CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

6.1   INTRODUCTION

As was set out at the start of the study, the primary focus of this study was to explore and formulate a new strategic model to enhance the MCD potential of designated managers. Such a model will hopefully help to ensure that the lack of appropriate and adequate managerial skills development in South Africa's automotive sector is addressed taking into account the current involvement of automotive business activities in MCD and in global competition. The study purpose was also to determine whether there is a difference between MCD for NDsGN and DsGN groups, taking into account the relative frequency with which the members of these groups fall into various categories of the variable themes of interest. Since the two groups had unequal sample sizes, the calculation of expected frequencies took this into account, with a significant difference level set at $p < 0.05$.

6.2   CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights several factors that are important determinants for DsGN MCD in the South African automotive sector. There is strong support for developing a key target area for the assessment and evaluation of MCD processes for designated managers within a strategic monitoring focus. Such a strategic HRM focus will affirm organisations' efforts to gain increased capacity of DsGNS' MCD achievements.

If DsGN MCD meets global competitive criteria and legislation regarding labour policies is implemented, this should enhance new global pricing, promote a narrowing of labour costs and work force reduction. Organisations are expanding their technological competencies with advanced digital and IT attributes, which enables managers to do more and raise their expectations of empowerment. However, there is ample evidence to suggest the need for accelerating DsGN so that the needs of organisations can be met. Three facets (career development, education and scarce competencies) should interface

with this strategic HRM planning process and top management commitment to build D𝗌𝗀𝗇 capacity and strong support to monitor MCD progress. The respondents in this study have highlighted their superiors' lack of commitment to MCD programmes, mainly due to a dictatorial style of management, a lack of skills and ineffective formulation of their future MCD plans.

Strong views about MCD needs, and about the responsibilities and expectations of individual ND𝗌𝗀𝗇 and D𝗌𝗀𝗇 managers were voiced. The respondents felt that their superiors knew exactly what their career needs and expectations were, but frequently these superiors changed their responsibilities or careers. This makes it impossible to establish a trustworthy relationship with managers as required for MCD purposes. A person's work patterns must encompass a stable, long-term career position for an MCD programme to achieve meaningful results. A key finding showed that HRM strategy ranked as the lowest organisational priority.

Issues that should be addressed are the skills gap, MCD internal communication, promotions up the career ladder, job security and the organisation's own vision for MCD programmes. It was also useful to determine what the perceptions of the participants about a standardised MCD model were. The respondents felt that there is little opportunity for career growth, and if an opportunity does arise, they are not given the chance to enquire about the vacancy.

The respondents felt that added learning through mentoring/coaching with external knowledge should be part of the standardised MCD model. For a candidate to be identified in the MCD process plan, he/she must acquire appropriate educational levels, potential competencies and establish the right career goals. The ND𝗌𝗀𝗇 and D𝗌𝗀𝗇 respondents felt that they had no control over valued resources, access to important people, the right to make suggestions and opportunities to discuss their career plans with their superiors. The respondents also felt that the responsibility for MCD programme contributions within the organisation must be a combination of efforts on the part of the individual, management and HRM strategy.

In addition, it was also useful to determine what impact political pressure and affirmative action have on overall MCD initiatives. The D𝗌𝗀𝗇 respondents felt that they

are not adequately trained for their present job functions, and that political pressures have no influence on actual affirmative action. For example, DsGNS are still not leading a significant number of in-house MCD projects. The DsGNS also have no means of acquiring additional competencies for promotion, due to an absence of individual career plans. There appears to be a lack of cohesion, as demonstrated by the absence of an HRM strategy linked to DsGN development. DsGN respondents felt that there were a five years career planning that leads to job insecurity and job guarantees due to an absence of employment equity plans and the fact that internal vacancies for promotions are saturated. Evidence suggests that DsGNS believe it is important to improve MCD programmes through performance appraisals (individual career development plans) that identify individual career needs and staff's career advancement needs.

Top management lacks practical experience and knowledge in basic career planning and does not allow for effective career advancement, thus limiting organisational decision-making powers. Yearly job description reviews with superiors are not sufficient to provide professional advice, direction and support. There are no focus group discussions every month where DsGNS could voice their experiences and problems. There is a lack of two-way communication with other DsGN managers, and an absence of MCD planning, DsGN's career development agreements and procurement policies.

The respondents stated that top management was mainly focused on decision-making within the management of designated MCD activities, and when it came to action plans on human resources supporting employment equity, management lacked leadership competencies. When presented with different face impressions that reflected different feelings about their organisations and asked to choose the one that best depicted the feelings of most people like themselves about their organisations, their choices revealed a need to improve the quality of life of DsGNS. The first impression of NDsGNS, on the other hand, showed that they were satisfied with their organisation and felt that they had a good relationship with their superiors.

Lastly, top management identification of, evaluation of and involvement with designated MCD programmes are essential from beginning to end. Organisational strategic HRM must use every possible intellectual and conceptual skill to build top management support for MCD programmes in every phase of the development that

links the human capital building process with the business's vision and action plan. The above evidence supports the need for a new proposed MCD model that meets the strategic need for a new paradigm vision, one which complements sustainable life-long learning and forms a vital part of the organisation's culture.

6.3   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STRATEGIC HRM PROCESS

This study highlights the need to work through the strategic HRM process at a number of levels, rather than to see strategy merely as a "big picture". It examines a suitable infrastructure for managing MCD in a more strategic HRM way in the organisation. It is proposed that it be created out of

- the strategic HRM process itself, which involves four major elements:
  - o   overall strategy;
  - o   tools and process;
  - o   people reality; and
  - o   platforms for discussions;
- designated management's assessment of MCD potentials;
- the identification of scarce skills in management and the development of competencies;
- HRM for the MCD process and workshop activities; and
- mentoring/coaching and top management commitment and support.

This study also examines and discusses various models for implementing and managing MCD processes within the unique setting of the South African automotive sector. DsGN career advancement activities can also be utilised for effective human capital development for managerial functions. Eight main recommendations emanating from this research can be made for improved MCD. These recommendations are listed below and arebriefly discussed in an attempt to enhance HRD activities:

6.3.1   Top management support, commitment and endorsement for linking designated MCD to the organisational mission statement

Top management need not be involved directly in the day-to-day activities of MCD programmes, but they must be involved in MCD design for competitive advantage.

They must also be committed to the mission and direction of the programme. Five key steps in complete support can be identified, and endorsements of each phase are essential. The form of top management involvement can vary. The goal throughout these phases is to secure the visible support of the top management guiding team so that people in the organisation can recognise that support is available.

- *Step One: Increase urgency for a procedure and establish MCD policy guidance*

  A policy on MCD must guide the company in terms of the implementation of the career plans of its designated managers and ensure that the company is entitled to claim for the different grants and reimbursements against Skills Development levies. Drawing up and managing the policies must include clear contractual arrangements such as bursaries for expensive training and development, or overseas training. The transfer of knowledge to other employees within the company should be encouraged.

- *Step Two: Build up the guiding MCD linkages to the strategic HRM/Business plan*

  Determining the need for MCD is the first and most important step in the process of evaluating the return-on-investment of a career plan. It is essential to establish an in-company MCD forum for consultation with regard to the required competency development levels of designated managers for the general effectiveness of MCD functions, achievement of the strategic objectives, MCD design, and delivery of a workplace skills plan which is aligned to the business plan.

- *Step Three: Establish a sound vision of competency model building for designated MCD*

  Top managers must be closely involved in the MCD programme, be the forces behind it, and spokespersons for it. The MCD mission statement itself has to have a central theme, be brief and easily understandable, and should use simple language. The MCD vision and model-building activities for top managers must include the following:
    o talks with designated managers about the MCD programme;
    o an MCD conference with staff/service providers/automotive stakeholders/ tertiary institutes (invitation to participate on the programme);

- o a video/DVD covering the MCD mission for designated managers;
- o the formulation of the MCD programme in consultation with the MCD advisory forum;
- o branding of the MCD programme; and
- o integration of the MCD programme with performance appraisals (individual development plans) and strategic HRM planning.

- ▪ *Step Four: Ensure buy-in during the MCD implementation phase*

  During this phase, when the MCD idea moves from the drawing board into reality, a high level of top management support is of the greatest importance. In orchestrating the participation of top managers during implementation, trust is built and willingness to share is developed from the inception of the designated MCD programme. Top management involvement in activities during the MCD implementation phase can be achieved by

  - o briefing the managers on the MCD programmes;
  - o participation by top management/service providers in MCD workshops and seminars;
  - o top managers' acting as formal mentors;
  - o designated managers' listening to top management presentations and making recommendations;
  - o the Chief Executive Officer, HRM Officer, Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Officer and Workplace Forum Officer's forming part of the advisory MCD committee to resolve difficulties with the programme;
  - o the Chief Executive Officer/Top Management's sitting on the panels to answer questions on the corporate mission and objectives being met; and
  - o documenting the internal MCD programme kick-off process for future assessment and for recording the company's visual success stories.

  Other ways to promote this high level of involvement and to help top managers work on their own careers to manage the MCD process are to arrange for participation in coaching skills development sessions with outside consultants and for participation in professional seminars to develop these internal support programmes at prestigious institutions.

▪ *Step Five: Implement ongoing MCD programme assessment/evaluation*

These processes must build in accountability and responsibility from the launching of the MCD programme to the last phase of the programme. To build up management support for this process from the very beginning, the importance of the way things are transformed (visual recordings of the MCD phases as a basis for future reference) must be emphasised. Such data is also required for comparison, so that practical changes for the programme can be suggested, appropriate assistance can be given to other departments contemplating similar programmes, and effective discussion about the final results can be possible. Top management evaluation activities should include

o demanding pre- and post-programme measures in line with equity plan reports;

o redesigning rewards and procedures to reinforce the MCD goals;

o tracking designated MCD results and discussion at forum level;

o integrating the MCD data base with existing organisational overall performance statistics; and

o getting feedback from managers who have participated in the MCD programme.

6.3.2   Structured strategic HRM for designated MCD policies and equity plan interventions

Employment equity plans should be seen as a separate function, where the employment equity effort should be separated entirely from strategic HRM functions. Structured strategic HRM and designated MCD policies should start with a career audit for all designated employees to determine what skills, experience and knowledge are available in the company. Where an affirmative action process is being implemented, employees should be informed beforehand and should not be told afterwards that it was a designated MCD programme. Current research indicates that Equity Employment opportunities are likely to be under-resourced in terms of expertise and time (only a short-term policy exists), whereas for the strategic HRM activities designed for MCD to be effective, a programme for life-long learning on the part of DsGNS needs to be in place. The organisation's strategic policy ability to influence and link other HRM organisational activities (such as recruitment policy, performance appraisals, succession

planning, career planning, business plans, employment equity and skills development) should be recognised and utilised as part of the designated MCD policy alignment.

6.3.3   Decentralising MCD responsibility to line managers

The HRM must assist and guide line managers to become effective career developers. Whether this is achieved will become evident from looking at previous life cycle career records. The HRM should also promote line manager involvement and commitment to the designated MCD programme design and educate line managers about the programme's benefits. Greater involvement with designated managers' key results is an area for developing performance by line managers according to HRM/MCD policies and objectives to facilitate relevant competencies. There must be a strong connection between line managers' involvement and shared responsibility with higher competency-based MCD activities and the use of individual development plan assessments. Finally, the individual line managers must be seen to be empowered, committed, able to make sound judgments and assess MCD impacts that are linked to the strategic business plan and HRM policies.

Reporting by line managers must provide the HRM focus group with information regarding monthly MCD activities and individual progress, new activities in the MCD programme, certification, achievements awarded and individual test results. Line managers should ensure that all documentation and record-keeping for all MCD programmes and processes meet the employment equity statutory and regulatory requirements and measure up to the business plan. The line manager's responsibility is to:

- assist designated managers in identifying the competency needs of the job;
- assist in identifying MCD resources;
- assist in designing, developing and implementing MCD programme activities;
- ensure maximum effort and commitment to the MCD programme;
- audit the progress of the MCD programme; and
- maintain MCD documentation and individual development plan records.

6.3.4   Mapping the complete designated MCD programme cycle for continuous assessment and improvement

The way to manage the DSGN MCD programme process is through performance management activities that improve and assess the individual's development plan for life-long learning and continuous programme improvement. This performance management process may be divided into three primary phases to monitor activities such as planning, coaching and reviewing performance. Each phase maps out the activities of the MCD programme process cycle relating to individual career performance activities. This performance management process acts as an HRM resource that provides the organisation with a systematic method to develop and maintain competent designated managers.

The system requires planning, managing and assessing the MCD plan to match the DSGN managers' goals with the competencies required to achieve the business's objectives. This MCD process for a designated manager's performance improvement and monitoring consists of three phases and is discussed briefly as follows:

- MCD: Planning – critical goals, competencies, development plan, weighing goals and competencies;
- MCD: Coaching – informal coaching, periodic results reviews, critical goals, competencies development plan; and
- MCD: Review – critical goals, competencies, development plan, overall rating, final comments, signatures.

6.3.5   Managing diversity for a sustainable business and HRM advantage

Managing employee diversity can provide opportunities to enhance organisational DSGN MCD programme performance, but poses several challenges. These challenges include resistance to change, the need for organisational policy fairness, open and honest communication, feedback sessions, retaining valued performers and maximising opportunities for all stakeholders. It is necessary to harness diversity for sustainable business by committing top managers to valuing diversity, MCD programmes, support groups, mentoring/coaching or action learning programmes, diversity audits and diversity management for responsibility and accountability.

The following recommendations are based on some of the challenges outlined in this study:

- Revisit problem decisions made to resolve employment equity-related issues with a clear policy and procedures to prevent problem incidents from occurring again.

- Increase the organisational scope to include diversity career management and competency development.

- Provide an opportunity of using an advisory forum to keep designated managers informed of the Employment Equity Act and how it relates to the Skills Development Act.

- Create awareness sessions about MCD, and its role in relation to the Employment Equity and Skills Development Acts.

- Explore other interventions that could follow on from Diversity Management Workshops. These may include
  - o an MCD programme for designated managers;
  - o teambuilding;
  - o programme for developing competencies to manage a diverse team;
  - o an emotional intelligence development programme; and
  - o implementation of an HRM strategy to ensure that the MCD programme retains strategic designated competencies.

6.3.6   A recommended MCD competency model with a strategic focus

The ideal systemic strategic MCD model, discussed in Figure 6.2 (following), was considered to be both meaningful and important from a South African perspective, given its usefulness for both Dsgn and NDsgn managers within a labour market facing high managerial skills shortages. Despite there being only limited literature available, several articles relevant to this study were found. The study focused on accelerating the pace of future Dsgn/NDsgn managers' MCD in the automotive sector in the new South Africa.

There is a need for a new paradigm which incorporates a sustainable vision for continuous life-long learning and flexible MCD strategies in order to create relevant competency skills for the South African automotive industry. This learning must be flexible in order to accommodate the diverse needs of designated managers identified

for MCD. Organisations are undergoing a tremendous technological transformation with some strategic human resources diversification, which can pose a new HRM challenge to this new MCD model (see Figure 6.2, following).

This study determines a new direction and possibilities for learning techniques to create a MCD model for implementing a strategic focus that responds to an organisation's needs. Such a focus involves top managers and D$_{SGN}$/ND$_{SGN}$ managers within existing HRM structures or in the establishment of new structures that suit the norms of the organisation. There are several steps in determining the strategic focus which require the participation of top management. The following topics should be discussed during the strategic focus session (see Figure 6.1, below):

- the purpose and use of competency models;
- the business direction and strategic business goals;
- the job competency modelling process;
- organisational core competency identification;
- a competency model format;
- the approach to implementing the MCD process; and
- the MCD plan.

Once all of the HRM activities have been identified, a plan and schedule to support the strategic MCD focus must be developed. The more involved top management is in the MCD competency development of the plan, the more likely management is to support all the activities that must take place. Such activities include

- identifying critical skills in the organisation;
- ensuring the best fit between designated management skills and the requirements of the organisation;
- providing performance measurement tools and support materials for designated managers to assess themselves and determine MCD targets; and
- providing support and structure for designated manager/senior manager career discussions.

A powerful component proposed for designated MCD is the action learning model (Thomson *et al*. 2001). This involves hands-on, practical exercises or activities where participants have to solve problems, perform tasks or achieve results, often within a

certain time frame. These activities may take the form of a simulation that is very similar to normal work activities. The concepts, skills and relevance of the exercise are often discussed after the exercise and arise out of the direct experience of the participants rather than an intellectual process. The MCD course must create several experimental exercises for managers to develop their own theory and guidelines for team dynamics and team building. Action learning is a more extended version of this approach, in that teams are organised to complete a workplace project over several months. The team helps each member and the total group learns as the project proceeds.

This model can thus become part of the working framework of analysis. It is presented in its most simple form in Figure 6.1 (overleaf), which essentially reflects a circular flowchart in the form of a clock, consisting of the various dimensions of designated management. It also provides a convenient MCD process mapping, as elaborated on in Figure 6.2 (following). These dimensions are the following:

- the **context** of management development, which becomes some of the main inputs from the external and internal structural and cultural environment and various aspects of wider organisational strategy outside management development;
- the **policy and responsibilities** in terms of which management development operates within the organisation business strategy, structure and responsibilities;
- the **practice** of management development, which can be split into two parts (first, there is the internal process, usually in the form of a development cycle, which is the mapping of the designated management development **process;** in addition, there are outputs in the form of methods and amounts of management development reported in-company job rotation, job observation, learning curve experiences doing the job, mentoring and job coaching);
- the impact of management development, which also represents its **outcome** (this is strategic assessments of designated management development and practical approaches to the evaluation of management development activities).
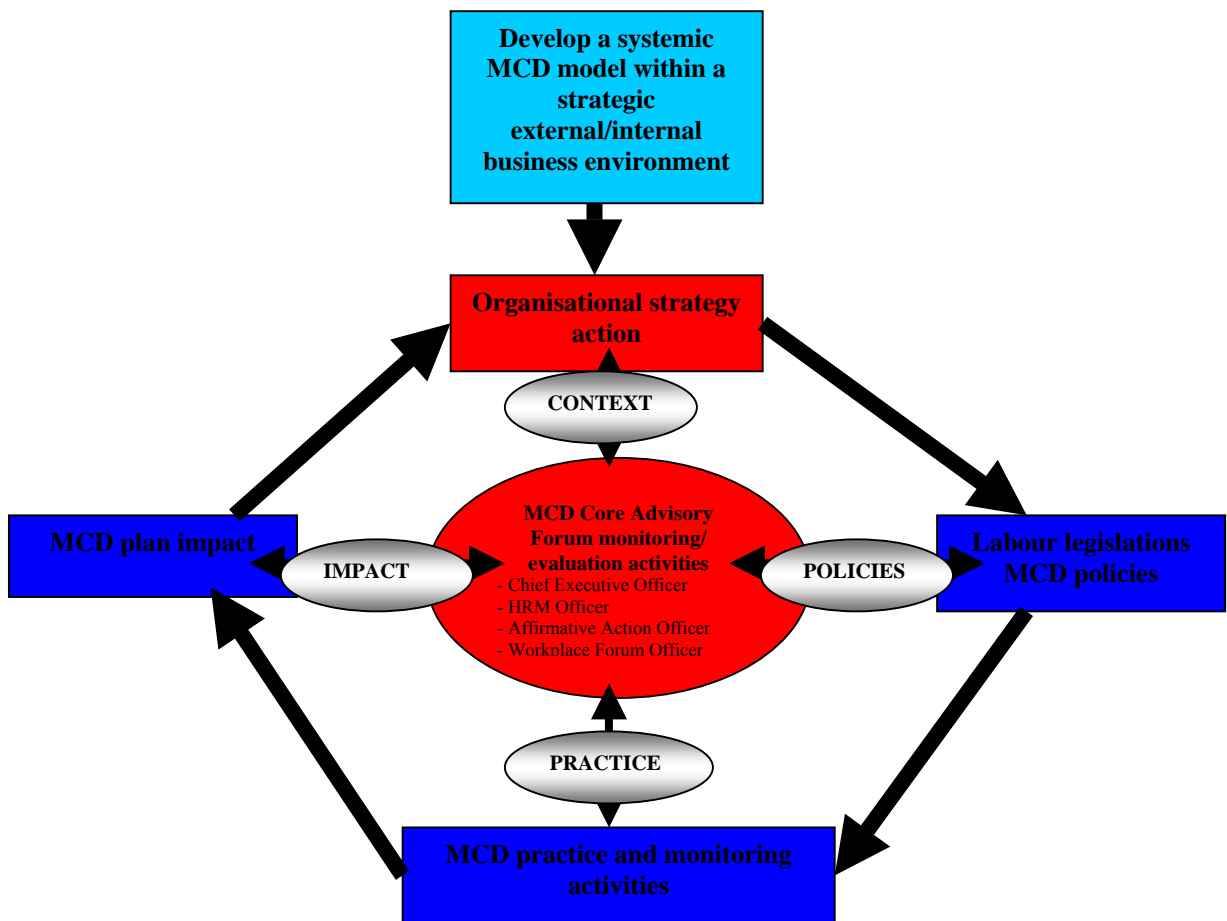
Figure 6.1:   **A summary of an MCD working model within the Core Advisory Forum**

SYSTEMIC STRATEGIC HRM AND POLICY
(see 3.6.2)

Management career development Plan

Organisational strategic action formulation (see 3.6.3)
- Vision/Mission statement
- Strategic business plan and objectives
- Implementation processes: workplace monitoring forum on equity on selection and competencies redeployment/effective employment equity timeframes/top management commitment.

Labour legislation forming company's realignment

IMPACT

POLICIES

CONTEXT

Roadmap for MCD impact (see 3.6.5)
- Scarce resources development
- Career-pathing and development of needs analysis
- Identify talent for development
- Management training
- Career planning
- Succession planning
- Replacement planning
- Leadership development
- Career change management
- Interactive socialisation
- Management education
- Performance management
- Rules and procedures
- Negotiation forums
- Conflict resolution
- Labour relations management
- Performance contracts
- Performance appraisals/improvement.

Core advisory forum monitoring/evaluation EE
(see 3.6.10)
- Chief Executive Officer
- HRM Officer
- Affirmative Action Officer
- Workplace Forum Officer

Realignment and EE/ Personnel policies and administration (see 3.6.6)
- Govt legislation
- Labour Relations Act (LRA)
- Employment/disciplinary codes
- Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plans on career policies
- Black empowerment
- Staff incentives
- Study assistance schemes

Strategic HRM Division (see 3.6.4)
- HRM Strategy
- Career-pathing and development
- Manager development policy
- Affirmative action policy
- Skills development strategy

PRACTICE

External environment: macro-variables
(see 3.6.9)
- Labour market signals
- External stakeholders
- Leadership assessment and dev.
- Economic/social
- Political/legal/govt. policies
- Technological
- Competencies inventory
- Multinationals/global business economy/ sector structure and growth
- Culture/climate development

HRM function focus & HRM activities (see 3.6.7)
- Planning/recruitment/selection
- Competency assessment
- Competencies broken into training components
- Formal HR constitution
- Individual/team training needs analysis/Training programmes
- Skilling, reskilling & multiskilling
- National Qualifications Framework (training linked to industry)
- Remuneration and reward structures
- Performance incentives
- Flexible work practices
- Social responsibility
- Industrial relations dynamics

MCD strategies/programmes activities (see 3.6.8)
- Management roadmap on the job training methods
- Job rotation/ Assessment
- Mentoring/coaching
- Managing diversity/culture
- Talent inventories
- Intercultural communication
- Skill-based diversity training
- Career-pathing (milestones, competencies)
- Succession planning (KRAs)
- Individual development plan
- Career-planning workshops

External environment: monitoring (inputs) (see 3.6.11)
- Department of Labour
- MERSETA's Chambers
- CCMA
- Affirmative Action/Equity Skills
- Organisational networks
- Boundary management
- Conflict management
- SAQA/ETQA
- Downsizing/retrenchments
- Trade Unions
- HRM Strategic Failure indicators

: Indicates communication flow, feedback and review between strategic/external/macro/core monitoring processes.

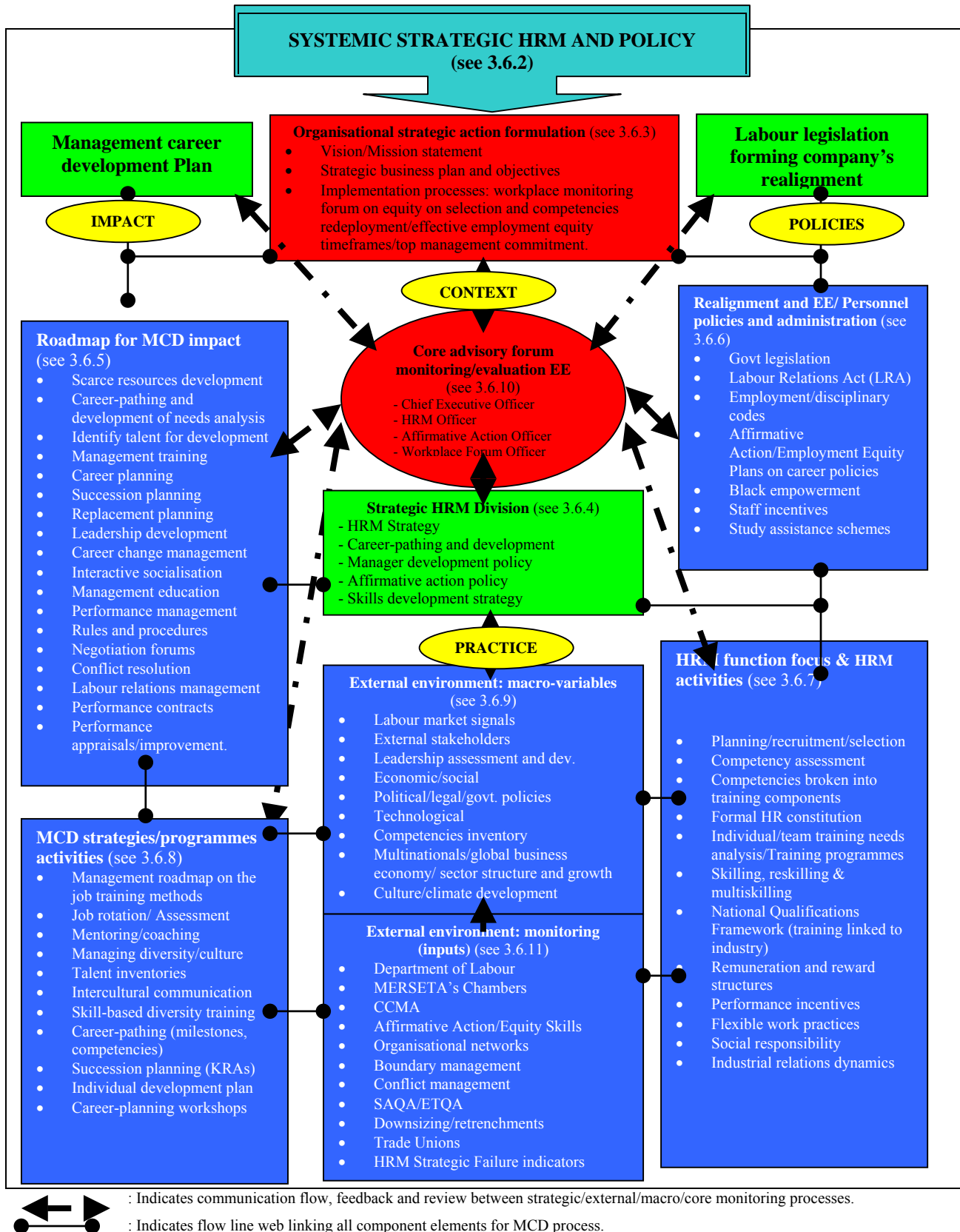: Indicates flow line web linking all component elements for MCD process.

Figure 6.2: A proposed detailed formulated strategic model for designated MCD

(adapted from Thomson *et al.*, 2001:31)

6.3.7   Suggestions for future research

In Table 6.1 (below) some of the key elements of the MCD process meet and create new competency development challenges, which it lists as a source for organisations' competitive market advantages and MCD should be linked closely to the National Sector Educational Training Authorities (SETAs). The table further illustrates a great fundamental change from the 20th century to the 21st century organisation. The biggest argument offered against the need for transformation is that organisations can succeed, with incremental change, on adopting a future 21st century MCD learnership to get there fast enough (that is, within a structure, system and culture).

Table 6.1: Illustration of the key elements recommended in developing a 21st century MCD learnership

Time frames	Past	Present	21st century
Organisational key elements and dynamics	Traditional competencies	Learning transformation	Strategic HRM for change
1. Candidates	Classroom/Listener	Employee	Learner
2. Competency training design	Event	Curriculum	Continuous process
3. Career development intentions	Knowledge	Wisdom (based on trial and error)	Action learning
4. Service providers	Specialists	Generalist	Involvement of all stakeholders or partners
5. Project focus	Style	Content	Process/outcomes/projects
6. Development centres	Tertiary Educational Institutes	In-house training facilities	Anywhere

This evolution of managerial learnership development must include a growing commitment to continuous learning that shares the common goal of seeing training as a process of "life-long learning rather than as a place to get trained" (Kotter, 1996:25).

This model further illustrates in (see Table 6.1) that the paradigm of learnership development has evolved dramatically over the past few years, and that participants are expected not just to listen to information presented by experts, but also to put that information to work by engaging in case study discussions, debating recommendations or project alternatives, and sometimes in making presentations based on their conclusions. Kotter (1996) reveals that during the learning transformation period, these assignments were frequently related to a business case that had little connection to candidates' situations in operational activities. However, it was hoped that candidates

resolving their current workplace problems or working toward project outcomes in similar situations would present possible solutions.

In the evolving new world of future strategic HRM competency development, 21st century MCD understanding devotes a significant amount of time to demonstrating designated managers' ability to apply concepts to real challenges through some form of action learning initiatives in the real world. When managerial informal learning is made practical, interest and motivation increases. The end result in a MCD learnership programme is then for the participant to become more dedicated, measurable and effective. Therefore participants can mobilise the power of strategic HRM to facilitate designated managers' growth and career development to

- promote economic empowerment for all, especially black people, workers, people with a disability, women and youths;
- eradicate poverty and address a legacy of underdevelopment;
- strategically engage and position HRM in the global economy and ensure competitive advantage by introducing relevant skills and competencies;
- promote and mobilise new investment into business expansion that creates recruitment opportunities for more designated managers.

6.3.8 Using an advisory forum to build MCD participation, support and feedback

It is important to establish support throughout the organisation for MCD programmes before they are implemented. One of the best ways to ensure the necessary enthusiasm and participation is by forming an advisory group. This advisory committee, linked to the strategic HRM, can play an important role in defining the present system and its needs (see the proposed model in Chapter Three). This forum can also establish a sophisticated and effective process for evaluating the progress of designated managers towards meeting employment equity career planning objectives. Advisory groups are also useful in determining new directions and in setting new MCD visions and goals. The members can also identify line managers and key players within the MCD activities and keep human resources professionals as consultants rather than as advocates. In general, advisory groups become increasingly helpful and involved as MCD

programmes enter the design, strategic planning and implementation phases. The following are some of the benefits that can result from Core Advisory Forum activities:

- An advisory group allows top management to demonstrate its support and commitment to designated MCD programmes.

- The advisory group signals top management's belief in collaboration and teamwork, which may be a new message for changing organisations and can help meet new competency needs.

- Advisory groups also give top managers the opportunity to observe the performance and capabilities of designated managers (measured against internal policies and procedures).

- Top managers can gauge their potential to handle increased diversity, complexity and new pressures to sustain groupings of non-designated and designated MCD programmes.

Among the benefits to middle/lower managers and others in the designated groups are opportunities to enrich and expand their jobs, to develop an increased appreciation for the complexity of the organisation, for how to produce employment equity/affirmative action change and introduce new designated MCD interventions. Lastly, the members of the Core Advisory Forum will have exposure to other functional areas and people, building stronger MCD resource networks and new career opportunities. In so doing, it plays a strategic role as prescribed by legislation. For example, if an organisation chooses to develop a formal mentoring programme as one of its techniques to advance designated managers, three conditions are required to increase its chances of success, according to Kram and Bragar (1992):

- The programme should clearly be linked to the business strategy and existing HRM policies and practices so as to increase the chances that potential participants and senior management will accept and actively support the programme.

- Core components of the programme (objectives, guidelines, training and education, communication strategy, monitoring and evaluation and co-ordination) should be designed for effectiveness rather than expediency.

- Voluntary participation and flexible guidelines are critical to business. Therefore the HRM strategy system is critical for the implementation and encouragement of support for designated MCD programmes.

The MCD action plan specifies the HRM intervention strategy, specifying the objective of each change activity, as well as who will be involved, who is responsible, and when the activity will be completed. Implementation of the action plan involves carrying out each step in the organisational HRM intervention strategy. The top management should continually confer with the Core Advisory Forum members of the HRM strategic system to review results, get feedback and make appropriate adjustments. They should establish an internal auditing and reporting system with respect to the programme and activities linked to the organisational HRM strategies, with an underlying statement of the importance of employment equity policies. Lastly, they should develop support for affirmative action, both inside and outside the organisation, protect the designated groups (the underrepresented) in any area, and develop timetables and goals in order to achieve equality (Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000).

6.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample data retrieved from the South African automotive workplace reveals high structural security in terms of "intellectual property barriers" due to the nature of business trading within the multi-nationals and parent companies' competitive marketing strategies. The responses from NDSGN and DSGN managers also differed markedly in approach:

- South African automotive organisations are highly protective and closed business environments that are solely dependent on the multi-national parent companies for direction. Therefore barriers exist to sharing intellectual managerial properties, technical competencies and marketing competitive factors.

- The DSGNS indicated their frustration about the Employment Equity Act's failure to obtain workplace equity. The NDSGNS felt that the Affirmative Action Act is targeted against them and exhibited a low level of support for in-house employment equity programmes. Leon (2003), the leader of the Democratic Alliance, has stated that the problem is not that employment equity policies are not being implemented, but that they are designed to fail. These policies do not address the core of the problem, namely the lack of opportunities and great shortage of designated managerial skills. Khoza (2002) reported that employment equity is not properly implemented and western competency models of managerial leadership are undermining Africa's ability to achieve its goals.

- A few respondents could not be reached, as they were on leave.

- The cut-off period for all questionnaire returns was two months and even though this was extended, some companies refused to participate, despite repeated attempts at follow-up.

- A complaint often voiced by the respondents was that they were constantly inundated with mailed questionnaires throughout the year from university students engaged in research.

- The existence of the automotive sector depends on a weak South African currency, and the Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP) that attracts business for export incentives and on addressing the shortage of designated managerial skills as the only avenues for sustainable business in South Africa.

- Constant change in the workplace makes career planning more difficult. Only well-defined designated MCD processes can provide guidance in short-term career planning.

Lastly, the overall sample results from the total designated lower/middle management respondents are satisfactory and reasonably represent the organisations and sample quota coverage was achieved.