participative behaviours. It is clear that in leading black followers in South Africa, at least in the short term, the most appropriate style of leadership seems to be a directive version of inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. It is also important to note that as internals were found to be more task-oriented and externals more socially oriented, whites in South African companies may find it more difficult and less natural to follow the transformational principles when leading followers.

Although it is evident that transformational leadership principles and practices lead to improved follower performance, the use of transactional approaches in certain situations remains necessary. In the military, deviations and mistakes cannot be ignored. The management-by-exception (MBE) style can therefore not be rejected completely. However, when dealing with mistakes and errors, leaders should become involved in the work of their followers not only because they want to rectify mistakes, but because they want to use the event as a learning opportunity for the follower. MBE could therefore be used in a positive sense with the focus of reinforcing the leader's transformational objectives. By only using the MBE style, leaders will quickly create a culture of mistrust and a workforce of risk avoiders because they are afraid of making mistakes when trying to be innovative. This will undoubtedly reinforce the existence of a high level of uncertainty avoidance. Furthermore, the research results support the notion that the followers of MBE-leaders do not perform at high levels. The research firmly established the fact that, also in the African context, leadership styles differ in terms of follower effectiveness and that higher levels of employee participation and involvement, inspirational motivation and individualised consideration (i.e. transformational behaviours) lead to higher levels of follower performance and effectiveness.

The study has indicated that the implementation of the Full Range Leadership development programme in the SAAF has not yet contributed significantly to the establishment of a transformational culture in the organisation. The ensuing implications together with some recommendations will be discussed in the next section.

11.5   CONSEQUENCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND POLICIES IN A TRANSFORMATIONAL PARADIGM

11.5.1   ROLE OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Senior, strong-minded and influential leaders can be regarded as the ultimate source of an organisation's culture. For a transformational culture to be created and maintained, top leaders with transformational values and convictions are needed, leaders who can actively create an environment that encourages true collaboration and pride in work. They have to give the assurance of and commit themselves to modelling the required behaviours associated with the values that need to be institutionalised. They should communicate the major assumptions and basic beliefs on which a transformational culture is built, in a clear and unambiguous manner. Their beliefs, values and underlying assumptions, particularly regarding their workforce, should be reflected in the decisions they make and their reactions to critical incidents. Although verbal communication is necessary, what top leaders say is not as important as what they do in practice. What young, inexperienced leaders learn from them, is worth much more than what they are formally taught in training sessions. This role of executive leaders demand time, patience and endurance. Their commitment should be visible and cannot be delegated.

As part of the leadership culture change strategy, senior leadership should also play an important role in appointing leaders already displaying the required behaviours and competencies to critical posts. Immediate modelling of the desired behaviours and practices assists a great deal in changing the leadership styles and approaches of junior leaders.

11.5.2   HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

Formal organisational policy, procedures and regulations form an equally important culture driver and impact on the behaviour of both leaders and followers at all levels. The cultural limitations to leadership have consequences for company policy formulation. Policy and regulations formalise the things that are regarded as really important in the organisation's culture. To ensure a successful transition from a highly structured, rule-bound culture to a value-driven, transformational culture, characterised by collaborative practices and employee empowerment, all HR policies and practices need to be revised and aligned with the requirements of the desired future culture. These include the alignment of HR policy with the SAAF's new core values. Two examples of policies that need to be revised and aligned, are grievance channels and decision-making. The ways in which lower-level

members in the organisation can bring their complaints to the attention of those at the top, are a reflection of the perceived power distance and the distribution of power in the organisation. It is difficult to establish open grievance channels in large power distance cultures. When power distance is reduced through the implementation of real participative practices and leader accessibility, subordinates will not fear retaliation, and grievance channels will not be used for personal revenge against inaccessible superiors.

As far as decision-making is concerned, the essential principle is that the way decisions are made, should reflect the values of those in the environment in which the decisions have to be effective. The values that are most influential here are found on the masculinity vs femininity dimension. According to Hofstede (1980), in complex decision-making situations, "facts" (which fit the masculine orientation) cannot always exist independently from the people who define them. The use of intuition and consensus might prove to be more valuable and appropriate in a less masculine culture, which is typically the case for blacks in South Africa. If the commitment of many people are needed for the implementation of decisions in such a culture, consensus seems to be the best approach.

11.5.3   LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Research (Bass et al, 1997) have clearly shown that transformational leadership qualities can be taught, both formally and informally and that training is particularly effective early in the careers of young leaders. However, as referred to above, the research subjects indicated that the implementation of the Full Range Leadership development programme in the SAAF per se have not contributed significantly to the establishment of a transformational culture in the organisation. This is probably due to the fact that firstly, the training programme has not been adapted to either the current constraints and opportunities of the SAAF organisational setting, or the culture change process currently being implemented in the organisation. Secondly, most participants were exposed to only one training intervention and in most instances there was a lack of retraining and refresher programmes. The development of transformational leadership cannot be left to a single workshop. Coaching and development efforts should be ongoing and these efforts should also be blended with other ongoing organisational development efforts. Thirdly, the programme was not implemented with a top-down approach, with the effect that upper-level leaders did not have the opportunity to practice transformational leadership and to model the expected behaviours.

In terms of the current research results, leadership development should start with the establishment of new basic beliefs about people in the workplace and the values they hold with regards to the work that they do. These beliefs are reflected in the basic principles of SAAF leadership development and were

discussed in Chapter 5. The research has once again clearly rejected the generalised notion that work is a negative experience and that the human being do not like work and will avoid it as far as possible. Significant support was obtained for the fact that, even in the African environment, people have a need for growth and development and that doing a good job is a means of feeling good about oneself. Furthermore, people generally have the willingness and the inherent competence to do what needs to be done. Once future and existing leaders have made these values their own, the rest of their leadership competencies and skills can be further developed with much less blockage and resistance.

To ensure the achievement of the SAAF's future vision and the establishment of a truly transformational culture, leadership development should be aligned with the culture change process (as described in Chapter 5) and the new SAAF values. All OD interventions at all levels should be planned and structured around the development of the desired transformational culture of air power excellence. This includes formal training at the SAAF's training institutions. Organisational values should not be seen as separate from day-to-day practices and employee behaviour, they should form the foundation for all habits and practices. Leaders should be taught how to demonstrate the true meaning of transformational values in practice. In this, the Directorate Management and Renewal Services at SAAF Headquarters and the internal OD consultants should play a pivotal role.

11.5.4   EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

The implication of the different motivation patterns in different countries is that personnel policies aiming at motivating people will have different effects in different cultures and even in different organisations. Herzberg's popular two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959) has been found to be culturally determined to a great degree (Hofstede, 1964) and is more applicable to some cultures than others. The theory claims that certain "motivators" have positive but no negative motivation potential. These motivators are related to the higher needs of Maslow's (1970) needs hierarchy and refer to the intrinsic aspects of work, those aspects having been confirmed in this study to play a more important role in the work-related value system of SAAF employees, including members of all culture groups. "Hygiene factors", in terms of the theory, are extrinsic in nature and have negative but no positive motivational potential. They refer to Maslow's lower order needs of safety and security. In motivational perspective, SAAF leaders should focus more on the provision of intrinsic goal objects than merely the offering of extrinsic rewards.

As leadership can be regarded as a complement to subordinateship, the key to the motivational role of leaders is the type of subordinate expectations one

is likely to find in a culture. This means that for leaders to be successful, they have to take the values and needs of subordinates into account, especially when applying a transactional leadership style. However, the rewards offered in a transactional approach is often extrinsically focussed (material needs of employees are addressed). Transactional leadership behaviours and the rewards offered, simply do not go far enough in developing the motivation to achieve the full potential of a leader's workforce. They only serve the purpose of removing high levels of dissatisfaction, but do not have real motivational value. As the work-related values and needs in the study show a strong tendency towards the intrinsic value of work, SAAF leaders should move away from a dominant transactional approach towards encouraging followers to achieve more than they originally thought possible. Motivational practices in the SAAF should focus on the development of the employee's self-esteem. The research did not produce any support for previous predictions that blacks in South Africa have a significantly lower level of need for achievement than their white counterparts. On the contrary, substantial evidence was found to confirm that black workers start to match many of the motivational patterns of whites as they become more industrialised, obtain higher levels of education, and move up the organisational hierarchy. Individualised consideration with a focus on the growth, development and performance of each individual should therefore play an increasingly important role in the motivation of all culture groups in South Africa.

Whilst in a high individualistic culture such as the USA, the popularity of expectancy theories, in terms of which people are pulled by the expectancy of outcomes, resulted in the "calculative" involvement with the organisation (Hofstede, 1980), the tendency of the subjects in the current study towards collectivism refers to a more "moral" involvement with the organisation. This further confirms the appropriateness of the transformational behaviours of support, concern and encouragement.

The role of rewards in the work-related behaviour of internals and externals, deserve reference. As mentioned earlier, externals do not associate performance with attaining rewards (and when they do, it is less so for externals than for internals). Reward systems applied in organisations are often built on the assumptions of internal locus of control and may be less effective when working with a diverse workforce in terms of locus of control. The use of the transactional style of constructive transaction could therefore be the wrong option when working with less internally oriented black employees. A transformational approach with a stronger focus on the intrinsically rewarding aspects of work, especially the need of people to learn and to develop, could well prove to be more successful in this case.

11.5.5   THE USE OF POWER

Leadership from a transformational perspective should see everyone as a potential leader and should be based on the premise that people are competent. Any attempt to develop leadership must address leaders' existing attitudes to power and followers. If leaders operate from the premise that people are incompetent, they will resist the sharing of power and any change effort will be cosmetic. The use of power is only effective to the extent that it really leads to increased levels of follower effort, performance and satisfaction. In previous chapters it was stated that the most influential approach of leadership is when power is shared and true collaboration and involvement is encouraged. Hall's (1993) research has clearly confirmed that both leader and follower have a more positive experience regarding the job to be done when power is shared than when all power is kept by the leader (i.e. a control orientation). In an organisational culture characterised by a large power distance, such as the one being studied, instead of pushing towards models of mere formal participation, the approach should rather be one of increasing the sharing of power so that the level of power distance can gradually be reduced. To establish a more transformational leadership culture in accordance with the requirements of the DOD, decision-making power can no longer be reserved for those in higher levels of the multi-levelled military organisation. A mindset that needs to be established in the military, is that empowerment refers to the transfer of power to lower levels (without giving up power) and that it does not require the removal of certain hierarchical levels to create a flatter organisational structure. Empowerment is vested in a leadership belief system and not in a particular type of structural design.

11.5.7   PRINCIPLES FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SAAF's LEADERSHIP CULTURE

For the implementation of a successful culture change process in terms of leadership practices, the following principles are offered as being essential:

- Organisation culture (thus leadership practices too) should be managed as an integral part of the strategic management process, since it impacts directly on all core processes of the SAAF.

- Top management, officers commanding and directors, as well as other leaders at all levels should accept responsibility for and commit themselves to the inculcation of the desired organisational culture as it is described in the SAAF's vision 2012 and the new set of core SAAF values and its supporting behaviours. Commitment should be personal and visible.

- An integrative strategy should be followed, in terms of which all policy development, planning, training and OD interventions are aligned with the requirements of the transformed organisational culture.

- ▪ Acceptance and internalisation of the organisation's core value system is a prerequisite for success.

- ▪ Periodical assessment of progress made is essential. Probably the most important in this regard will be continuous self-assessment and reflection by all leaders on the effectiveness of their own behaviours in terms of follower performance and satisfaction. Performance management must be an integral part of the assessment process.

- ▪ Progress should be communicated continuously throughout the organisation in an open, honest, timeous and transparent way. Line functionaries play a pivotal role in this process and should accept their responsibility in this regard.

In a high uncertainty avoidance culture, employees show a high need for security and direction and a low level of willingness to explore new ways of doing things. This poses special challenges to leaders in a transformational paradigm. A critical task of senior leadership in this regard will be to firstly communicate a clear statement of what the organisation will be like in future. A positive and clearly understood vision will serve as a strong motivator to employees and will transmit clarity of what is expected from them. Secondly, senior leadership needs to continuously encourage followers to take risks. In the process followers should be allowed to make mistakes as part of the learning process.

11.6   SOME FINAL COMMENTS

The research findings have confirmed the validity of adopting a transformational leadership culture for the military (particularly the SAAF) and that the new core SAAF values as well as the principles on which current leadership development in the SAAF is based, are in line with and accommodate both Western and African work-related values. The leadership practices on which the culture for the future is based, should have one central theme in common: a keen sense of concern for people, their well-being and their growth and development. Leadership efforts should all be based on creating the conditions for follower collaboration and commitment.

The personal aspirations of people in the workplace as well as the basic assumptions about why people work and the importance of work in their lives have for many years been ignored or (at least) misunderstood. The myth that people in general only work for financial compensation and that management can make all decisions so that followers can just do the work is slowly being replaced by the assumption that people come to work with a complex array of personal needs and aspirations to be fulfilled. They join others in the

workplace with intrinsic motivation and a curiosity in learning. It is more and more accepted that the focus should not only be on extrinsic motivation where people are being ruled by external forces and where reward is often only available for the one at the top (and punishment for the one at the bottom), but rather on the creation of organisational conditions where the whole system is optimised, one where all employees display a sense of commitment, involvement and ownership. In Africa, perhaps more so than anywhere else, the essence of business survival lies in the ability, skill and commitment of leaders to put humanity back into the workplace. The best source of competitive advantage for the future will be the organisation's ability to enable, empower, and liberate human resources.

The conclusion is that South African leaders will be required to facilitate a process of integrating and synthesising the appropriate conventional management theories and techniques with African value systems, thereby creating a new African management perspective that will acknowledge the realities of the continent on the one hand while still enhancing the ability of South African companies to compete globally on international competitive markets. The search for a suitable leadership model for a transforming South Africa should therefore not run the risk of only focusing on either African- or Western-specific cultural value systems. The focus should much rather be on finding and developing leadership approaches that could successfully integrate the best of both worlds. To this end, the transformational leadership approach was found to be the most suitable, at least as a point of departure and reference for further leadership development efforts.