



THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ON THE VISION OF GROWTH AT A PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Leadership studies have gained traction in the 21st century as scholars, statesmen and organisations seek to unravel this abstract yet tangible notion. The study seeks to ascertain the impact leadership has on organisational growth particularly at a pharmaceutical company in South Africa. Guided by the comprehensive literature on leadership the researcher embarks on unravelling the various aspects of business upon which leadership imprints. With the end purpose in mind, leaders need to determine what is required to achieve these goals and still remain current in a highly competitive market. Data for the study is obtained through a quantitative assessment offered to all the employees at the company. Major findings highlight areas where management can improve in order to ensure a competitive advantage and solidify the company's position as a market leader on the continent of Africa.

Key Words: leadership, organizational goals

1. INTRODUCTION

Emerging market economies has attracted interest from researchers as well as Multinational Companies (MNC's) (Luo, 2003; London and Hart, 2004). Emerging markets (EM) offers exceptional growth opportunities for MNC's originating from developed countries and thus will be the primary strategic focus in the near future (Arnold and Quelch, 1998). Emerging economies enhanced global trade in excess of eight percent annually in 2011 and 2012. The four

major emerging economies in the world, Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICs), generate about 18% of international trade. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), estimates that by the year 2035 the gross domestic product (GDP) of emerging markets will surpass that of all currently established markets (Ghauri, Hadjikhani, Elg, 2012). Although EM's prospects are promising, it remains challenging due to macroeconomic factors (Hoskisson, Eden, Lau, and Wright, 2000). Recent global developments have made way for other emerging markets such as Turkey and South Africa to have an increased share of global Gross National Product (GNP) (Lehrer and Delaunay, 2009:126). EM's area coverage exceeds 30% of the earth's surface and is home to about 60% of the global population (Cavusgil, Ghauri and Akcal, 2013). Sub-Saharan Africa has eleven percent of the global population and twenty-four percent of the global disease burden. However less than one percent of the global health expenditure is allocated to it (World Bank 2008). Theories regarding management, strategy and marketing, which are the benchmark in the world today have largely been developed and researched in Western firms and markets. Advanced economies have had systematic and incremental growth for more than 200 years to reach the current stage. Considering the specificities of emerging markets, it is worth questioning whether the prevailing theories and models may be completely applicable when dealing with emerging markets. The political and cultural climates of various emerging markets may require unique approaches and ways of communicating brand value (Oliver and Holzinger, 2008). It is of utmost importance that MNCs adapt their strategies accordingly in order to be effective in EM's and this will require clear and effective leadership. Leaders have a mandate to identify and resolve challenges for all internal and external stakeholders. This relates to increased confidence from customers, employee productivity and advanced competencies and capabilities which ultimately results in seamless processes (Ulrich, Smallwood, 2004). Effective leadership is both an art and a science especially in EM's. Increased competition, new technologies, changing organisational structures, a diverse workforce, and the constant pace of change all contribute to the complexities of leading. Leading in the health care industry brings unique challenges (Schwartz and Pogge2000). This study sets out to establish the impact that leadership has upon the growth of an organisation in an emerging market context.

1.1 Background

The company is currently the biggest, In-vitro diagnostic (IVD) company, worldwide. IVD can be defined as the systems used as well as all reagents that is needed to generate a result which could be used to prevent, cure, or treat diseases in the human body. IVD is the term used for diagnostic tests performed on humans (Food and Drug Administration, 21 CFR 809.3).

1.2 Problem Statement

Due to the slowdown of the established markets, it has become imperative to invest in Emerging Markets to ensure the survival of the organisation. However the company in South Africa faces challenges in doing business in EM such as:

- Lack of infrastructure on customer sites

- Retaining skilled employees
- Maintaining affordability for Government while still remaining profitable

The differences in local private and public healthcare. Targets for growth have been set at 10% in the emerging market segment within five years. The purpose of the study is to highlight the impact of leadership on the vision of growth at the company in South Africa.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate the impact of leadership on the vision of growth at the company in South Africa, as well as make recommendations on how management can promote a vision of growth amongst employees through leadership. This study will examine the intangible effects which leadership brings to the fore in protecting the credibility of the organisation amongst internal and external stakeholders, and articulating a compelling strategy of growth in product innovation and geographic expansion.

1.4 Research Questions

The questions that will be addressed in the study are:

- How do employees perceive the current performance of the company?
- Do employees understand the company's growth strategy?
- Are employees willing to subscribe to the growth strategy?
- What recommendations can be made in order to promote the vision of growth amongst employees through leadership?
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1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is intended to highlight the impact of leadership on the vision of growth at the company and reasons for organisational growth, corporate leadership roles, transformational leadership theory as well as suggesting a relevant strategy. A cross-sectional view of the current situation leadership and vision for growth for the company will be established. The perception, understanding and willingness to subscribe to the growth strategy will be established and recommendations can be given to the leadership of the company on how to further promote the vision and need for growth. Although the company is at the forefront of health care in the world as well as South Africa, an organisation that is not determined to grow and chooses to rely on past success will eventually lose market share due to the nature and intensity of competition in emerging markets. The study will draw on leadership theory in a context that can benefit organisational leaders in becoming more effective in leading their various organisations in order to grow the organisation. This will be a learning paradigm as it extends the knowledge base of leadership and the impact that it has on organisational growth.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Strategies for organisational growth

Kotler (1991) describes strategic planning as an alignment between the organisation's objectives set by management and the resources at hand. This would involve shaping the organisation's

products and services in the context of the current market in order to produce satisfactory profit and growth. Internal Growth consists of expansion through product development, market development and expanding the line of products. Other forms of expansion include;

- Market penetration strategy – selling existing products to existing markets. The company may reduce prices, increase promotional activities, and improve distribution networks.
- Market development strategy – selling existing products to new markets. Aimed at reaching new customer markets in new geographic areas.
- Product development strategy – making modifications to a product that is existing in order to add value to the customers.

Diversification: Allows the company to enter new divisions of business which are diverse to the current operations. Vertical diversification/ integration - products and service that are complimentary to the existing business. The purpose is to improve profitability and marketing of the organization. Horizontal diversification – the addition of associate products to the current product line. A company may decide on producing air conditioners whilst manufacturing refrigerators. Concentric diversification – an extreme form of horizontal integration. The company manufactures diagnostic instruments and reagents for a range of tests ranging from AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, cancers, various blood tests and diabetes testing. Conglomerate diversification – when a company diversifies into business which is unrelated both in terms of technology and marketing. At the company all of the internal growth strategies are in effect.

External Growth Strategy: consists of a number of strategies such as foreign collaboration and joint ventures, amalgamations and mergers and acquisitions.

Mergers and Acquisitions – complimentary to diversification strategies. Organisations seek growth by acquiring other technological expertise and investment opportunities. Mergers promise synergy which sum is greater than the combined value of the merger (Shelton, Hall and Darling, 2003:313). Ansoff (1965) differentiates between market and product dimensions of organisation growth. Ansoff's theory has four strategies: market penetration, market and product diversification and diversification. However Fligstein of 1990 generated a more comprehensive model namely: market penetration or market development, internationalization, vertical integration and diversification of the resource base. Market penetration refers to the strategy of intensifying sales volumes in the existing business at the same time benefiting from savings in operations due to economies of scale. Penetration strategy focuses on developing more customers in the same type of market with minimal modifications and technology advancement. This strategy works in an emerging market situation but to continue in this strategy will result in intense competition as the market reaches maturity (Gerybatze, Stephan 2003). Long term growth can therefore only be achieved with the expansion of the businesses activities and geographical regions. This strategy is integral to the company's growth strategy. In the diagnostic industry MNCs have shown a deployment all strategies mentioned by Fligstein in effort to grow which has been largely successful.

2.2 Market leader versus follower

Giligan and Wilson (2009) defines market leaders as the firm that has the largest market share in terms of pricing, distribution coverage, platform for advertising, technological 'know how' and rate of new product introductions. A market leader dictates the pace of competition and is the benchmark for other companies in the industry. The company is a market leader in IVD throughout the world. A distinction is made between a market leader based on size and thought leadership based upon innovation and various patterns of thinking.

To remain a market leader, an organisation must:

- Expand the market: find ways to increase demand
- Protect the current market share: achieved through effective strategy.
- Expand market share: increase market share even if the current size of the market does not change.

Market leaders are seen as pioneers or first movers by scholars with the primary goal being to create new market demand, introduce new products and be a technological leader in the market. Technology or market uncertainty occurs when the first mover best market position. Late movers may gain an advantage concerning their brands based on research or mistakes of the pioneers company. Misguided interests of managers can erode the dominant position of the first mover by opting for mergers as an alternative to growth instead of developing new technologies. This is typically seen in the mature phase of the organisation's life cycle (Mueller 1997, 841). Government interference is a threat to first-movers as some governments might fear the monopolistic dominance of these firms. They may create a competitor to counteract this fear. This is seen worldwide in the airline industry (Hill, 2002, 262-266).

2.3 Employer of choice

A good reputation attracts customer, improves the performance of employees and assists in talent retention. Employer reputation is the perception employee have of the organisation (Hepburn 2005). The advantages of having a good reputation for an organisation are:

- An excellent reputation
- Attraction and retention of skilled talent
- Diverse workforce
- Increased employee satisfaction
- Better customer satisfaction
- Improved competitiveness
- Long-term tenacity (Hepburn 2005).

Hepburn of (2005) argues that Human Resource (HR) department plays an integral role in developing an organisation into an employer of choice. The process consists of examining the current position of the organisation through conducting interviews and focus groups to ascertain current perception of employees, building a strong brand to position the organisation as a first choice employer, retesting of the brand through feedback mechanisms, aligning HR goals with company strategy and measure current performance through Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).Dimensions for developing an employee of choice are according to the Deloitte, Best

Company to Work For Survey 2009. Companies should excel in the following areas: leadership, performance management, management style, HR policies, change management, communication, diversity and transformation, procedures (work/life balance), innovation, job satisfaction, recognition, rewards, training and development, values and culture (Deloitte Best Company to Work For Survey 2009).

2.4 Organisational capabilities

Organisational capabilities have a direct bearing on the performance of the organisation. These are the skills, abilities and expertise of the work force as a direct result of the human resource investment (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2003). Leaders form organisations that turn strategy into sustained actions. When opinion is gathered concerning admired companies, names such as Apple, Starbucks, Intel or Google springs to mind, but few people give thought to how these companies set their strategies. What consumers admire about these companies are their capabilities and ability to innovate and respond to a dynamic consumer environment (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2004).

2.5 Definition of organisational capabilities

Organisational capabilities (OC), are identified with the know-how of a firm in performing particular problem-specific activities (Dosi, Nelson and Winter 2000). OC is closely linked to the knowledge-based view of the firm. An outcome of organisational capabilities approach is that “idiosyncratic capabilities” which persistently shape corporate performance (Dosi, Faillo and Marengo, 2003). Capabilities of the organisation create identity which later shapes the culture of the company.

2.6 Types of organisational capabilities

Ulrich and Smallwood (2004) identify thirteen typical organisational capabilities that may be present in a successful organisation. Individual companies tend to excel in one or two of these capabilities while remaining on par with other industries in the other capabilities mentioned. It is when the organisation lags behind in capabilities that dysfunction and competitive disadvantage occurs. Typical Organisational Capabilities adapted from Ulrich and Smallwood (2004) are:

- Talent refers to the ability of the organisation to attract, motivate and retain competent and committed people.
- Speed refers to the ability of implementing important changes fast.
- Shared Mindset / Culture – refers to the consistent and positive images experienced by customer and employees when interacting with the organisation.
- Accountability refers to the competence at disciplines that result in high performance.
- Collaboration refers to the ability to work regardless of obstacles to ensure both efficiency and leverage.
- Learning – generating and generalizing ideas with impact by implementing technology effectively.

- Leadership – embedding leaders in various positions in the organisation who models the leadership brand ensuring success planning.
- Customer Connection – refers to building enduring relationship of trust with key customers.
- Innovation – refers to the implementation of products, administration, strategy, geographies, brand identity and customer service.
- Strategic Unity – refers to articulating the vision and involving employees in the strategic plan.
- Efficiency – refers to cost management.
- Risk – refers to managing risks by attending to disruptions, predictability and variance.
- Social Responsibility – refers to sustainability by managing the carbon footprint, philanthropy of the organisation.

2.7 Developing core competencies

According to Grant (1996), core competencies are the resources and capabilities that create competitive edge over its rivals. Core competencies are a result of unstable market conditions due to innovation, diversity of competitors and the relentless technological changes of the current industry rather than long term strategy (Serfontein, 2010). McCauley and Van Velsor (2004) argue that: “Leaders develop skills and perspectives that enable them to facilitate the accomplishment of work in organisational systems”. It is apparent that core organisational capabilities exist in order to create a competitive advantage. Companies invest in hardware technology as a capability however scholars believe that for an organisation to be successful, other human capabilities should also be in effect (Dosi, Nelson and Winter 2000). Other scholars believe in differentiating between technological and organisational competencies (Coriat and Weinstein 2002).

2.8 Organisational culture

Organisational culture examines the indispensable and unique qualities namely; behaviours, attitudes, norms and values and decision making processes which is at the heart of the organisation. Researchers revealed that the organisations effectiveness improves when managers concentrate on the cultural aspect of the organisation (Collins and Porras, 1997; Schein, 2010). Leaders are architects of group cultures (Schein, 2010). In this section organisational culture concepts will be examined, drawing on the extensive knowledge obtained from empirical studies and cultural dimensions of Hofstede and Trompenaars.

2.9 Definition of organisational culture

According to Edward H. Schein, one of the foremost authorities of organisational culture, fundamental assumptions constitute the core and most important aspect of organisational culture. His formal definition: “A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 1992). Greenberg and Baron of 1997 states

that; “it is a cognitive framework consisting of attitudes, values, behavioural norms and expectations”.

2.10 Organisational culture conceptualized

Organisational culture is based on basic or shared assumptions. The assumptions are based on beliefs, norms, values and rules which employees identify with (Schein, 2004). These norms and values are impacted by the language people speak, customs, traditions and rituals that is employed in many situations (Trice and Beyer, 1993). According to Edward Schein of 2004, we identify four characteristics of group culture:

1. Structural Stability: this implies that the culture values are shared amongst members of the group, it is stable, it defines the group and gives it meaning.
2. Depth: the culture is embedded, unconscious, intangible and less visible.
3. Breadth: once the culture has been established, it governs all aspects of the group.
4. Patterning and Integration: culture implies that the rituals, climate, values and behaviours tie together into a coherent whole. Patterning and integration stems from our need to be sensible and orderly.
- 5.

2.11 Hofstede’s cultural dimensions

Geert Hofstede (2001), created a greater understanding concerning the relationship between organisational behaviour and cultural factors. Hofstede’s work is worth mentioning since no other study concerning cultural dimensions has been done at this scale. It is held in high regard (Bond, 2002; Hofstede, 1998). He started his research in 1980, the study comprised of a 116 000 questionnaires, 60 000 respondents from more than 50 countries. Hofstede worked for IBM then known as Hermes, between 1967 and 1978, to obtain this research. Hofstede examined differences between national cultures through four dimensions: Power distance, Individualism, Masculinity vs. Femininity and Uncertainty Avoidance.

2.12 Trompenaar’s cultural dimensions

Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner identify seven cultural dimensions. These are shown in the decision making processes of the participants who face certain dilemmas, making a direct translation to the culture of the participant (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). One of the biggest critiques of Trompenaars’ and Hampden-Turners’ work is Geert Hofstede. According to Hofstede concerns were raised concerning the data analysis and interpretation. Hofstede argues that the study is to polarized, countries or organisations can have both sides of the dimension scale, the sample size is too small sitting only 9 countries which are not enough to make a viable cross- country extrapolation. Hofstede also argues that Trompenaars’ confuses the individual analysis with the country analysis (Hofstede, 1996).

2.13 Impact of leadership on organisational culture

Schein (1992) argues that leadership is the creators, managers and at times the demolishers of group culture. According to Schein “the only thing of importance that leaders do is create and manage culture” and “the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work within

culture”. The management of culture is imperative for the organisation’s long-term success. Knowing when to sustain the current culture or change counterproductive culture is a key leadership and management competency (Schein 1992). It is a common belief that corporate culture is related to organisational strategy especially in the area of implementation of strategy (Choe, 1993; Rashid and Anantharaman, 1997). Researchers found that organisational effectiveness improves when leaders place an emphasis on culture (Collins and Porras, 1997; Schein, 2004). Schein (2010) further points out that leaders are creators and architects of group culture and are responsible with speeding up cultural change if the culture becomes dysfunctional.

2.14 Introduction to the concept of leadership

Increased importance is on leadership and the specific leadership qualities which are needed to function in today’s business environment. Organisations may be misled to think that financial success is the only target worth achieving due to the pressures of modern business (Serfontein, 2010). Some scholars believe that the biggest impediment hindering managers from becoming great leaders is the absence of vision. Vision assists leaders in making smart choices and decisions are made with the end result in mind (Prokesch, 1997). Leadership is vital to the organisation in that it effects all aspects of the organisation from the culture that it creates, the capabilities of the organisation and operational structure, the strategies chosen for organisational growth to the stakeholders which the organisation effects. Strong leadership restores confidence in the organisation from an investors perspective due to a well define vision and this further insures the wellbeing of the organisation from a shareholders perspective in the ability to attract capital investment.

2.15 Definitions of leadership

The definition of leadership is difficult to quantify and many writers have tried to over simply the concept. The most traditional definition of leadership is an interpersonal influence directed toward the achievement of a goal or goals. The formal definition widely accepted is the process of social influence in which a person gather the support and help of others in the accomplishment of a common task” and “the action of leading an organisation or a group of people.” (Kruse, 2013). Freiberg and Freiberg (1996) suggest that leadership is based on mutually influencing and learning of leaders and collaborators in pursuit of a common goal. The mutual influencing of parties is then aimed at effecting meaningful and intended change.

Grint (2005) states that “it only requires the good follower to do nothing for leadership to fail”. Howell and Shamir (2005) conclude that followers have the power to empower the leader, influence their decisions and could ultimately determine the success or failure of this relationship.

2.16 Theories of leadership

2.16.1 Trait theories

In the 1920’s and 1930’s leadership research tried to identify the attributes that differentiate leaders from non-leaders. These theories were content theories focusing on “what an effective

leader is”, not on “how to effectively lead”. Trait approach originated from the “Great Man” theory in order to identify the key characteristics of a successful leader. Emphasis was placed on physical attribute such as young to middle age, energetic, tall and handsome. Social backgrounds traits include being educated at the “right” schools, socially popular and upwardly mobile. Other social characteristics include being charismatic, tactful, popular cooperative, charming and diplomatic. Personality traits include being self-confident, emotionally stable, adaptable and assertive. Task-related characteristics include being driven to excel, accepting responsibility, having initiative and being results-oriented. There is little consistency in the results of the various trait studies, however some traits do appear more frequently than others including: technical skill, social skill, friendliness, group task supportiveness, task motivation, application to task, emotional control, administrative skill, general charisma and intelligence (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano and Dennison, 2003). Trait theory does not make a judgement as to whether these leaders are born with these attributes or whether they can be learnt, no two leaders are alike and no leader possess all the attributes mentioned. Each leader develops the traits needed in a particular situation therefore situational conditions were taken into account (Bolden *et al.*, 2003).

2.16.2 Behavioural theories

The behavioural theorist is concerned with the identification of behavioural styles of leadership. The theory is built on the premise that people could be taught to be better leaders. Douglas McGregor described Theory X and Theory Y in his book, *The Human Side of Enterprise*. The respective theories represent the various ways in which leaders view employees. Theory X managers believe that employees are remuneration motivated, lazy, uncooperative, and have poor work habits whereas Theory Y managers believe the converse.

It can therefore be assumed that Theory X prefers an autocratic style of leadership compared to a more participative leadership style (Bolden *et al.*, 2003). Theory X emphasises control and limits the ability of employees. Theory Y, encourage integration and create a platform where the employee can pursue their personal goals in line with the organisation’s objectives.

2.16.3 Contingency or situational theories

Contingency or situational theories are concerned with matching behavioural styles to situational factors. Three respective models arose from this train of thought and extensive research has led to formulation of these models. Fred E. Fiedler’s contingency model suggests that there is no best way for managers to lead (Bolden *et al.*, 2003). The situations will dictate the styles of leadership used by managers. The solution to a managerial problem is found in the factors that brought it about. Fiedler looked at three situations that could define the condition of a managerial task:

1. Leader member relations: How well do managers and employees get along?
2. The task structure: To what degree is the job structured?
3. Position power: How much authority does the manager possess?

Managers were rated into two categories, either relationship orientated or task orientated. Task orientated managers do well when the situation has good leader – member relationships, structured with either strong or weak position power or unstructured tasks but with strong

position power. Managers with a relationship orientated approach do well in all other situations. Various situations would thus call for an adaptation of leadership (Boldenet *al.*, 2003). Task-orientated leaders thrive in positive outcome situations such as sales targets being met whereas relationship orientated leaders thrive when greater customer satisfaction is achieved. Although effective, scholars believe that the contingency theory is too complicated to have much of an impact in most leaders (Schrin and Kabanoff, 1982).

2.16.4 The Hersey-Blanchard model of leadership

The Hersey-Blanchard leadership model is also built on the premise of the situational perspective of leadership. This model suggests that the level of the maturity of subordinates determine the style of leadership.

Task Behaviour: Leaders spell out duties and responsibilities to an individual or group. One way communication is observed

Relationship Behaviour: Two-way or multi-way communication is observed providing socio-emotional support. This involves listening, facilitating, and supportive behaviours.

Maturity: Employees are self-managed and willing to assume responsibility. Employees have a varying degree of maturity dictated by the manager leadership style (Boldenet *al.*, 2003). According to Blanchard the key to the situational leadership style is found in the maturity level of the subordinate. Once this is determined a leader can either direct, coach, support or delegate.

2.16.5 Transformational leadership

Transformational Leadership was conceptualised by James McGregor Burns in 1978. Burns believed that leadership is a process not a person. Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its purist form, it has the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Only transformational leaders are capable of charting necessary new course for modern organisations because they are the masters of change (Burns, 1978). Bernard M Bass (1998) extended the work of Burns by explaining how transformational leadership could be quantified. Transformational leaders have a tremendous amount of influence on followers and are held in high esteem by their followers. It commands trust, loyalty, admiration and respect, motivating employees to exceed work expectations. This is achieved through the idealized influence or charisma which the leader invokes. Leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and Barack Obama come to mind with their natural charisma and idealized influence. The full range of transformational leadership introduces four elements namely:

Individualised Consideration: leaders attend to each followers needs assuming the role of mentor or coach. Empathy and two communications exist. The follower's individual contribution is acknowledged.

Intellectual Stimulation: the way in which the leader challenges assumptions, solicits follower's ideas and take risks. They stimulate creativity and independent thinking amongst followers approaching every obstacle as a challenge and opportunity to learn.

Inspirational Motivation: the way leaders articulate vision, with skilful, precise, engaging communication. Followers believe in the vision and are optimistic about the future.

Idealised Influence: leaders are the role models for ethical behaviour, reinforcing trust, pride and respect. As a development tool, transformational leadership has been adopted in all sectors of business, government as well as non-governmental organisations (Bass, 1998).

Transformational leaders are relevant to today's workplace due to their game changing style of leadership. The day-to-day managerial tasks are important but the transformational leader will bring organisations into futures they cannot envision. Transformational leadership will relate to sustainable competitive advantage.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Collins and Hussey (2009), research can be developed and improved by adopting a suitable methodological approach that enhances the methodological rigour of the research project. There are essentially two main research philosophies and these can overlap. These methodologies are commonly used in science as it seeks out the facts or causes of any social phenomena in a systematic way. Positivistic approaches are founded on the premise that the study of human behaviour should be conducted with the same rigor as studies conducted in the natural sciences (Collins and Hussey, 2003:52). Research can be approached in the following ways, either; quantitative or qualitative, applied or basic, deductive or inductive, descriptive or analytical. A quantitative method of research will be utilized. According to Hopkins (2008:1), quantitative research is all about quantifying relationships between variables. Quantitative research focuses on collecting numerical data and matching it across people groups (Sibanda 2009:3). Quantitative research uses experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypotheses and generalizations are the outcomes of this test. They also emphasize the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2003).

3.1 Population and sampling strategy

Sampling refers to select a percentage of the complete population. This is widely used and most common technique to obtain information regarding the phenomena of study. To obtain data from every possible group or member is known as conducting a census. It is not always necessary to conduct a census due to time, cost and accessibility constraints (Saunders, Lewis and Thorn hill, 2009). According to Saunders *et al.*, (2009) two sampling techniques prevail i.e. probability or characteristic sampling and non- probability or critical sampling. The sample size at the company was initially 150 participants of which 113 reliable responses were received.

3.2 Pilot study

The term pilot study in social science research can either refer to a feasibility study in preparation for a major study (Polit, Beck, and Hungler, 2001:467), or it could refer to a pre-testing of a research instrument (Baker 1994:182-3). A pilot study was conducted with ten subjects to determine if the proposed questions in the survey answer the research objectives. The outcome was successful as management gave suggestions to tweak questions so that they could be adequately gauged concerning the perception of their leadership.

3.3 Data analysis

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) define analysis as a process of converting data into a story and data analysis as the process of reducing large amounts of data into a condensed version so as to understand what the data represents. Research as explained by many authors (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003) is the applying of a scientific method to an existing problem. However control methods such as validity and reliability has to be applied to the data gathered in order to make it reputable.

3.4 Data quality

Research concerns the systematical collection and scrutiny of secondary data in order to answer the research question or objective (Saunders and Rojon, 2011). Data quality is the degree to which the data meets the needs of the users (Vale, 2010). Thus, it is important to introduce rigour within the data collection process to ensure repeatability and resilience to scrutiny.

Validity: Validity is the degree to which the measuring instrument actually measures what it intended to measure. **Reliability:** according to Gibbert and Ruigrok (2010:109) it is the absence of error and represents repeatable results under the same conditions. According to the Centers for Disease Control (2009) reliability is demonstrated by how similar one measurement taken is to the other. A large response rate coupled with carefully chosen words which is not ambiguous provide the bases for reliability.

3.5 Limitations of the study

The study was conducted subject to the following limitations:

- Due to the five point liker scale utilised the significant data generated was found to look more positive than it actually is. The researcher could have adopted a 4 point scale instead in order to force a decisive decision.
- Although anonymity was guaranteed, and inherent lack of trust prevailed due to the fact that the researcher was part of the population.
- As an added measure to support the quantitative research, a qualitative analysis could have been triangulated in order to rule out any uncertainty regarding positive and extremely positive answers, therefore a mixed method research could have yielded more conclusive data.
- Some questions posed may have been too socially acceptable as a result a sense of compelled compliance is experienced in fear of negative repercussions.
- The implication to the study based on the limitations could mean that the outcome looks more positive than what it really is. The data received shows that respondents marked with increased uncertainty in certain questions instead of outright disagreeing with the statement.
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3.6 Elimination of bias

In quantitative research the researcher should aim to be as objective as possible and guard against personal bias (Taylor 2005). Some steps to minimise personal bias are:

- Limit personal contact with participants.

- The uses of statically methods to disseminate information.
- Standardise the format of the questionnaire (Taylor 2005).
- The researcher has adhered to these guidelines upon collecting primary data. A standardised questionnaire was used and sent to all participants, personal contact was minimised and statically methods for disseminating numerical data was used.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethics refers to the appropriate behaviour in relation to the rights of respondents of the research. Ethics is important for conducting effective research as a result researchers are under much more scrutiny (Best and Kahn, 2006; Field and Behrman, 2004; Trimble and Fisher, 2006).The researcher made every effort to ensure that consent was granted, that the survey and interviews conducted remained anonymous so as to prevent harm to participants and the organisation. Privacy was guaranteed by having the questionnaire hosted by an external internet site. Guidelines were given stipulating length of time and procedure to follow. The survey was created in an unambiguous and clear fashion to prevent misunderstandings and to maintain data integrity.

3. RESULTS

Due to the growth strategy of the company as well as a high attrition rate most employees fall within the 1 to 5 year category. However most new applicants are between the ages of 30 to 50. In the last 3 years the company has grown the staff compliment by 50%.Employment type is an indication of the labour policy adopted at the company where most of the applicants are permanent and have access to the benefits such as medical contributions, provident or pension in some cases car allowance, fuel etc. The company has a fairly flat hierarchy with three levels to country manager.

4.1 Objective 1: perceived performance of the company

The employees have a positive perception concerning the competitiveness of the organisation. More than 97% of the employees agree with the statement confirming this. A generally positive response was received concerning the company being an employee of choice however 5 % indicated uncertainty and 3% disagree with the statement. The reason for this could be due to the dynamic environment of the diagnostic market especially in an EM setting. Twenty-two respondents indicated a measure of uncertainty over their future in the company and six respondents disagreed with the statement indicating that they may be hunting for new employment or better opportunities. However, 75% of the employees indicated that they are satisfied with the company as an employer and have no immediate plans for leaving. This implies that there are about 25% of employees who are considering to find other employment over the next five years. Generally, a very positive response was received concerning the meeting of financial targets. Considering the fact that the company has met or exceeded and in some years surpassed targets set over the last five years. This response is well justified considering that quarter one's financial report exceeded expectations.

4.2 Objective 2: employees understanding of the growth strategy

Almost 15% of respondents did not share the same positive outlook as the majority. Thirteen respondents indicated uncertainty concerning this statement. In the question pertaining to employee' confidence in management there was a 50/50 split between extremely positive and positive indicating uncertainty. Four respondents totally disagreed indicating that in general, although positive, there remains some degree of uncertainty regarding confidence in leadership. The company has recently had a change in leadership within the last year. The previous country manager had been with the company for 20 years, some senior personnel have taken up other assignments within the international group, which all could contribute to some uncertainty in leadership.

4.3 Objective 3: employee's willingness to subscribe to the growth strategy

The majority agree with that they are supportive of the vision of growth, however 45% indicates reservation. The statement concerning peer support produced much variation with more than 26% indicating that they do not share the same positive outlook as the majority of the employees. The positive rating is one of the lowest we seen so far at just over 70%. This indicates that support between peers could be addressed and that the culture of the company could be of an individualistic nature. A direct uncertainty in the statement about whether employees are encouraged to be innovative in the workplace is close to 10%. An overall positive response is close to 88% however we do notice that extreme positive is lower than the trend of other statements. This implies that employees do not totally agree with the statement and that management could improve in this area. Results also showed that employees are not certain if management really does have their best interest at heart indicating a degree of distrust in leadership. The highest degree of uncertainty is received for the statement about whether leaders inspire employees to perform better was close to 20% with more than 6% out rightly disagreeing with the statement posed. Extremely positive is also one of the lowest for this objective. An overall positive is recorded at 75%. This implies that employees do not unanimously agree with the statement. The highest extreme positive was received concerning whether tasks are performed over and above the job description. A unanimous result was received with only three respondents indicating uncertainty. The extreme positive is well correlated with the results confirming that employees feel that they are doing more than what their job description requires or that their work life balance is biased in favour of work. This could be a source of discontent and could be improved upon.

4.4 Objective 4: how the company can promote the vision of growth amongst employees through leadership

The majority agreed that management shows drive to achieve totalling 88%. A 50/50 split is observed between positive and extremely positive totalling the highest in this objective. Just over 10% do not share the same positive opinion as the majority. Most interesting evaluation of this statement concerning evidence of effective leadership from management is that the highest score for those who out rightly disagree is noticed. No other question has had this percentage on an individual scale. The uncertainty percentage and outright negative is almost proportionate. A

downward trend at extremely positive is also noticed at this statement. This implies that more employees out rightly disagree with this statement than any other statement in the questionnaire. Close to 25% do not agree that their manager recognises their achievements. Recognition for employee achievements can be improved upon.

4.5 Discussion of results

- Perceived performance of the organisation has the highest mean score. In the following questions:
- Outperforming rival competitors; employees largely agree with the statement.
- Confidence in performance as a market leader; employees are confident in the company's performance
- Gladly recommend the company as an employer of choice; employees largely agree with the statement however the second highest uncertainty in the section was noted. Due to the trend in the way respondents answered the questions more than 6% disagree with the statement
- Tenure over the next five years: close to 25% disagree indicating that they may be seeking employment elsewhere.
- Meet or exceed financial target; respondents agree with the statement
- Financially, respondents feel comfortable with the company's performance, however a quarter of respondents indicate that they may be looking for employment elsewhere.

4.6 Growth Strategy over the next five years:

- Contributor to the growth strategy; the highest uncertainty is recorded for this section. This implies that employees are not all certain that they are contributing to the growth strategy in their current function.
- Motive for growth; less employees strongly agree than agree. This indicates that employees agree but with a degree of uncertainty. This implies a degree of distrust leadership.
- Confident in leadership ability; close to half of the employees strongly agree, the others agree with a degree of uncertainty. This implies agreement with a degree of reservation.
- Reaching of financial goals; almost total confidence from employees. These finding concur with the section of perceived performance of the organisation.
- Excitement about the future of the organisation; implies that employees are confident of the future of the organisation.

4.7 Employee Engagement:

- Fully supportive of the vision; majority of employees agree with this statement.
- Management has my full support; slightly more than half of employees strongly agree with the statement. The other half of the respondents are not completely convinced, this implies a degree of reservation and uncertainty of what full support entails.
- Support from peers; second highest uncertainty is recorded for this statement. This would imply that employees disagree with this statement considering the trend of answering. This can be attributed to an individualist culture as well as the pace of the organisation and workload given to each employee.
- Going the extra mile; majority of employees strongly agree with statement.

- I often do more than what is required; the highest extremely positive percentage within the section as well as the whole study. Notable is the fact that “going the extra mile” and “often do more than what is required” scored quite high both in the section as well as in the entire study. This implies that employees might already perceive their performance as going the extra mile and doing more than what is required in their job description. This is an indication of work life balance biased in favour of work. I could be a source of discontent amongst employees.
- Management welcomes suggestions for better work efficiency; strongly positive is quite low compare to others statements, implying that the majority do not totally agree or are uncertain of this statement. This is an indication of the style of leadership in effect at the company.
- Encouraged to find innovative ways to perform job functions; a degree of uncertainty is noticed with less respondents strongly agreeing with the statement. This implies that employees are not encouraged to seek innovation but rather do what is required.
- Leadership having my best interest at heart; Uncertainty is noted. Less extremely positive results. This implies a degree of uncertainty or distrust in leadership.
- Agree with decision making; according to the results, employees are totally agreeing with this statement. The lowest strongly positive is noted over the whole study. This implies that a majority of employees do not agree with this statement.
- Inspired by leaders; based on the trend of answering, employees are not totally agreeing with this statement. Employees indicating uncertainty regarding inspiration and motivation from leadership.
- Mutual benefits of the double in five initiative; employees agree with the statement, however more than half indicates uncertainty regarding the mutual benefits.
- Leadership:
- Management showing drive to achieve; less than half strongly agrees with the statement, the rest indicates uncertainty.
- Evidence of effective leadership; more respondents show uncertainty. This implies that employees might not be.
- Competence of managers; the majority do not strongly agree. This indicates scepticism concerning competence of management.
- Recognition for achievement; respondents indicate that recognition is lacking as this scored the highest uncertainty in the section and one of the lowest extreme positive.
- Trust in decision making; the lowest outright positive is received. This implies that employees have reservations concerning how decisions are being made. This refers to competence in leadership ability.
- Value work contributions; employees feel that this also could be improved upon.
- Effort to listen and consider my opinion; this also scored one of the highest uncertainty and lowest extreme positive. This is an indication of that two communication could be improvement upon.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the respondents show uncertainty in the area of tenure over the next five years. This could be attributed to the attrition rate at the company, senior managers and key embedded leaders leaving and the dynamic pace of the daily processes. Employees feel that support between peers have room for improvement. It scored one of the lowest mean scores in the employee engagement section. This is an indication that the culture is individualistic. This could indicate fragmentation amongst the various divisions. Respondents indicated that management is not open to suggestions in improving work processes. This could be an indication that the work processes are cumbersome as seen in the longitudinal study done by the company global and this indicates that management might not be open to suggestions. A directive style of leadership may be present. Respondents indicated that innovation in job processes are not readily received or at the very least not welcomed by management. This is once again an indication of rigidity in work processes and a directive management style. As an affiliate of the company global directives are set by the global organisation which needs to be adhered to. This might be an indication that managers are either not sure which processes could or should be changed or even not sure how to change it. It could also be an indication that a learning organisation concept is not a strength in the South African affiliate. Respondents indicated a degree of distrust in management concerning the statement “leadership has my and the organisations best interest at heart”. Workplace studies in recent time have shown that employees are becoming less trusting in managers (Davis and Landa, 1999). Decision making processes directly affecting work tasks are highlighted as scoring the weakest mean in the employment engagement section. This is indicative of the style of leadership adopted, the change in organisational culture and trust in the competence of management. Inspiration, from leadership, to excel in work tasks is on the lower end of the spectrum. Scoring a mean of 3.92 in the employment engagement objective. Respondents indicate that positive re-enforcement might be welcomed. Recognition for a job well done could also be improved upon as respondents do indicate that more recognition would be welcomed. An overwhelming positive response was received concerning going the extra mile” and “I do more than what is required in my job description”. These two statements correlate well together and are highly ambiguous as it could indicate great job satisfaction or it could indicate discontent, resentment and an unbalanced work life dynamic. The correct interpretation warrants for further research. All of the statements regarding the leadership objective were flagged as having the lowest mean scores overall with the exception of “My manager shows the drive to achieve” and “My manager knows what he/she is doing”. These statements in the section deals with; trust in management, trust in decision making, adequate recognition and two way communication between managers and subordinates.

5.1 Conclusion

The objectives set throughout the study were fully met and answered by the statements posed. The objective of perceived performance of the organisation was the most positive, second to that was growth strategy understanding. The most significant findings in the primary study are that of leadership and employee trust issues.

5.2 Recommendations

In the interest of improving upon the current performance of the organisation, the following recommendations are offered:

- To mitigate turn over intention, increase the level of trust between subordinates and managers (Tan and Tan, 2000). This is achieved by improving relational trust between manager and subordinates and positively effecting the perceived support of the employee.
- Peer support is an indication of the organisational culture, more collaboration amongst peers would be welcomed.
- A negative POS can lead to a lower level of commitment and unwillingness to engage in extra roles. Perceived Organisational Support (POS) can be improved by acting in the best interests of the employee through opportunities for further training and development and unique benefits to the employee apart from remuneration. These favourable outcomes relates to improved performance, favourable attitudes and behaviours towards peers (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hitchinson and Sowa 1986).

Trust, decision making, inspiration, motivation, recognition and two way communications can all be mitigated by adopting a transformational style leadership which in turn would change the culture of the organisation positively.

5.3 Areas for further research

In order to adequately assess the impact of leadership on the vision of growth one would need to quantify the effects of good versus bad leadership. This could only be achieved through a longitudinal study of various organisations over period of time. Future studies concerning quantifying transformational leadership in a financial paradigm could be of value for future organisations seeking change.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the impact of leadership on the vision of growth of the organisation. The researcher defined what leadership is, the various styles of leadership, leading in a market leader role, how leaders can aid the organisation into becoming an employer of choice, the role that leadership plays in formulating organisational growth strategies, developing organisational capabilities to ensure competitive advantage and the impact leadership has on organisational culture in order to achieve end goal purpose.

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