Does Leadership Influence Organisational Culture: A Case Study

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for an MA in Human Resource Management
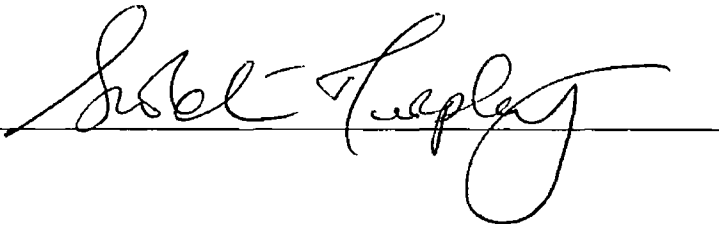
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AUTHORSHIP DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of MA in HRM, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is entitled "Does Leadership Influence Organisational Culture: A Case Study". The main objective of this dissertation it to attempt to prove the hypotheses referred to in the title – does leadership influence organisational culture?

The research takes the approach of a case study, based on the organisation in which the researcher is employed. The organisation in question is a family owned retail business with eleven department stores throughout Ireland which has been trading for over one hundred years.

The researcher chose this area of study as she believes culture plays a huge part in the running of the organisation; both positive and negative. However the literature and existing research does not give a clear understanding about how a leader can alter the culture, or indeed if this is even possible. As a result, the researcher attempted to establish whether a leader can influence culture.

The methodology used to achieve the objective was a combination of examining the secondary data available on both leadership and culture, then researching the leadership and culture in the organisation. The main research methodology chosen was a case study approach and the process was qualitative and the logic was inductive.

The main findings from the secondary data were many and varied however there was no conclusive proof in the literature as to whether leadership can influence culture.

The research from the primary data centred on identifying the culture and the leadership in the participating stores. A stratified research strategy was adopted testing the three main employment categories in the stores – Senior Management, Middle Management and Staff. The participants were able to provide the researcher with detailed information on the leaders in the store.

The literature was unable to establish whether a leader can influence culture; however it is this researcher's belief, on completion of the primary research, that a leader can have an impact on the culture of an organisation. It must be noted though that this was a study conducted on three leaders in one organisation and therefore for the hypothesis to be proved or disproved conclusively further research, on a larger scale, must be conducted.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

The researcher is employed in a large group of department stores situated throughout Ireland in 11 locations and employing just under two thousand people.

The family owned business was founded in 1900 and the family continues to own and run it. The business has flourished over the years and has experienced rapid expansion over the last twenty years. The company is run on traditional values of giving customers value for money and providing fair and reasonable employment. The management style has been paternalistic and the company enjoys the reputation of being one of the better employers in the retail trade in Ireland and has been rewarded with loyalty from the workforce many of whom have worked there all their lives. Each store is run as a separate trading company within the group and this has helped to ensure that the operation and its staff are focused on their own business.

The workforce is unionised with Mandate Trade Union representing the majority of staff both sales assistants and clerical staff. S.I.P.T.U represents the catering staff and non-sales staff employed in warehousing and physical distribution. There is a good working relationship between the company and the unions based on mutual respect.

The organisation has gone through a sustained period of change in the last three years including the closure of all but one supermarket in an effort to concentrate on the more profitable non-food business. These changes have proved difficult to implement in some stores due to the prevalent cultures. It is against this background that the researcher decided to examine the culture and the ability to influence it.

1.2   Potential Significance

Some research was carried out in the organisation last year on the topic of organisational culture, specifically dysfunctional cultures. However that research did not attempt to identify whether it was possible to manipulate the culture in an attempt to achieve organisational culture.

As previously mentioned, there is little existing research that surmises that leadership can influence culture. It is intended therefore that this research will lead to a better knowledge and understanding of the influence, if any, of leadership on culture at the workplace level and perhaps in general.

Having completed this research the researcher will have a better understanding of the culture and leadership and the impact of leadership on culture.

1.3   Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to look for the influence leadership has on culture, if any. It was firstly necessary to examine the literature pertinent to the topic.

1.4   Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to establish whether the leadership of an organisation can have an impact on the culture.

1.5   Process and Logic of the Research

The process adopted is primarily qualitative and the logic is inductive. This is because it moves from observation to the construction of an explanation. The qualitative approach is more subjective in nature and involved examining and reflecting on perceptions in order to gain an understanding of human interactions.

1.6   Outcome of the Research

This is basic research as it is making a contribution to general knowledge and theoretical understanding rather than solving a particular problem. This research is intended to contribute to a better understanding of the link between leadership and culture. It is not aimed at solving an identified problem.

1.7   Limitations of the Research

There is concern over a number of issues including:

- This is the first major research project undertaken both by the researcher and in her place of employment on the subject. This inexperience had to be overcome by proper preparation and reassurance to the organisation that it is a positive experience.
- This research is carried out in one organisation only and the findings will not be made available to other companies in the retail or wider trades. The findings will remain confidential as the company is very private in its thinking and also to protect its trading position. As a result, universal application cannot be inferred.
- The time available to the researcher is also a cause for concern.

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Before any primary research can be undertaken it is important for the researcher to look at some of secondary research available on the subject areas. There is a large amount of research on this area, as a result the researcher identified the key research; what follows is a review of the key points of this selected research.

2.2 What is Culture?

The term culture is used in a wide range of social sciences and as a result has many different meanings in many different fields. (Groeschl and Doherty, 2000). Indeed, Kroeber and Kluckholn (1952) identified 164 definitions of culture while Ajiferuke and Boddewyn state that *"culture is one of those items that defy a single all-purpose definition and there are almost as many meanings of culture as people using the term"* (Ajiferuke and Boddewyn, 1970, p154).

In the context of this research, the term culture is used to describe the phenomenon of corporate/organizational culture. It is intended therefore that only definitions applying to this type of culture will be used and that when the term culture is used in this research that it will apply to corporate/organizational culture.

Hofstede acknowledges the difficulty in attempting to reach an all-encompassing definition for culture when he said *"there is no commonly accepted language to describe a complex thing such as culture.......In the case of culture such a scientific language does not exist"* (Hofstede, 1983, p77). However, despite these acknowledged difficulties, it is the intention of the researcher to identify the more common definitions of culture and

from them extrapolate a list of the shared elements of culture for use as a definition of culture throughout this research.

Some of these more common definitions of culture are:

"A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group 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, 2004, p17)

"Culture is a technical term used by anthropologists to refer to a system for creating, sending, storing, and processing information developed by human beings, which differentiates them from other life forms" (Hall and Hall, 1990, p183)

"Culture is the holistic summation of individual community members' habitual attitudes and behaviour" (Shuster, 1994, p9)

"Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organisation from another" (Hofstede, 1991, p180)

"Culture can be defined as the set of key values, assumptions, understandings, and norms that is shared by members of an organisation and taught to new members as correct" (Duncan, 1989, p229)

Eldridge and Crombie (1974) have attempted to develop a clearer and more comprehensive definition with:

"Culture...is a characteristic of all organisations through which, at the same time, their individuality and uniqueness is expressed. The culture of an organisation refers to the unique configuration of norms, values, beliefs, ways of behaving and so on that characterize the manner in which groups and individuals combine to get things done.

The distinctiveness of a particular organisation is intimately bound up with its history and the character building effects of past decisions and past leaders. It is manifested in the folkways, mores, and the ideology to which members defer, as well as in the strategic choices made by the organisation as a whole. The individuality or cultural distinctiveness of an organisation is attained through the more or less constant exercise of choice, in all sections and levels...The character of organizational choice is one of the major manifestations of organizational culture. " (Eldridge & Crombie, 1974, p89-90)

Lundberg (1990) distills the main themes of culture and produces what he describes as an all-encompassing definition. Lundberg identifies some consensual themes of organizational culture:

* A shared, common frame of reference – this means it is largely taken for granted and is shared by a large proportion of the organization's members
* It is acquired and governing – it is socially learned and transmitted by the organisation's members and provides them with rules of how to behave in the organisation.
* It has a common psychology in that it denotes the organisation's uniqueness and contributes to its identity.
* It is enduring over time in that it can be found in most fairly stable social units that have a reasonable history.
* It is symbolic as it is manifested in observables such as language, behaviour and things
* It ultimately consists of a configuration of deeply buried valued and assumptions.
* It is modifiable but not easily.
(Lundberg, 1990)

In order to proceed further with this study it is important to outline the meaning adopted by the researcher as a definition of culture for this research. As discussed earlier, there are many differing meanings of culture in many different arenas, however for this research it is culture in the organizational setting. Even within this context of organizational culture there are many varying different definitions of culture proposed.

For this research it is understood that culture is developed over time and that it is constantly evolving as it is influenced by the changing norms, values and beliefs of a group. To this end, the researcher believes that culture is a variable within an organisation that can be changed. Interestingly, as culture is influenced by the norms of the group it also influences the norms of the group. It is an inherent, underlying part of group norms and so becomes a socializing mechanism for new members of the group. It also impacts on group members' perceptions and as a result how they process information.

It is the area of influence that is at the heart of this research, particularly with respect to the question of whether, as the researcher hypothesizes, that culture can be influenced by members of the group or outsiders. Interestingly, influence is also part of the many definitions of leadership and is central to this research so influence will be explored after culture and leadership are completed.

2.3   Dimensions of Culture

While definitions of culture are important, they do not give a complete insight into what culture actually is. Furnham (1997) proposes that another way of understanding corporate culture is to make various distinctions or to spell out the dimensions underlying the culture. It is to this end that an exploration of some of the theories of culture now takes place.

The model proposed by Schein (2004) helps to organize the pieces of the cultural puzzle. He proposes that culture exists at different levels within an organisation, namely artifacts, espoused beliefs and values and underlying assumptions. These levels are arranged according to their visibility.

- **Artifacts** are visible and physical. Some examples include dress codes, physical settings, signs and banners.

- **Espoused values** are audible and spoken and include justifications, goals, philosophies, saying, slogans and strategies. They are included in stories of organizational heroes and myths. They can even be found in greetings and small talk.

- It is easy to assume that artifacts and espoused values are reflective of the **underlying assumptions** but this is often not the case. Instead several artifacts and espoused values are often 'wish lists' that represent a desired culture that can be quite different from the true culture. This difference between artifacts and espoused values and underlying assumptions can be called *"cultural misalignment"* (Buch and Wetzel, 2001, p41)

These values become so deeply embedded in a culture that members of the organisation may not be consciously aware of them. (Daft, 2002)

Deal and Kennedy (1982) similarly say that culture has a number of specific elements, namely shared values, specific rites and rituals and serves as a primary means of communication.

2.4   Categorising Culture

In order to compare and contrast cultures, it is important to be able to classify cultures. Many researchers have attempted to classify and codify culture, however it is interesting to note that nearly all result in a description of four types of culture.

Hofstede (1980) proposed four dimensions of cultural orientation, through the information he collected through his work in IBM:

- Power Distance:
  This refers to the extent to which people accept or tolerate unequal distribution of power. It is often used to qualify the nature of dependence relationships. Where power

distance is small, parties can readily approach each other and communication is open and frank. Where power distance is large, the opposite occurs.

- Uncertainty Avoidance

This refers to the manner and extent to which a party perceives threats from uncertain or unknown situations. Strong uncertainty avoidance can be manifested by strong needs for predictability, policy statements and written rules; it can also be characterized by closed communication climates. Weak uncertainty avoidance will have the opposite needs and characteristics.

- Individualism v Collectivism

Individualism characterizes contexts where desired relational ties are very loose, rather than tight knit. People are generally expected to develop and support their own interests. In contrast, collectivism describes contexts where people are expected to integrate into strong, cohesive in-groups. These groups provide protection and resources in exchange for uncompromised loyalty.

- Masculinity

Masculine contexts tend to emphasize assertiveness, recognition and competition. In contrast, feminine contexts tend to emphasize modesty, nurturing, cooperation and concern for relationships.

- Long-Term Orientation

Hofstede added a fifth dimension, namely Long-Term Orientation, also known as Confucian Dynamism. Long-term orientation refers to contexts that emphasize rewards, perseverance and thrift. Short-term orientation characterizes contexts with a marked focus on the near past and present, with respect to tradition, reputation and social obligations.

Denison (2000) proposes that effective organisations demonstrate high levels of four cultural traits that reflect the ability to balance the dynamic tension between the need for stability and the need for flexibility.

- Involvement is defined as the organisations' ability to develop employees' skills, build ownership and create a team-based workforce that are committed to success.

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■ Consistency refers to an organisation where employees' behaviours are rooted in a set of core values where both leaders and followers can reach agreement and where different units can work together.

■ Mission reflects the organisation's ability to define a meaningful long-term direction; this provides employees with a sense of focus and a common vision for the future.

■ Adaptability refers to the organisations' ability to translate the demands of the business environment into positive action.

Goffee and Jones (1998) identified four forms of organizational cultures based on two kinds of relationships, namely sociability and solidarity:

■ Networked Organisation:

The networked organisation is characterized by high sociability and low solidarity. Goffee and Jones suggest that this is one of the most sustainable cultures. The strengths of this type of culture are the characteristics of kindness and friendliness which allow trust and loyalty to develop. As a result of the high levels of social interaction within the organisation effective team working and knowledge-sharing flourish. However, the weaknesses associated with this type of culture are the very friendliness that is at its core. This friendliness may mean that managers can turn a blind eye to poor performance or may find it difficult to deal with poor performers who are perceived as 'friends'. Also as a result of this friendliness the best compromise rather than the best solution is found. Inefficiencies are also rife as there is no systematic knowledge transfer rather 'chats' occur. Finally, the close relationships that characterize this culture can lead to cliques and gossiping, which in turn may lead to information being shared selectively and agreements being reached outside the proper channels.

- Mercenary Organisation:

The mercenary organisation is characterized by high solidarity and low sociability. The mindset of this type of organisation is centered around the work. There is a shared desire in this organisation to win and everyone agrees about their goals. These organisations are very flat structures as unnecessary layers will have been eliminated. However in this search for perfection and high achievement mistakes are not tolerated and so creativity is hindered. This ruthless organisation treats people as indispensable.

- Fragmented Organisation:

The fragmented organisation scores low on both sociability and solidarity and is best suited to organisations where there is little need for members to co-ordinate. Members of this organisation are judged on their productivity rather than on their time spent at work. The ethic of the organisation is so strong that it eventually results in selfishness and arrogance and so loses sight of the collective goal.

- Communal Organisation:

This type of organisation is characterized with high sociability and high solidarity. Goffee and Jones suggest that this organisation combines the best of the fragmented and the mercenary organisations. These 'best bits' are:

  o Friendliness towards each other and passion for work.

  o Commitment and loyalty along with energy focused on targets and results

  o Creativity and open-mindedness together with productivity and competition

This organisation is usually a start up organisation but can be difficult to sustain.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) produced a taxonomy of corporate culture which, like Goffee and Jones, outlined four types of culture, namely:

- The Tough-guy macho culture can be seen where high-risk taking occurs and individualism is preferred. High risk, high gain philosophies abound where heroes are survivors who win high stakes. This type of culture can result in short-termism, immaturity and distrust.

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- The Work hard-play hard culture encourages people to maintain a high level of activity but the activity is mainly low risk. Success comes with persistence so it is rewarded. This culture is very much customer centered which results in heroes who are friendly, carousing and super-sales people. Problems associated with this type of culture include quality being sacrificed for quantity and high energy enthusiasts drifting into cynicism when the quick-fix existence loses its meaning.

- The Bet-Your-Company culture companies are often ponderous, deliberate companies where good ideas are given a proper chance to show success. The culture is a high-risk, slow feedback existence with less pressure than the preceding cultures. Heroes in this type of organisation can cope with long-term ambiguity, respect authority and technical competence. As a result these organisation move with slowness and so are vulnerable to short-term fluctuations and cash-flow problems.

- The Process culture is the classic bureaucracy so heroes are orderly, punctual and attend to detail. Special language and jargon abound, as do rituals. However, there is a lot of 'self-defence' with members trying to protect themselves before anything or anyone else.

Williams et al (1989) suggested another four-type model specifically power, role, task and people cultures.

- Power-orientated organisations attempt to dominate their external environment; this is reflected in their internal environment/culture where those who are powerful within the organisation strive to maintain absolute control over subordinates. The law of the jungle often prevails as members struggle for personal advantage.

- Role-oriented organisations can be thought of as bureaucracies. Within this organisation there is an emphasis on legality, legitimacy and responsibility and there is a strong emphasis on hierarchy and status. Stability and respectability are valued as much as competence.

- In task-oriented organisations, structures, functions and activities are all evaluated in terms of their contributions to the organisations goals; nothing is allowed to get in the

way of tasks being completed. As a result, authority is based on appropriate knowledge and competence and emphasis is placed on speed and flexibility.

- The people-oriented organisation exists in the main to serve the needs of its members. Individuals are expected to influence each other through example and helpfulness

The final classification of culture to be offered is that of **Graves (1986).** Again, it is four-fold:

- A Barbarian culture is anti-bureaucratic and rejects procedures and formality with made up of workaholics and mavericks. Leadership is charismatic and groups are unstable. Members are hostile in defeat and disdainful of a settled life.

- In the Monarchical culture there is contempt for bureaucracy and planning yet this organisation is heavily dependent on the leader. Loyalty is highly praised so promotion comes from within, this can result in varying qualities of leadership.

- The Presidential (democratic) culture has an elected leader who embodies the needs and aspirations of people in the organisation. Yet he/she is sustained by subordinates. These cultures tend to be reactive rather than proactive.

- Finally, the Pharaonic culture thrives on order, status and ritual. It tends to be a 'false' culture where individualism is accepted but the system must be maintained.

Implied in many authors' observations, most notably that of Deal and Kennedy (1982) is that different sectors of the economy often share similar cultures; this is far from the case. From the researcher's experience in the retail trade it is too simplistic to say that all retailers have the same culture, indeed as part of the primary research it can be seen that cultures differ in the same retailer.

The classifications discussed are generally based on opposite ends of continuums, but again it must be argued that there are many other points between the ends that reflect various different combinations of the opposing classifications.

With so many different models offering various classifications and in an attempt to develop one model from all of the above, the researcher offers the table below and associated commentary as in indication of cultural taxonomies from her point of view:

	Hofstede	Denison	Goffee & Jones	Deal & Kennedy	Williams et el	Graves
1	Power Distance (Equal v Unequal)				Power-Oriented (Unequal)	
2	Uncertainty Avoidance (Predictability v Un-predictability)	Consistency (Predictabili ty)		Process Culture (Predictability)	Role-oriented (Predictability) Task-oriented (Predictability)	Barbarian (Un-predictability) Pharaonic (Predictability)
3	Individualism v Collectivism	Involvement (Collective)	Communal (Collective) Networked (Collective) Fragmented (Individual)		People-oriented (Collective)	Monarchical (Collective) Pharaonic (Individual)
4	Masculinity v Feminity		Mercenary (Masculine)	Tough Guy Macho (Masculine)		
5	Orientation (Long Term v Short Term)	Mission (Long Term)		Tough Guy Macho (Short Term) Bet your company (Long Term) Work Hard Play Hard (Long and Short Term)		Presidential (Short term)
6		Adaptability				

On analysis, the researcher concludes that in essence there are six clear elements that make up culture. These scales are:

1. Distribution of Power

   From completely equal distribution of power to a dictatorship.

2. Predictability

   From complete need for predictability to a disdain for predictability

3. Collectivism

   This ranges from collectivism to individualism

4. Masculinity

   This is taken from Hofstede's theory. The continuum runs from masculinity (assertiveness, recognition, competitiveness) to feminity (modesty, nurturing, cooperation)

5. Time Orientation

   This stretches from a long term orientation to a short term orientation.

6. The final element is that of adaptability. However, it is the researcher's contention that this element depends on the combination of the other five, in that it depends on whether the combination of the other five allows the organisation to be adaptive both internally and externally.

2.5   The Importance of Culture to the Organisation.

Organisation culture can influence how people set personal and professional goals, perform tasks and administer resources to achieve them. It also affects the way in which people consciously and subconsciously think, make decisions and ultimately the way in which they perceive, feel and act. (Hansen and Wernerfelt 1989, Schein 1990)

Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Peters and Waterman (1982) have suggested that culture can exert huge influence particularly in areas such as performance and commitment.

It also gives employees a sense of identity and generates a commitment to a set of values and ways of doing things. It serves two important tasks in that it socialises members so that they know how to integrate with each other (internal integration) and helps the organisation adjust to the external environment (external adaptation). (Daft, 2002).

Internal integration occurs as the culture of an organisation helps members to develop a collective identity which helps them to learn how to work together effectively. This happens as a result of the culture imprinting a set of unwritten rules onto employees. (Daft, 2002)

External adaptation takes place as the culture determines how the organisation deals with outsiders, but correct external adaptation only takes place if the culture embodies the values and assumptions needed by the organisation to succeed in the environment it operates in. (Daft, 2002).

In general it can be argued that culture relates to performance, although many authors are of the opinion that there is no directly compelling evidence for a clear and direct link between culture and performance and surprising even that there is no good evidence of the sort of impact culture has on fundamental processes like motivation.

However, as can be seen the issue of influence arises again. In this context it is about how culture can influence various outcomes as listed above. The literature describes many positive aspects of what culture can impact on within an organisation, thus culture is one of the most important variables that an organisation can 'use' to achieve its desired outcomes. And so, the influence leadership can have on culture is significant.

As can be seen there is not much literature available on the importance of culture to the organisation but it is the researchers belief that culture can have a huge impact on an organisation and its performance. This is because culture, as can be seen from the definitions, is a mechanism that socialises new members into an organisation and 'controls' existing members' behaviour, if a leader can have power over this culture then he or she can drive member's behaviours in the way that is best for the organisation.

2.6   Culture – Summary

As can be seen there are vast amounts of literature pertaining to culture. The definitions provided by the many researchers in the area are quite similar however, this researcher is adopting both Schein's (2004) and Lundberg's (1990) definitions of culture as it is believed that these combined offer the most comprehensive definition for this study.

Additionally, the researcher developed a cultural taxonomy in an effort to combine the many and varied ones that have been produced. It is intended to use this at a later stage as a method of refining the primary research.

Finally, the importance of culture to the organisation was discussed, albeit briefly. It is because of the importance of culture that was one of the reasons behind the researcher choosing it as an area of study.

2.7   What is Leadership?

Researchers have offered over 350 definitions of the term leadership (Daft, 2002). Defining leadership is difficult as the nature of leadership itself is complex. Indeed, one researcher has said that leadership *"is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth"* (Mac Gregor Burns, 1978, p2). However, it is important, in order to attempt to answer the research question, that an all-encompassing definition is found. It is intended to identify the more common definitions of the term leadership and from that devise the all-encompassing definition that will be inferred whenever the term leadership is used in this research paper.

Daft (2002) uses Rost's (1993) definition to underpin his discussions on leadership. He states that *"Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes."* (Daft, 2002, pg5)

He continues by developing on the key elements in the definition by saying that leadership involves a number of different factors including:

- **Influence** refers to the relationship between people, this relationship is not passive. Daft continues by saying that influence of this type is multidirectional and non-coercive. Leadership is also reciprocal as superiors influence followers but followers can also influence their superiors.

- **Changes** are required by all parties in the relationship. Leadership involves creating change not keeping things as they are. It must be noted that these changes are not just initiated or dictated by the leader rather they reflect the **purposes** that leaders and followers share, as an important part of leadership is using their influence to bring all followers around to a common vision.
- **People** are the main concern of leadership therefore leadership is a people activity that occurs among people – it is not something that is done to people.

It must be noted that the researcher does not share the view that both leaders and followers share common purposes. It is the researcher's experience that the majority of the time changes are initiated because of a leader's wishes rather that than being initiated because they are what all parties want.

2.8   Theories of Leadership

A lot of the research relating to leadership can be divided into 3 groupings:
1. the trait approach,
2. the behavioural/functional perspective and
3. the situational/contingency view.

While an overview of these theories needs to take place it must be noted that none of these approaches by itself can fully explain leadership. However, they can lead to a more complete understanding of leadership than definitions can give.

2.8.1   Trait Theories

These theories are the earliest approaches to leadership and focus on the personal characteristics and attributes that were believed make good leaders. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) summarized some of these traits as:

- Drive
- A desire to lead
- Honesty and Integrity
- Self-Confidence
- Resonance
- Cognitive Ability
- Knowledge of the business.

They suggest that although these traits do not assure successful leadership they do help leaders acquire the skills necessary to be a successful leader.

Nadler (1988) would suggest that successful leaders not only embody these traits but also have high levels of emotional intelligence while Rubin (2000) suggests that leaders with traits will show key leader behaviours.

Ulrich et al (1999) propose that a limitation of looking at traits of leadership alone is that they are only a partial view of leadership. They suggest that it is not enough to have these traits but a successful leader must connect these traits to desired results and outcomes. Therefore a successful leader must demonstrate these traits but also demonstrate the results required. They suggest that the key attributes associated with their definition of effective leadership are setting direction, demonstrating personal character, mobilizing individual commitment and engendering organisational capabilities.

2.8.2 Behavioural Approach

Behavioural, otherwise known as functional theories, seem to have developed from the trait theories in that they appear to suggest that leaders need to demonstrate certain traits as per the trait theories but they also need to demonstrate key behaviours. These behaviours differ from researcher to researcher.

Lippett and White (1947) propose three different leadership styles and outlined how each influence performance and employee satisfaction. These three different leadership styles were:

- Autocratic – leading by command
- Democratic – leading through group input and decision making
- Laissez-faire – leading through very little leader participation to allow complete group freedom.

Their study found that the autocratic leader's group produced the most by a small amount but that the democratic leader's group produced higher quality goods and had higher levels of employee satisfaction. The laissez-faire group fared the worst.

These behavioural studies were continued by both the Ohio State University and the University of Michigan. The Ohio State studies developed two dimensions of leadership centering on how leaders perceived their own styles and how their styles were perceived by their followers. These two dimensions were described as initiating structure and consideration. Those leaders who scored highly on initiating structure were the type who told their followers what to do and how to do it while leaders who scored high on consideration focused more on their followers needs. The researchers at Ohio State put forward that those leaders who scored high on initiating structure and low on consideration were viewed as authoritarian while those who were high on consideration and low on initiating structure were viewed as democratic. They also suggest that it is possible for a leader to be high on both. It was found in the course of their research that consideration for others (democratic) was the most effective in terms of performance. Interestingly, they found that the leaders who were high on both did not lead to high performance.

The University of Michigan studies were also concerned with two different leadership orientations namely a leaning towards employees or towards production. This is similar to Blake and Mouton's (1964) Managerial Grid which developed two dimensions namely

concern for people and concern for production. They combined these orientations to form the following leadership styles:

- Team Management style (high on both concerns) was viewed as the most effective leadership style.
- Authority-Compliance Management (high concern for production, low concern for people). Leaders who operate in this style are very controlling.
- Country-Club Management (high concern for people, low concern for people) leaders operate on the opposite of the authority-compliance leaders as they are highly accommodating of their followers, sometimes at the expense of production.
- Impoverished leaders have low concern for both people and production.
- Middle of the road leaders have, as the name suggests, some concern for people and some concern for production.

What is interesting about the Leadership Grid is that it refers to a way of thinking rather than traits that a leader should possess. It follows therefore that this can be affected by training. This is contrary to a trait way of thinking.

The researcher believes that rather than being two separate theories of leadership, the trait theories and the behavioural theories are interlinked in that required leadership behaviours can be taught and learned but only if the leader possess the traits as outlined. Therefore, they are not, as much of the research lays down, two very differing theories rather they are two stage of one theory. Stage One is that a successful leader must possess the traits as outlined in the theories but can only become a successful leader if they are taught the behaviours as outlined in Stage Two. However, both stages are interlinked as a leader can only be taught the behaviours required at Stage Two if the possess the necessary traits. Essentially, to answer the age old debate of 'are leaders born or made', this researcher believes that leaders are born but successful leaders are moulded/made.

Likert (1961) developed another way to look at leadership again from a behavioural perspective; he called this theory the Linking Pin Theory. He proposed that leaders are not just leaders they are also subordinates, that is leaders of one group and subordinates of another. As a result, effective leadership is about exerting influence not just on followers but also on leaders and peers. The key to this, according to Likert, is to have a good understanding of bosses and oneself and use this to develop a supportive working relationship. Johnson and Frohman (1989) say that the ability to represent a group upwards and to manage other relationships is a key dimension of management and leadership.

Goleman (2000) develops on behaviours that leaders should display with six leadership styles:

- Visionary style – this focuses on getting followers to move toward shared dreams/goals. It is most effective when organisational change is occurring and when this change needs clear direction. Leaders who operate in this style will display self-confidence and empathy.
- Coaching style – this leader connects the organisation's goals with what people want. This leader is also concerned with developing people and through each individual's improvement developing organisation performance. Leaders of this style display empathy, self-awareness and a willingness to help others.
- Affiliative style – this creates accord in the organisation by ensuring that people have a connection with each other. This is done through creating attachments with each other and to the organisation. The leaders who adopt this style again display empathy along with displaying communication skills and an ability to build relationships.
- Democratic style – a leader displaying this style will gain commitment through consensus and gaining buy-in. He/She will value input from employees. This leader will display collaborative and communication skills.
- Pacesetting – this leader will demand excellence through setting challenging goals for followers, the outcome of this is good results but may also result in high stress. This

leader is conscientious, has a drive for achievement and possesses a high degree of initiative.

- Commanding – this final style demands compliance with company objectives. Goleman recommends that this should only be used in a crisis. This draws on the leader's initiative, drive and self-control.

Goleman propounds that leaders should not just display one style, rather they should be able to draw on a style suitable to the prevailing situation. This sees a move towards contingency theories which will be discussed shortly.

On review of the behavioural approaches to leadership it is illustrated quite easily that there are many differences between them, however it most also be noted that some common themes are available. Namely:

- There are 2 main roles of leadership: a focus on tasks and production and a focus on people and support.
- With the exception of Goleman, these theories suggest a one best way approach.

This one best way has been criticized by many as too simplistic (Fiedler and Chemers (1974)) and merely a change from a list of traits to a list of behaviours. (Daft, 2002). The researcher agrees with Fiedler and Chemers as while one leadership approach may be suitable to one situation, it will take another set of behaviours to deal with a contrasting situation.

2.8.3 Contingency Theories

Daft suggests that *"contingency theories combine the trait approach and the behavioural/functional theories to suggest that the most effective leaders are those individuals who can adapt their styles to the demands of a particular situation, group, and their own personal values."* (Daft, 2002, pp 207)

The classic contingency theory was proposed by Fiedler. He suggested that effective leadership is based on the fit between a leader's style and what he terms favourableness of the situation. In essence, this means that there are three variables that can have an impact on the leader's ability to influence a group namely the personal relationships the leader has developed with members of the group, the clearness, or otherwise, of the task the group is expected to undertake and the degree of power the leader has over the group.

Fiedler suggested that, depending on the favourableness of the situation, different leadership styles should be utilised. He suggested that when the situation was either very favourable or very weak then the best leadership style to use was authoritarian. Where the situation was somewhat favourable, the best leadership style to adopt democratic.

House and Mitchell (1974) developed another contingency approach, the Path-Goal Theory. The leader attempts to ensure that a subordinate has a clear path to a particular. This clear path is developed through various skills, such as motivation, clarification, coaching etc, depending on the subordinate.

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) further developed the contingency approach by developing on the Ohio State Studies. They put forward that there are two dimensions of leadership behaviour: task and relationship (what the Ohio studies would refer to as initiating structure and consideration). These two dimensions form a grid and therefore four possible leadership styles. But they further develop on the Ohio studies by suggesting what leadership style should be used in each of the four quadrants/situations:

- In a High Task, Low Relationship environment the leader should adopt a telling style that is giving specific instructions and closely monitoring staff and their performance.
- In a High Task, High Relationship environment the leader should adopt a selling style whereby he/she explains decisions to all concerned and allows time for clarification.
- In a High Relationship, Low Task environment, a participation style should be adopted, in this environment the leader should share ideas and facilitate in decision making.

- In a Low Relationship, Low Task environment the leader delegates responsibility for decisions and the implementation of same.

Vroom and Yetton (1973) approach the contingency theory through an examination of leader behaviour and group participation in decision making. They attempt to address on the type and level of participation that should be used in different situations. They propose five different leadership decision styles:

- AI: The leader solves the problem/makes the decision alone using whatever information is available at the time.
- AII: The leader acquires the information required from subordinates and then makes the decision alone based in this information.
- CI: The leader shares the problem with individual subordinates, but does not bring them together as a group; he/she then makes the decision alone using this information.
- CII: The leader shares the problems with the subordinates as a group and then makes the decision alone.
- GII: The leader shares the problems with the subordinates as a group and reaches consensus the group on the final decision. The leader does not attempt to influence the group.

They further develop the model to give a choice of various styles for the differing situations so that the leader can use an appropriate decision-making style taking into account the various contingencies.

The various writers purport that a leader will be able to choose the right leadership style to display/to use. However, this researcher believes that the leader's choice of style will not only be contingent on the situation but will also be contingent on the traits they possess and the behaviours they have learned, either formally or informally through exposure to different cultures. The contingency theories offered by Fiedler and others state that a leader's behaviour should be contingent on the situation but this researcher believes that a leader's behaviour is also contingent on their experiences. The behaviour

they apply to a situation rather than being the 'best' approach to a situation will in fact be the 'best approach available to them as a result of their experiences.

2.8.4 Attribution Theory

A further theory relating to leadership that has not yet been discussed is that of attribution theory. (Calder, 1977). This links to many discussions on motivation and perception. In essence, should a subordinate have an idea of what makes a good or bad leader and a person displays these then the subordinate automatically assumes that this person is a good or bad leader. In other words, if a subordinate associates certain outcomes with a good leader and these outcomes takes place then the subordinate places the title of 'good leader' on that persons head even if he/she had no influence on the outcomes.

2.9   Transformational Leadership

The discussion thus far has covered the leader as directly overseeing the activities and behaviours of subordinates. However, a leader's responsibilities are much broader than this. There has been much debate on transformational and transactional leadership. Transactional leadership has been the basis of discussion so far but a brief outline of transformational basis needs to take place.

Rather than being concerned with supervision, the transformational leader is concerned with vision and inspiration. Tichy and Devanna (1986) identified characteristics that transformational leaders display that differentiates them from transactional leaders. These characteristics include:

- Identification as a change agent – transformational leaders are seen to make a difference, but the ideas that keep the organisation innovative are theirs, they are not simply implementing change that someone else in the organisation has proposed.

- Courage and Outspokenness – transformational leaders take risks and are willing to challenge the status quo. They can deal with painful realities and do not bury their head in the sand in difficult situations. They help their followers to act similarly.

- Belief in people – rather than adopting an authoritative style, transformational leaders attempt to empower others.

- Value-driven – transformational leaders hold a set of values and exhibit behaviours that reflect these values.

- Lifelong learning – transformational leaders are continuously learning and developing. It is as a result of this that they view failures as learning experiences. They also encourage this attitude in others as they understand the importance of lifelong learning.

- Transformational leaders have the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty and so can survive and succeed in a constantly changing world.

- Transformational leaders are visionaries in that they create and implement the right vision for the organisation.

Interestingly Gardner (1986) uses the term transformational leader tag to distinguish between management and leadership. He proposes that transactional leaders are in essence routine managers while transformational leaders are leader managers. He argues that these leader managers are characterized by long-term orientations, forming priorities on the basis of present and future needs of employees and the organisation. They also have an appreciation for the 'bigger picture' and not being consumed by detail.

Bass and Avolio (1990) suggest that transformational leaders demonstrate at least four complementary competencies namely,
1. charismatic leadership,
2. inspirational leadership,
3. intellectual stimulation and
4. individual consideration.

Charismatic leaders are identified with and emulated by their followers. They are respected, trusted and earn commitment. They also set behaviour and performance standards that are often taken up by their followers.

Inspirational leaders have some characteristics in common with charismatic leaders; however the degree to which followers respect, trust and commit to them is contingent upon the degree to which their followers identify with them. This identification is critical as this type of leadership depends largely on followers' sensitivity to emotional appeals and mutual commitment to achieving common goals.

Intellectual stimulation is used by leaders to encourage followers to consider newer, more effective methods of thinking, acting and performing. It is often concerned with motivating followers to reconsider their traditional habits. To achieve this, followers are encouraged to think independently and resolve problems creatively.

Individual consideration is characterized by providing followers with opportunities to fulfill needs for learning and self-enhancement.

To sum, it would seem that the researchers in this area believe that transactional methods are regarded as the instruments of managers while transformational methods are seen as the instruments of leaders.

2.10   Characteristics of Successful Leaders

Having discussed in brief the various theories of leadership, the characteristics of a successful leader must now be identified.

Hogan et al (1994) contend that measures of personality have been shown to correlate with effective leaders. They suggest that the big-five model of personality also covers the same factors that apply to effective leaders. So, in effect, the five broad dimensions

in the big-five model of personality are also personality factors that can be seen to apply to effective leaders. These are:

- Urgency
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Emotional Stability
- Intellect

Bennis (1989) said that leaders are people who know what they want and why they want it and have the skills to communicate it and get buy-in. Lappas (1996) argues that this is what distinguishes exceptional leaders from average leaders.

However, it is Fulmer and Wagner (1999) who completed the most comprehensive listing of, what is in effect, a listing of traits and behaviours that can be linked back to the traits and behavioural theories and which they believe that successful leaders display. They identified twenty leadership talents that they group into four main categories:

- Direction:
  The leader displays vision, concept and focus so that direction can be provided to subordinates and the organisation.
- Drive to Execute:
  The leader displays ego-drive, competition, energy, courage and proactivity so that he/she can successfully motivate others.
- Relationships:
  In order to develop constructive relationships with others, the leader must take on several roles including relater, developer, multirelater and stimulator. He/she must also recognise peoples' individuality and be team-oriented.

- Management Systems:

  These are general management talents and include being results oriented, disciplined, ethical and responsible. Leaders must also be an arranger and be operate on both an operational and strategic playing field.

To sum what makes a good leader the researcher intends to use Fulmer and Wagner's complete listing along with Jack Welch's definition of what a leader should be ((1998) as quoted in Applebaum et al 1999 (pp244). He proposed that:

"Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion. Above all else, though, good leaders are open. They go up, down, and around their organisation to reach people. They don't stick to the established channels. They're informal. They're straight with people. They make a religion out of being accessible. They never get bored telling their story."

Leadership, as can be seen, is among the most important factors in superior/subordinate relationships. Through leadership, managers/leaders can have positive, neutral or negative influences on their staff. In order to understand how these relationships develop and add to the success or otherwise of an organisation it was important to outline some definitions of leadership and the various theories of leadership in order to create an understanding of what makes an effective leader.

2.11   Leadership – Summary

Similar to culture, many definitions can be found for leadership however the researcher decided to use Daft's (2002) definition for the basis of this research. However, as noted previously the researcher does not agree with one element of Daft's definition as she is of the opinion that the majority of the time, changes take place in an organisation because of the leader's wishes rather than, as Daft propounds, changes taking place because they are what all parties want.

A number of existing theories of leadership were introduced. At this stage the researcher proposed her own understanding of these theories that the trait and behavioural theories are linked as in order for a leader to display specific leadership behaviours he or she must be in possession of certain traits. These behaviours are then used contingent to the situation according to the many researcher, however this researcher put forward that the behaviours a leader displays are limited, or contingent on, his/her experiences.

Finally, as can be seen from many of the theories, leaders may show a concern for people, a concern for task, or a concern for both people and task. The many researchers propose that a concern for people and a concern for task is the best style among leaders.

2.12 Influence

Before discussing the links provided by other researchers between culture and leadership it is essential that, as previously indicated, a brief discussion of influence needs to take place as it can be seen that a significant element of leadership is the influence of others.

A leader has the ability to influence through the power he/she possess. The definition of power as the potential ability of one person to influence others to do something they would not normally have done (Astley and Pachdeva, 1984) or the ability to achieve goals or outcomes that those with the power desire (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1974) is important to this research as it links to the attempt by the researcher to prove or disprove whether culture can be manipulated by the leader. In order for a leader to manipulate the culture he or she must be able to influence groups of people.

In this regard it is important to recognise that there are different types of power that result in varying degrees of influence on followers: (French and Raven, 1960)

- Legitimate Power:
  This power comes from the holding of a formal position within the organisation. To a certain extent subordinates accept this as legitimate power and so comply.

- Reward Power:

   This power again comes from a formal role in the organisation that of having the authority to issue rewards. Rewards can be used to influence the behavior of subordinates.

- Coercive Power:

   This is the opposite of reward power and is essentially the negative side of legitimate and reward power.

- Expert Power:

   This power is not linked to the position held by an individual. It results from the special knowledge or skills that the leader possess.

- Referent Power:

   This type of power links to the traits that the leader possesses and the behaviours that he/she displays. This leads to subordinates respect and admiration being earned and in certain cases the behaviors being imitated.

The authors do not identify a 'best' type of power but this researcher believes that referent power is the most important power for a leader to possess in order to influence followers to do what the organisation needs doing as it is based on the leader's natural abilities – and through experience as a leader and a follower it seems to this researcher that it is this natural power that can influence more than any other. This should be followed by expert power rather than legitimate or reward power as the respect that a leader who is seen to understand many areas of the business would seem to be more influential than simply being in a specific position.

2.13   Linking Culture and Leadership

In the context of this research it is now important to establish a whether the existing literature discusses a link between culture and leadership and specifically the effect that leadership can have on organizational culture, if any. In particular a number of existing studies on this area will be looked at briefly along with some of the findings of key authors on leadership and culture.

Schein (1983) proposes that the leader in large measure creates the corporate culture, a view which is also shared by Daymon (2000) and Martin et al (1985). Many researchers, including Bass (1998), argue that there is an undeniable link between strong organizational cultures and strong and competent leadership.

Sarros et al (2002) conducted a study of one thousand nine hundred and eighteen members of the Australian Institute of Management. Their study revealed strong and positive relationships among leadership and organizational culture; indeed their findings revealed that leadership was a far more prominent predictor of culture than culture was of leadership. This is consistent with Schein's (1985) contention that leaders determine the type of culture in organisations. In contrast, their study showed that minimal amounts of leadership were accounted for by culture.

They further develop on these findings by saying that the more transformational leadership used, the greater the leadership outcomes and as a result the more performance oriented and supportive of organisation culture. This is similar to Bass' contention that:

"For an organizational culture to become more transformational, top management must articulate the changes that are required...The behaviours of top level leaders become symbols of the organisation's new culture." (Bass, 1999, pp 16)

Sarros et al continue by saying that follower attitudes change in response to leaders' transformational leadership skills and interestingly they quote work a number of authors who say that transformational leadership can be enhanced by training and counselling.

Lory Block (2003) also undertook an investigation into the connection between leadership and culture. In his research of the literature he found, like Sarros et al, that many authors had suggested a conclusive link between leadership and organizational culture, however in this instance the hypothesis (*"Employees' perception of organizational culture will be positively associated with the leadership of their immediate*

supervisors" (Block, 2003, pp 322)) was unproven after a detailed study in a sales/service organisation with 900 employees. The resulting findings went against the hypothesis as it was found that *"leadership styles did not differentiate between the nature of cultural attributions made by employees..."* (Block, 2003, pp 323). However, they did find enough evidence to support a link between proactive leadership behaviours and positive cultural perceptions and also between inactive leadership behaviours and negative cultural perceptions. This is consistent with Crant and Bateman's (2000) research concerning the relationship between leadership and proactive personalities. Reactive leadership can provide short-term benefits but will be unlikely to result in positive culture in the long-term.

Block suggests that as there is little research on the impact of leadership on culture and even less research that agrees whether there is a link at all between the two that further research needs to be undertaken to clarify if a link exists between the two. This is one of the reasons why the researcher has chosen to undertake this course of study.

However, it is the 'father of culture', Edgar Schein, who has produced the volume of works on this area. Schein (2004) proposes that culture develops and changes as the leader's assumptions are shared and so become embedded among followers. He suggests that leader's assumptions are embedded in a number of ways such as:

- What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis
- How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises
- How leaders allocate resources
- Deliberate role modeling, teaching and coaching
- How leaders allocate rewards and status
- How leaders recruit, select, promote and excommunicate
- Organisational design and structure
- Organisational systems and procedures
- Rites and rituals of the organisation
- Design of physical space, facades, and buildings

- Stories about important events and people
- Formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds, and charters

(Adapted from Schein, 2004, pp246, Exhibit 13.1)

These embedding mechanisms are in effect communication tools for the leader to communicate, whether consciously or unconsciously, his/her own values and attitudes and so express what is and is not accepted. It should also be noted from the above that inferences can also be made about what leaders do not pay attention to. Essentially, effective leaders must *"walk the talk"* (D'Annunzio et al, 2004, pp5) and display the values that the company requires to be shown by all.

As Schein is the only author to break down how leaders influence culture it is intended to use his theory as a method to develop a research tool in an attempt to establish whether a leader can have an impact on leadership.

2.14 Conclusion

As can be seen there are huge volumes of research on both organizational culture and leadership, however very little practical research has been undertaken to link the two. It is intended to use some of these theories as a basis for the primary research. This will be discussed in the following chapter, Research Methodology.

Before research metholodgies can be discussed it is important to summaries the literature. In order to summarise the vast volumes of literature and also to understand the researcher's viewpoint, what follows is an outline of the mainpoints.

The definition of culture to be used throughout this research is a combination of Schein's and Lundberg's. In other words, when culture is referred to throughout this research what it meant is that of a pattern of beliefs shared by members of an organisation that influences the way they think, feel and act that is acquired on entering the organisation. It is observed in things such as language and behaviour but also goes much deeper than

that and is rooted in deeply buried assumptions. The researcher also believes, as Lundberg does, that culture can be changed. However, it remains to be seen whether leadership can change it.

In order to further clarify culture, the researcher developed six categories of culture based on the many available from established authors. These six categories are:

1. Power Distance
2. Uncertainty avoidance
3. Individualism/Collectivism
4. Masculinity/Feminity
5. Time Orientation
6. Adaptability

It is intended to use these to categorise the culture in the participating stores.

Having identified what culture means to the researcher a brief discussion ensued around the importance of culture to the organisation. The researcher believes that culture is one of the most important variables within the organisation as it is a socializing and controlling mechanism that manages the members of the organisation so if the leader can influence the culture he/she can influence members' behaviour to aid the achievement of the organisation's goals.

Having mentioned leadership several times it was important to define it. The researcher understands leadership to be the process of influencing people in order to get something done. To further understand leadership the various theories of leadership were analysed. The researcher believes that rather than being two separate theories the trait and behavioural theories are interlinked in that a person needs to possess certain traits in order to be able to learn the behaviours required of successful leaders. According to Fiedler and other researchers these behaviours are then used contingent to the situation the leader is dealing with. However, the researcher believes that the contingency theories do not go

far enough; a leader utilises a behaviour contingent on a situation but the behaviours that are 'available' to them are also contingent on their experiences.

Successful leaders as a result acquire the traits identified throughout their development as individuals, this gives them the basis to learn, formally and informally, the behaviours required of successful leaders. These behaviours, or talents as Fulmer and Wagner term them, are then put to use for different situations, however the behaviours that a leader displays are limited to their experience.

The importance of leadership in the context of this research is the influence element as an attempt is being made to establish whether leadership can influence a particular variable within the organisation, namely culture,

Influence, the researcher believes, occurs through the power a leader holds. While French and Raven proposed five different types of power, the researcher is of the opinion that referent power and expert power in her experience are the types of power from which leaders can draw greater degrees of influence.

Having spoken of culture and leadership as two separate entities it was important to look at literature that links the two, this is at the heart of this research. While the research is divided as to whether leadership can influence culture, the researcher's hypothesis is similar to that of Schein; leadership can influence culture, however whether this hypothesis is proven on the basis of the primary research remains to be seen.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out how the subject matter of the project was researched. It is intended to present a critical evaluation of the methodology and methods uses, review the options that are available, identify those that have been chosen and those that have not and give the reasons why. It will also state what the dominant paradigm is and the limitations of the method used.

3.2 Definition of Research

Before continuing, there is a need to define what research is, Hussey and Hussey succinctly state that:

"Research is a process of enquiry and investigation; it is systematic and methodical, research increases knowledge"
(Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p1)

3.3 Research Paradigms

"The term paradigm refers to the progress of scientific practice based on people's philosophies and assumptions about the world and the nature of the knowledge"
(Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p47)

This section will explore the two main traditions: the positivistic and the phenomenological approaches which exist in relation to assumptions concerning the nature of social science. Once these have been discussed, a decision needs to be taken on the paradigm best suited to the research and the researcher.

In this context, it is about how research should be conducted. People's basic beliefs about the world will reflect the way in which research is designed, how data is collected, analysed and presented. It is therefore important to understand the researcher's own paradigm, as this determines the entire course of the research.

There are two main research paradigms, the positivist and the phenomenological, sometimes called quantitative and qualitative. These are in reality two extremes of a continuum. Creswell (1994) and others have drawn differing assumptions of the two. The fundamental objective of the positivistic approach is to explain human action whereas the phenomenological approach seeks to understand human realities.

3.3.1   Assumptions of the Main Paradigms

Cresswell (1994) identifies five main areas where the assumptions of the two paradigms determine the researcher's perspective:

- Ontological assumption: the nature of reality
  The researcher must decide whether they consider the world to be objective and external to themselves or socially constructed and only understood by examining the perceptions of the people who encounter them.

It is this researcher's belief that the latter applies as each person has a different perception of reality based on one's upbringing, past experiences and influences and how these impact on individuals. Therefore reality is not objective but subjective, seen from the individual's point of view.

- Epistemological: the relationship of the researcher to that researched
  Epistemology is the branch of philosophy which is concerned with the study of criteria by which people determine what is valid knowledge. Positivists believe that only phenomena, which are observable and measurable, can be validly regarded as

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knowledge while phenomenologists minimize the distance between the researcher and that being researched and are usually involved in differing forms of participatory enquiry, interacting with that being researched.

It is the researcher's belief that by interacting with the participants in the enquiry and the data emerging, a better in-depth knowledge can be obtained of that being researched. Therefore it can be seen that the researcher does not agree with the exclusive nature of the positivists approach. It must be noted that as this research is being carried out in the researcher's place of work there is an obvious danger of becoming too involved as this could impact negatively on the outcome of the research, so care must be taken to avoid this.

- Axiological assumption: concerned with values
Positivists believe that the process of research is value free, so they are detached from what they are researching. Phenomenologists believe that researchers have values and that they are involved with what is being researched.

The researcher believes that people's experiences determine what are recognised as facts and the interpretations that are drawn from them.

- Rhetorical Assumption: language used in research
This has importance in the reporting and writing of the research. Positivists use formal language based on set definitions and are impersonal. Phenomenologists use informal language reflecting the immediacy of the research and demonstrates the researcher's involvement.

While the research believes that she in involved closely with the research she also believes that given the nature of the research as a master's level thesis formal language is required.

- Methodological Assumption: process of the research

The researcher has to decide the approach to the overall research process, what their paradigm is and having done so this decides the methodology. Positivists will use the deductive method as they will want concepts used to be measurable, while the phenomenologist will use the inductive approach. These are two extremes and very few people operate within their pure forms.

3.3.2 Research Paradigm for this Research

It is now important to identify the research paradigm associated with this research. It is first vital to reflect again that the two research paradigms outlined are merely examples of the opposite end of a continuum and most researchers will be found somewhere in between. This is true in this case, however the researcher's nature of reality are grounded much more in the phenomenologist approach than the positivistic, however some elements of the positivist approach will be evident.

3.4 Research Methodology v Research Methods

For the purpose of this dissertation a distinction is made between research methodology and research method based on Hussey and Hussey's definitions. They say that research methodology refers to the overall approach to the research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of data. Research method refers only to the various means by which data can be collected and/or analysed.

What follows is a reasoning for choice of methodology covering the types of research and its purpose, the process of research, the logic and the outcome of the research that were used and explain why this was done.

3.5 Types of Research

Types of research can be classified according to the function they perform in the overall research process. These are:

- The **purpose** of the research – the reason why it is being conducted.
- The **process** of the research – the way in which data is collected and analysed.
- The **logic** of the research – whether one moves from the general to the specific or vice versa.
- The **outcome** of the research – whether one is trying to solve a particular problem or make a general contribution to knowledge.

Source: Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p9

3.5.1 Purpose of the Research:

Research can be classified according to its purpose as being exploratory, descriptive, analytical or predictive.

- Explorative research is conducted into a research problem or issue when there are very few or no earlier studies to which can be referred to for information about the issue or problem.
- Descriptive research described the situation as it exists; it goes further than explorative research.
- Analytical research goes beyond simply describing the situation to one where the raw data is analysed to put forward an explanation of why the issue exists.
- Predictive research goes further that analytical research in that it tries to forecast future events based on the data collected.

Source: Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p10

The objective of this research is to study an issue in the researcher's employment that has not been researched before. Therefore the nature of this in-company research is initially

explorative. The findings of the research then have to be described, therefore the research is descriptive also. An analysis of the findings is then undertaken as a means of explaining the data so some analytical research will also apply.

This research will not be predictive in nature as it is not intended to use it to forecast future events based on the data collected.

3.5.2 Process of the Research

The process of the research determines the way, they type of methods which the researcher uses to collect and analyse primary data. As the researcher will be looking for people's interpretations of a particular phenomenon i.e. leadership, the research will be qualitative.

3.5.3 Logic of the Research

The logic of the research determines whether the researcher is moving from the general to the specific or vice versa, whether is it deductive or inductive.

"Deductive research is a study in which a conceptual or theoretical structure is developed and then tested by empirical observation: thus particular instances are deducted from general inferences."

"Inductive research is a study in which theory is developed from observation of empirical reality: thus general inferences are induced from particular instances"
(Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p13)

This research will test a preconceived theory, that of Schein's inference that through a number of different ways the leader can affect the organisational theory. But it will also examine a phenomenon, which exists in the workplace; as a result a hypothesis will then be developed, and therefore this research is inductive in nature.

3.5.4 Outcome of the Research

Research can be classified depending on the required outcome, whether the research is trying to solve a particular problem or making a general contribution to knowledge.

There are two main types of classification:

Basic Research is when the research is done to enhance understanding of the general issue without much thought being put into the immediate use of the information obtained. This type of research is more academic in nature as it concerned with knowledge and understanding.

Applied Research is when the research is conducted to identify solutions to specific existing problems.

The primary objective of the research is to establish whether the leadership of the organisation can influence the culture. It is not primarily setting out to form solutions to a particular problem therefore the research is basic in nature. However, it may occur that some solutions to problems may be identified. As a result, the research may be part basic research and part applied research.

3.6 Site and Population

The research was carried out in the researcher's employment. As stated in the introductory chapter this company employs just fewer than 2,000 staff in 11 stores through Ireland. Approximately 70% of the entire employment is at staff level. The remainder are at different levels of management. In deciding on the participants for this research a number of issues had to be looked at including:

Time Available:

As the researcher was working full time while completing this thesis, time constraints existed that needed to be taken into account, as a result a decision was taken not to base the research on all the stores within the Group rather it was decided to strategically pick three stores.

Types of Leader/Type of Store:

As all stores were not being studied, the researcher attempted, in consultation with the Group Human Resources Manager, to select three stores with different backgrounds and different leaders.

Store A is one of the oldest having been acquired by the Group in 1929. It has 308 staff in total. This is made up in the following way:

Senior Management:	6
Retail Managers:	15
Catering Management:	3
Staff:	284

It was chosen for this research as it has caused problems for the Group in the past with an easily recognised strong union presence, something that has been around since before the Group acquired this particular store. Problems in the recent past include protracted negotiations following the announcement of changes to the cash office and the stockrooms that resulted in a long delay in introducing the required changes. Indeed, these problems were not resolved until they were referred to a third party. Another reason for choosing the store was the General Manager. He is the longest serving General Manager in the Group, having been appointed as General Manager to a newly opened store in 1990 and then moving to Store A in 1996. The researcher believes that the

combination of these two makes Store A a worthy participant in the research as there is a long serving leader and a strong culture.

Store B is in existence since 1979 and the leader has been the General Manager there for the last four and a half years. Staff numbers are as follows:

Senior Management:	4
Non Food Management:	5
Non Food Supervisors:	6
Food Management:	4
Food Supervisors:	5
Staff:	164

Store B is now unique within the Group as it is now the only store with a supermarket. Food retailing is very different to non-food in many different ways; some of the differences are it is much more labour intensive, it has a much higher staff attrition rate and due the nature of the business much tighter controls and bureaucracy is required. Store B has also been influence by the original store in the Group. The first store in the Group was opened in 1900; Store B is in the same county and was the first suburban department store in the country. As they are in the same county, when Store B opened a large number of staff from the original store wanted to move to Store B. As a result, a lot of the ways of thinking and doing that had developed over nearly eight decades were transposed into the then new store. One example of this is the issue of seniority. Historically, decisions were made in the company based on an individual's length of service with the company. This led to a way of thinking in Store B that this should also be the deciding mechanism, this proved to be quite difficult for the original General Manager in the store, however it was never challenged as a way of thinking until the current General Manager was appointed. This interesting culture made up of influence from the original store in the Group and the food retailing culture together with a leader who seems to have made a deliberate decision to challenge the 'norms' within the store made this another store that is worthy of further study.

The final store, Store C, was chosen as it is one of the newest stores in the Group, but also has been open long enough, 10 years, for its own culture to begin developing. Store C is staffed as follows:

Senior Team: 4

Retail Managers: 10

Stockroom Management: 1

Catering Management: 1

It has been one of the stores within the Group that there were little industrial relations issues and was the store where new systems and procedures were trialed as resistance was minimal; indeed staff seemed to relish the fact that their opinion was being used. However, in recent times, the company has encountered resistance with similar projects. It is the belief of this researcher, from her experience in the Group that this has come from the influence of Store A. Store A have a very strong house committee The leader of Store C has only been in the role of General Manager for the past year and a half. The researcher believes that this store is appropriate for this study as it is a newer store with a very new manager, so again just as Store A and Store B are different from each other; Store C adds another dimension to the study – a new leader.

Other stores were considered, however as they were quite similar to the above stores they were discounted. One store in particular was considered however as the General Manager is female the researcher made a deliberate decision not to include this store in the study as it would have added another element to the study, that of gender. It was felt that this would detract from the key question of the study, that of can leadership have an influence on organisational culture.

The time available to the researcher was a key factor in deciding who to interview in each store. This will be discussed in more detail in the section concerning selection of sample.

3.7   Research Methodology

Gill and Johnson define methodology *"as the study of methods or procedures used in a discipline so as to gain warranted knowledge"* (Gill and Johnson, 2002, p227).

Hussey and Hussey state *"methodology refers to the overall approach to the research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of the data"* (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p54)

The choice of paradigm deemed the most appropriate has a fundamental effect on the research methodology chosen and the overall research design.

"The methodologies most associated with the phenomenological paradigm are action research, case studies, ethnography, feminist perspective, grounded theory, hermeneutics and participative enquiry" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p64)

It has already been stated that the research paradigm is closest to the phenomenological view; therefore it follows that the methodology chosen should be an associated one. The main methodology that has been chosen is a form of case study approach.

"Case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 1993, p125)

Case studies are often described as exploratory research used where there is a deficiency of knowledge.

The strategy is to collect primary and secondary data relating to the subject in question. The secondary data will be collected and outlined in the literature review. The primary data will be collected by means of a semi-structured interview. The interviews will be structured based on the findings of the secondary data and on issues that the researcher

believes warrant further investigation. The researcher's personal observations will also be used as will a previous study conducted within the organisation that identified the cultures in all the stores.

3.8   Data Collection

"Data refers to known facts or things used as a basis for inference or reckoning" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p149)

Information is drawn from the data once it is organized and analysed. Having decided on the research paradigm and the overall methodology, a method for collecting the required information has to be decided on.

The research paradigm and methodology have a significant impact on the choice of data collection methods. As already stated, the research paradigm is a phenomenological approach therefore it follows that the data collection method would follow that route. The ways in which the data was collected and analysed are set out below.

3.8.1   Quantitative Data V Qualitative Data

Data can be qualitative or quantitative in form. No one approach should depend solely on one method. Methods should be selection because of the data required to fulfill the research objective.

The primary data collected will concern the views of employees and members of the store management team in relation to the leadership in the three stores. The data by its nature is qualitative.

3.9   Selecting a Sample

"A sample is made up of some of the members of the population" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p144)

A population may refer to a body or to any other collection of items under consideration for research purposes. A sample frame is *"a list or other record of the population from which all sampling units are drawn"* (Vogt, 1993, p202)

There are various methods which can be used to select a sample, such as random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and others such as quota sampling, cluster, multistage, judgmental, neutral etc.

A stratified sample will be used as the population will be made up of staff grades, store middle and senior management and senior group management. This will facilitate a more comprehensive response as the issue of leadership and culture affects all levels of the organisation.

A decision was made to interview the following in each store:

1 x General Manager (the leader in question)
2 x Senior Management
4 x Other Management
5 x Staff

The numbers are small to reflect the time constraints however; the researcher is of the opinion that these numbers are sufficient to produce the required information.

3.10   Data Collection Methods

There are two main sources of data. Original data, known as primary data, which is collected at source and secondary data, which already exists.

The following collection methods were considered in the collection of the primary data.

3.10.1 Interviews

Interviews can be associated with both the positivistic and phenomenological methodologies; they can be highly formalized and structured or can be free ranging conversations. (Easterby-Smith et al, 1997). The most fundamental of all qualitative methods of data collection is the in-depth interview and can be semi-structured or completely unstructured and are most appropriate when it is necessary *"to understand about the constructs that the interviewee used as a basis for his/her opinions and beliefs about a particular matter or situation"* (Easterby-Smith et al, 1997,p74).

Interviewers can follow up on ideas and opinions, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings which questionnaires never could.

Interview questions for the semi-structured interview are based on Edgar Schein's work on the impact of leadership and culture. He proposes twelve different ways in which a leader can influence culture. The researcher developed questions based on these twelve areas.

3.10.2 Questionnaire

"A questionnaire is a list of carefully structured questions, chosen after considerable testing, with a view to eliciting reliable responses from a chosen sample" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p161)

It was decided that a secondary method of collecting data would be used in order to compare the leaders in the three stores would be questionnaires. Again, due to time constraints it was decided that rather than developing a questionnaire specific to this research that established questionnaires would be used. The questionnaires used were

- The T-P Leadership Questionnaire (Ritchie, J.B and Thompson, P, 1984 in Daft,2002)
  This questionnaire was employed by the researcher in an attempt to diagnose the leader's preferences for task and people. It was hoped that the results could be used to compare the leaders who did influence culture with the leaders with did not.

- The Personal Power Profile (Hinkin and Schriseheim, 1989 in Daft, 2002)
  This questionnaire was used by the researcher to establish the participating leaders personal power preferences and again in an attempt to link those power preferences with the ability or otherwise of the leaders to influence culture.

These questionnaires were given solely to the leaders concerned and were used to compare the leaders and their task/people preferences, their cultural preferences and the types of power they use to influences. These questionnaires were used as a secondary data collection method.

3.10.3 Observation

Observation as a method of collecting data and can take place in either a laboratory or in a natural setting. A natural setting has been defined as *"a research environment that would have existed had researchers never studied it"* (Vogt, 1993, p150)

As the research is carried out in the researcher's place of work, the researcher has observed the operation of the company for many years and is familiar with how it does business both from a relationship and commercial viewpoint. The researcher will continue to make these observations during the research and hopes to elicit valuable information and confirm certain hypotheses throughout the process. The data elicited

will be qualitative in nature. The researcher at this stage will need to be very aware of personal bias.

3.11   Data Analysis

Data is only useful after it has been analysed. Analysis of data involves converting recorded observations into statements, which describe those observations.

"With qualitative data, there is no clear and accepted set of conventions for analysis corresponding to those observed with quantitative data" (Robson, 1993, p370)

The main problem in analysing qualitative data is how to reduce it. It is essential to establish systems and procedures to allow the researcher to manage and organize raw data that has been collected. The main objective when analysing data is to find answers to the research question.

The analysis of the data follows the principles of a general analytical procedure whereby the data is collected and summarized in order to identify patterns and themes.

3.12   Social Interaction, Trust, Bias and Ethics

The researcher is conscious of the fact that their position as a member of Group Management may have some impact on the research project.

In terms of social interaction, the majority of employees is the company know the researcher, but the researcher's relationship with staff grades is distant and interaction limited. The researcher is well known at all management levels, and has made it common knowledge that she is undertaking a course of study and needs their assistance in completing the research.

This had a bearing on trust, there was an issue of bias and there were ethical issues that have to be considered before the research is undertaken.

Regarding the trust issue, the researcher has been employed as Group Human Resources Officer for three and a half year, a Human Resources Manager at store level for one and half years and on the shop floor for four years. A good level of trust has been developed between the researcher and all levels of staff and management over the last three and a half years particularly, this trust is based on mutual respect and confidentiality where necessary. The research is keenly aware that this level of trust needs to be maintained on order to have an effective research project but also to maintain a positive working relationship.

As already stated, phenomenological research is open to bias as much of the data is subjective. The researcher is aware that the validity of the research falls with them and is also very aware that the views, opinions and beliefs of those surveyed have to be realistically and faithfully conveyed and not reflective of the researcher's frame of reference.

An ethical issue arises here also, if the trust is broken in any way or even damaged this has serious consequences for those who have participated and, more importantly, may have a serious impact on the researcher's standing in the workplace. Again, the importance of honestly conveying the facts presented, especially where the researcher does not share those views, cannot be stressed enough.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS and CONCLUSIONS

4.1   Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the primary research that was undertaken and to comment on these findings. However, before the primary research can be presented it is intended to discuss and comment on the findings of a previous study that was undertaken in the Group by this researcher last year.

That research was undertaken with the intention of identifying the dysfunctional cultures in the various stores and also the causes of these dysfunctional cultures. For the purposes of this current research on leadership and culture the previous study will be used as a starting point to identify the existing cultures in the three stores. The researcher will also comment on her beliefs as to why these cultures exist.

Once this analysis of the existing cultures has taken place, the findings of the primary research in this study will be presented and analysed in an attempt to identify whether the leadership in the stores has influenced the cultures.

Finally, once the findings and analysis have been presented, a summary of the main findings will be presented at which stage it will be possible for the researcher to conclude whether the hypothesis has been proven or otherwise.

4.2   Current Culture and Leadership in Store A

The culture of this store has quite obviously been influenced by its history. When the study was conducted last year a number of key cultures were found to exist in this store:

While it would seem that in a retail environment one of the key cultures is sales focus it would seem that there is a culture of focusing on stock rather than sales within the organisation. This can be observed when walking the shop floor where a large proportion of staff can be seen filling out stock, merchandising and doing stock counts. This would seem to originate from the store's history when staff and managers were praised for well-merchandised and fully stocked departments. Indeed the current role of Retail Manager was previously called Stock Manager.

Alongside, this culture of focusing on stock is also a task-focused culture, again displayed by both management and staff. Certain tasks need to be done on a daily and weekly basis and certain people must ensure that these happen. This leads to people becoming focused on set tasks; this results in the required tasks and nothing extra being done, in other words, no ownership is taken, in particular by the staff. It is the researcher's opinion that this task-focus has been created by previous leaders within the organisation, as historically it was believed that completing specific tasks was the key to success. The researcher also believes that this way of thinking results in a lack of initiative as being so task-focused staff members are 'taught' not to think for themselves.

From this task culture comes a short-term focus; rather than focusing on a long term strategy for the future success of the store the focus is on the achievement of short-term gains.

Also, from the task-focused culture comes a very strong culture of demarcation; 'one man one job'. This was, up until last year, one of the strongest cultures in existence within the store, however, due to a rationalization programme that saw the redundancies of all the General Workers this culture has weakened hugely with just a few of the longer serving staff attempting to maintain it.

Another culture that exists, possibly stemming from the demarcation culture or perhaps supporting the demarcation culture, is a significant culture of 'them and us'. Not just a them and us culture between management and staff but also between different levels of

staff. This has resulted in a certain level of suspicion arising between the many differing groupings within the store. Staff are suspicious of every movement/change made by management as they now believe that management are attempting to downsize through various change initiatives and as they say 'get rid of them'. These change initiatives came about through outsourcing of non-sales functions as the company believes that it should now concentrate on the main core business, that of selling. There is also a strong focus on seniority within the store, defended heartily by the house committee and the senior staff. This has caused numerous problems for the company.

There is also a very union dependent culture. In some cases it seems that the first port of call for an employee with a problem is the union rather than the management, contrary to the open door policy that exists in the organisation. However, the house committee insists, in the main, on adherence to the grievance and disputes procedure and advises any employee with a problem to firstly approach a member of the management team and only then if it cannot be solved will the union then deal with it, again through the proper channels and procedures.

The culture is influenced by the hierarchy that exists leading to people who refuse to take ownership. Traditionally, in the company, the decision making has been 'held' with the General Manager. Decisions affecting staffing, suppliers, stock and security all have to be cleared by the General Manager even though these should be the responsibility of other managers.

Finally, a culture that was not seen until two or three years ago has also come into play in the store, namely an entitlement culture. A large number of staff believe that it is their 'right' to be granted all requests – regardless of whether it matches the needs of the business. One member of management in the store called this the 'give an inch, take a mile' culture as when one person has requested and been allowed to do something due to their individual circumstances, everyone else then wants the same and it results in a number of demands.

These are the stronger cultures in existence in Store A but in order to proceed with the research it is intended to attempt to place these findings into the cultural typologies discussed earlier.

Distribution of Power

There is not a completely equal distribution of power within the store as the balance of power hangs more in the favour of management, however there is only a marginal distance between the power held by management and held by staff. It is the belief of the researcher that this is the way things should be, in order for management to get things done it is important that they hold more power than staff.

Predictability

Due to the task-focused nature of the work it can be seen that there is a high need for predictability within the store. This has been witnessed more recently. The company has introduced a number of new systems in order to improve efficiency and competitiveness but Store A has been the most vocal store in the group against these changes. As a result of the strong union culture there are vast amounts of written and unwritten rules of how things should be done.

Collectivism

Strong demonstrations of collectivism are an inherent part of this store; these are not actively encouraged by the management team as there are some strong cohesive 'in-groups'/cliques in store who aim to 'control' their members. This has resulted in some of the aforementioned cultures arising. The Sports and Social Club is very strong in this store and a large proportion of the staff regularly socialize together outside of work.

Masculinity

Store A shows some elements of both the masculine and feminine cultures. The store displays the company ethos of caring for staff and 'minding' people at times of struggle in their lives yet at the same time there can be a 'hard' edge when required to get things

done or wanting something. In fact, it would seem that a preference for the masculine trait it shown in this store.

Time Orientation

Short-termism is a definite culture in Store A. Issues and problems are 'fixed' to result in short-term gains. Very little long-term orientation is in evidence; an example can be seen that for a store of its size and with a high turnover, no succession planning exists. This has always been the case in the long history of this store, and also in the long history of the Group. Historically and to this day the leaders of the Group have had a short-term view of success and in this researcher's opinion, as an organisation needs to adopt a more long-term outlook.

Adaptability

Store A is possibly the least adaptable of all the stores. It can be argued that this is the case because of the high need for predictability and the short term orientation adopted. From a group perspective, Store A is the one store that new initiatives take longest to 'bed in'.

Leadership in Store A

On completion of the T-P Questionnaire in relation to his preferences for either task or people, the leader in this store showed a very strong leaning towards task rather than people. His power preferences lied with legitimate and expert power.

This would seem to reflect on the culture, particularly the masculinity cultural leanings and the task-culture. This will be discussed in more detail at the analysis of the leader's impact on the culture.

4.3   Current Culture and Leadership in Store B

It was noted during the course of the study that this store had one of the strongest customer-focused cultures in the Group. Even though the store accounts for nearly 9% of

the group turnover it has been described by both customers and staff as a local shop. Customers and staff address each other by first names; staff can be witnessed on a regular basis going beyond the call of duty to meet the customers' needs.

However, despite this there is also a task culture prevalent within the store. People focus on one task, get it done and move on to the next and so on. This in theory, may seem like a good thing, however on the reverse side, people only do the tasks that they believe belong to their particular grade of staff and when all their tasks are done, they simply stop working until asked to do a specific task by their manager. This may stem, particularly in the food departments, from the bureaucratic culture in existence. This is something that has been imposed on the food department by the various legislation that governs food hygiene and that compels organisation to maintain and keep vast volumes of paperwork.

This would explain the lack of ownership taken in the store by staff. In contrast, the small management team in the store tends to relish responsibility. One would think that this could lead to a 'them and us' culture between the management and the staff but this is not the case.

However, there is an element of a 'class culture' between the different departments/areas of the store. Staff in the non-food departments would perceive themselves as superior to those in the food departments and likewise clerical staff would perceive themselves as better than anyone working in a sales role. This has perhaps been influenced by management as when a redundancy situation arose in the supermarket some years ago some food staff wanted to be transferred to the non-food, not all were transferred as it was believed, and still is, that some food staff did not have the ability to work in the non-food. Also, there is a huge emphasis on seniority in the store, with staff attempting to ensure than decisions are made using seniority as the tool. As discussed earlier, this culture of seniority has been in existence since even before this store was established and was firmly embedded in the store when the current leader commenced with the store.

A culture that has arisen in recent times and indicated by staff is that of fairness. Staff directly attribute this to the current manager as he has no favourites; this was something that was in existence before he commenced employment as the general manager. This has led to a decline in union dependency and as a result the number of referrals to third parties has fallen dramatically.

Again, in an attempt to have the cultures of the three stores described on a similar scale, the culture of Store B will now be analysed using the five cultural typologies.

Distribution of Power

Similar to Store A, there is only a marginal distance between the power bases of management and staff and this comes from legitimate power of management to do their jobs.

Predictability

There is a high need for predictability within this store also again witnessed by reactions to changes in the supermarket recently. However, change initiatives have been implemented relatively seamlessly once the initial discussions have taken place. This seems to have occurred as a result of the attitude of the General Manager/Leader in the store. According to one staff member interviewed he does not accept *"silliness"*, in other words he will discuss only matters relevant to the issue at hand. Staff have accepted this. It is hoped that the reasons for this occurrence will be explained in the primary research.

Collectivism

There are collectives in place in the store but as opposed to Store A, the groups in this store tend to work for the greater good as they believe that for them to get what they want (terms and conditions of employment and enjoyment and fulfillment from work) only if the company is trading well. Members of the different groupings look out for each other and support each other through tough times and again socialize together frequently. Indeed, a visit to the Staff Dining Room supports this as there are many photos on display of the various functions arranged and attended by staff and management. It may be that

this has occurred from the history where there was a strong culture of 'them and us' and staff felt they had to stick together.

Masculinity

This store again shows traits of both masculinity and femininity, however there is a distinct leaning towards the feminine side as staff are nurtured and developed as it is believed that this is what gets things done. There is an open relationship between management and staff with all parties willing to talk problems through.

Time Orientation

As with Store A, Store B also favours a short-term orientation; however several managers interviewed favoured a long-term outlook but said that they were restricted to a short-term view as this is how the company conducts its business.

Adaptability

While the short-term orientation and need for predictability can hinder adaptability, the relationships that exist and the belief in the need for the store to succeed help to balance it out as all parties are willing to deal with issues as they arise in a speedy manner and adopt new practices after discussion. It may be that the belief held by the current General Manager has also been adopted by the staff members over the last four and a half year.

Leadership in Store B

The leader in this store showed equal preferences for task and people, which many of the researchers would say is the ideal for leaders. His power preferences were for referent and expert power. Again, this will be discussed in more detail when attempting to prove the hypothesis.

4.4 Current Culture and Leadership in Store C

Store C displays some very different cultures to those that exist in the previous 2 stores.

There is a no-nonsense culture in this store displayed by both the management team and by the staff. One staff member jokingly said that the motto for the store should be the same as Nike: "Just Do It". People understand what needs to be done and why. This also reflects on the relationship between the store and the union. The house committee often defends the management stance as they often believe that what is right for the company it also right for the individual. While unsure as to why exactly this occurs in this store and not the other two it could be that as this store was opened only ten years ago when unemployment in the locality was quite high and the staff working there understand the need for the organisation to be successful is linked to sustained employment.

A sense of 'order' also exists. Things are done in the way the company expects them to be done and they are also done on time. This results in a high degree of diligence by all and also initiative being displayed by staff and management.

A culture that exists in this store and not in the other two is that of sales awareness and figures awareness. Staff and management know the importance of achieving targets. One staff member said that if the store was not successful then it was possible that her job would be in jeopardy but also that if the store was not successful it reflected poorly on her and her colleagues, especially those who wanted to develop a career with the company.

Flexibility is very important to this store due to its size, number of departments, staffing levels and opening hours. Staff are trained to work in all departments and that has been used to aid the functioning of the store. This was deliberately embedded into the culture of the store when the store opened in 1996. Yet, this has been challenged recently and the company will be defending this at a Rights Commissioner Hearing shortly.

This has possibly occurred due to an increase in union dependency, which when looking at all three stores as a whole, has probably increased in all stores due to the number of frame-breaking changes that have occurred in the last number of years. Or, as the researcher has previously stated, it may be that this is because of the influence of Store A and, with careful management, may only be a minor blip.

Yet again, it is possible to recognise a task-focused culture in this store similar to the other two. This is a culture, an mentioned previously that exists in all stores and is as a result of previous Group leaders way of thinking.

This store fits into the cultural typology as follows:

Distribution of Power

Again, similar to Stores A and B, Store C does not exhibit a huge power distance between different levels. The managers hold legitimate power in order to oversee the running of the store on a daily basis. A large power distance would not be accepted in this store as the newest store in this research, it is less formal than the other two stores and while members in the other two stores may accept a larger power distance, staff members in Store C would not as they believe they are 'part' of this store. It would seem that this was a deliberate attempt on behalf of the Group as a result of learning from previous stores.

Predictability

Until recently, this store did not have a very high need for predictability and as a result were flexible to the changing needs of the business and was seen as a store that could be used to trial and test new policies, procedures and systems. However, with the introduction of the last two systems projects there was some reluctance on behalf of staff and some management to take part and to have these required changes take place. As discussed earlier, this researcher believes that this is not a change in the staff members need for predictability rather it is the influence of Store A.

Collectivism

Interestingly, this store does not display the same strong leanings towards collectivism that the other two stores do. A lot of staff have said that they come to work to do their job and get paid for doing a good job, they do not want 'hassle', which some of them has said comes from the union committee. In this store, the Sport and Social Club never materialized as there was no interest shown by staff.

Masculinity

There is a very good balance in this store between masculine cultural traits of assertiveness, recognition and competition and feminine cultural traits of nurturing and co-operation. This is to be expected, again as the Group has learned over time to balance their paternalistic history with the need for the masculine traits needed to survive in today's business environment.

Time Orientation

Again, this store displays a short-termism mind set. This goes back to the 'just do it' mindframe – in sorting out today's problems and getting things done, tomorrow is placed in the background.

Adaptability

This store, as can be seen, has demonstrated high levels of adaptability in the past and has 'led the way' for other stores in dealing with new initiatives. However, the levels of adaptability are lessening at present, however only time will tell whether this is a short term reaction to current projects or whether this is a gradual decline in adaptability within the store. It is the researcher's view that this is a short term reaction as there are only a small number of staff members against these current projects, with the remainder of the staff attempting to co-operate.

Leadership in Store C

This leader had a slightly higher leaning towards task but it was only marginally ahead of his concern for people. His power preferences were for referent and expert power. These will be discussed in more detail at the analysis stage.

4.5 Interview Results and Commentary: Linking Leadership and Culture

Having described the culture in the stores it is now important to move to the primary research associated with this thesis. In the first instance, a commentary on the results of the interview needs to take place along with an analysis of the findings.

It is important to remember that the interview questions are based on Edgar Schein's proposal that the way in which leaders do things influences the culture of the organisation. To this end, the questions were designed using Schein's model, each Section is based on one element of his theory, the title is of each section is one of the ways, according to Schein, that leaders influence culture It is intended to analyse the impact that the leaders have on the culture of their stores during each section.

4.5.1 What Leaders Pay Attention To, Measure and Control on a Regular Basis

Q1: What are the most important responsibilities that you as a leader/your leader performs and why?

Store A:
From the interviews carried out in this store, the following list was compiled as the most important duties of the leader

- Maximising Sales
- Reducing Costs

These focus on what the General Manager and Assistant General Manager constantly referred to as 'the bottom line' of increasing sales and reducing costs and all interviewed believed that this should be achieved through:

- Delegation of exact duties to management team and their staff such as stock levels and merchandising
- Regular communication of results and how to achieve them
- Developing management and staff to achieve required goals.

Interestingly this focus on sales by the leader cannot be seen as being reflected in the culture but perhaps the delegation of exact duties to all rather than giving people the responsibility of achieving a set goal has resulted in the task-focused culture. It is the belief of the researcher that as the leader in the store considers that sales will be achieved through full shelves and well merchandised stock that he has also imposed this thinking on the staff and management. It may be that by giving managers and staff more freedom to achieve the goals of sales and cost reduction they will not just focus on the tasks but also have an understanding of why the various tasks must be done and perhaps be more successful in achieving the store's goals.

Store B:
Similarly, the General Manager and Senior Team in this store believed that the overall duties of the leader in store were to drive sales and control costs. Interestingly, the General Manager and the Supermarket Manager both said that while the overall responsibility for driving sales and cost control lies with the General Manager it was not his sole responsibility.

This is slightly different from the responses received from Store A who believed that the General Manager was the only one responsible for making things happen. Another member of the Senior Management team in Store B, the HR Manager, said that unless the rest of the management team and staff were aware of targets and unless assistance was given to them to reach those targets then sales could not be achieved and costs could not

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be controlled. The General Manager reflected this by saying that even though his primary duties were to do with the achievement of numerical targets that before that could happen he had to develop his team and build in them the necessary skills to drive sales and reduce costs and so achieve the stores success. It is interesting that this leader was the only one to say that achieving excellence in customer service and developing all members of the store to provide this service was also part of this job. It was initially thought that this was the reason behind the strong customer-focused culture in the store but management and staff advised that this culture existed before he became leader in the store.

However, similar to Store A and the leader in Store A, this leader also speaks about specific tasks that also have to be completed. It is understood that to achieve the overall goals for the store that certain tasks have to take place but if the leader is more focused on tasks as opposed to the overall goal then it would seem that the staff are following the leader is doing in focusing on tasks.

Store C:

The leader is this store and his team are very much in tune; nearly all answered the same way about what their leader focuses on and does on a regular basis.

The first thing that everyone mentioned when talking about important duties of the leader was standards. The General Manager said that in order to maintain the right standards expected of the store he walks the store numerous times a day. He said that if the store looked right and if staff knew what was expected of them then the sales targets could be achieved. He also said he used the walks as a communication tool. While walking he deals with daily tasks but he also was able to talk to staff members about their departments and difficulties and also passing on his level of detail and expectations to employees.

Other important duties of the General Manager mentioned, are as in the other stores, namely a focus on achieving sales and reducing costs, along with delegating specific tasks to managers and staff.

The focus on standards by the leader is reflected in the culture of order on display in the store. It was noted by many that this did not exist with the previous General Manager but had only come about as a direct influence of the General Manager.

Q2: How do you measure your success?

Two aspects were dealt with here, namely how the leader measured if his store was successful and how he measured his own success. All three when asked replied that their own and the stores success were interlinked in that they could not be a success if their store was not a success. They said the real measurement of both was again the achievement of sales targets and reducing costs. The only real difference here came from the leader of Store A who said that the traditional way in the company of knowing whether you were a success or not was that if you were doing well you wouldn't hear anything from the senior people within the organisation. He said that to a certain degree this still exists. One staff member also used this example and said that the only time she would have a real conversation with the General Manager was when she was in trouble for doing something she shouldn't have! When asked further about this she said that the reason she went to the union rather than the General Manager was because she associated him with negativity.

This is a clear example of a leader being influenced by the culture he works in but also of the culture being influenced by a leader, albeit a negative influence. If the leader was associated with more than just negative aspects of the job it is probable that staff would then be less dependent on the union.

Q3: What controls do you use to ensure that your store is successful?

Yet again, the concept of numbers and targets was raised here. The controls identified by all the leaders were the performance of various departments against budget. But, this huge focus by the leaders and their management team is not reflected in a culture of sales awareness except in Store C. This is rather worrying for the organisation that this culture has not become embedded, as the retail trade is hugely competitive and the organisations turnover is falling markedly. The difference observed between store C and the other two stores which may account for the cultural difference is that communication seems to be a lot more open in store C and all relevant information is shared. A staff member in Store A said that he has never been told if his department is a success or not, he gauges it based on his own experience. A staff member in Store B said that while she knew whether her department's sales has increased or decreased she did not know by how much and indeed why. In contrast, sales staff in Store C, said that the General Manager and his management team constantly advised her how her department was doing on a daily basis, sometimes even more often. They also turned to her for advice as, she said, that her manager called her the expert on her department.

It is believed that this constant communication of accurate and timely information, which works all ways across all levels in Store C, accounts for the culture of sales awareness that does not exist in the other two stores. Again, following interviews with other managers and staff it was confirmed that this was not always the way in Store C, that it has only been since the arrival of the leader that an awareness of sales has developed as he shares all relevant figures with them, something that the previous manager never did. In fact, the HR Manager who has worked with the current General Manager and his predecessor indicated that the openness now was the complete opposite of the last General Manager and that it was only since a decision was made to share figures with the staff that they showed an interest in helping to achieve sales. She also indicated that staff had become more proactive in driving sales as there was a sense of competition between the departments as to who could achieve their budgets. Again, in this store, this is a clear

indication of the leader influencing the culture, however in this instance a positive influence.

4.5.2 How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises.

As part of this section a number of questions were raised about critical situations that the leaders and their stores have experienced, how they dealt with it and who assisted them in dealing with it. While interesting to hear about the experiences and the coping mechanisms they employ, no direct correlation could be found by the researcher between the leaders' behaviour and the culture adopted in the store.

In this instance, no link could be found to support the hypothesis that the leader influences the culture.

4.5.3 How leaders allocate resources

The key question in this section related to how the leaders come to making a decision when they have a certain resource to allocate. As the organisation on which this research is based is a retail organisation one of the more common resources is space and also staff. The leader of store A indicated that his decision was based on the numbers, for example when allocating space he looked at the sales figures for departments, the department with the highest sales would be allocated the space.

However, the leaders in store B and C indicated that while the figures helped them in part to form their decision it was the input of the management (Store B and C) and of staff (Store B) that was the primary method used to make the decision. As the leader in store B pointed out, it is the staff who work on the front line and that they are the ones with the most knowledge of their department. It was also his opinion that by consulting with both the managers and the staff before a decision was made there was less agitation once the decision was made. He believed that this was because all parties had had an opportunity to air their views.

The researcher agrees with this viewpoint for two reasons. Firstly, since this leader became General Manager in Store B, the staff have indicated that there is now a culture of fairness in the store. This is further evidenced by a huge decline in a union-dependent culture together causing a huge reduction in the number of third party referrals from this store.

Store C has a similar story, however in this instance the leader only consults the management team when decisions have to be made about allocations of resources. This is probably reflective of the 'just do it' culture that exists in the store. The researcher believes that this non-consultation with staff may be, in part, responsible for the move towards a non-adaptive culture in the store and recommends that to halt this move and the move towards a more-union dependent culture then the leader needs to consult with all affected before making a decision about allocation of resources, or indeed any decision.

As mentioned briefly, the leader in Store A makes his decisions in relation to allocation of resources solely on the figures. This researcher is of the opinion that this has aided and supported the existence of number of the cultures prevalent in the store, including the 'them and us' culture, the union-dependency and the lack of adaptability. It influences the 'them and us' culture through fostering a climate of 'the leader makes all the decisions, we have no influence on it' and also the union dependent culture as they perceive the union as their voice who puts their views across about decisions taken. Finally, the non-adaptive culture has been 'assisted' by the non-consultation with management and staff. As the experience in Store B, and to a lesser extent Store C, shows, if all staff and management can get their view point across relating to a decision they are less likely to stand in the way of the decision being implemented.

4.5.4 Deliberate Role Modelling, Teaching and Coaching

While Schein would believe that through the above a leader can embed cultures in an organisation, again the researcher found little to support this.

Participants were asked firstly about what leaders in the organisation they would like to be compared to/who their leader was like within the organisation. They were then asked to describe the skills and traits that make them/their leader a successful leader. Finally they were asked about the traits they like to see in others – the same as themselves or differently and how they developed potential leaders within their store.

The leaders were asked this to ascertain whether the characteristics they admired in a previous leader were also those which they possessed and which they expected to see in others. The researcher had hoped that there would be a correlation between all of these traits and also correlation between these traits and the culture. No links could be found.

4.5.5 How leaders allocate rewards and status

Leaders and their teams were asked about the rewards available in their store, how these rewards were allocated and about the importance of status in their stores. All participants listed the rewards that are available in all Group locations but participants in Stores B and C both added recognition as a reward. While the researcher is unable, with this information, to prove a direct link between the leaders' allocation of reward and cultures within the store, it is interesting to note that the store where no recognition takes place is also the store that has the most dysfunctional cultures e.g. 'them and us', union dependent, unadaptable etc.

Status, particularly seniority, has historically been very important in the Group as a whole and used to be one of the primary mechanisms for making decisions about staff. Store C is the newest of the stores in this research so, as yet, does not have to deal with issues relating to seniority. In Store A, perhaps as a result of its long history, seniority is a constant source of conflict as the company, rightly in this researcher's viewpoint, insists that seniority should not be the ultimate deciding factor rather the needs of the business should dictate any decisions. Store B used have similar problems however since the current leader took over as General Manager four and a half years ago, there is very little

problems with this. The longest serving manager in this store, the Supermarket Manager, suggested that this was because the current leader refused to entertain discussions about seniority and after his appointment enforced decisions unilaterally rather than discuss the issue of seniority. He also said that the current General Manager always says to staff that the only way to obtain status (*"get into the good books"*) was to work hard and earn it. While the General Manager in Store A criticizes the role of seniority in his store, in his twelve years in the role he has not succeeded in steering staff away from their strong belief in it, yet the General Manager in Store B had succeeded in under four years. A clear case of how a leader can influence culture.

4.5.6 How leaders recruit, select, promote and excommunicate

The purpose of asking a number of questions in relation to recruitment, selection and promotion were to see whether leaders were maintaining the current culture or attempting to change dysfunctional aspects of it. While all leaders and a large number of their staff stated that attitude was the key when recruiting or promoting, it was interesting to hear the leader of Store A saying that it was important that a person would 'fit in' with others in the area the vacancy was in. The leader of Store B said that when he started in the role and observed some of the negative cultures at play in the store that he made a deliberate decision to recruit people for their ability to do the job rather than their ability to do fit in with others in his store in an attempt to dilute the cultures. A member of his management team said that this sent out a message to everyone in the store that a change was about to occur; staff soon realized that it was ability not personal contacts that selection was based on. He believed that this also changed the staff's attitude to him as a manager as they respected what he was doing. The leader of Store C was similar in his approach to recruitment and promotions but he made the point that this was the way that recruitment had been done since the store's inception in 1996.

Again, it can be seen a leader deliberately 'taking on' a culture and changing it, but also in doing so not just changing a specific culture in a store but also influencing others for the good.

When asked about dealing with situations where a member of the store has to be terminated, the key to all decisions made by the leaders was fairness. Their followers all echoed this. While one would believe that this would influence the union dependent culture, this is not the case due to other reasons cited earlier. As a result, while the researcher was able to establish a link between how the leaders deal with recruitment, selection, promotion and culture change; there was no conclusive link between termination, or excommunication, and culture.

4.5.7 Organisation Design and Structure, Organisation Systems and Procedures Design of Physical Space, Facades and Buildings

It is intended to deal with these three sections together as while all the leaders and their followers were vocal about the organisation design and structure, organisation systems and procedures and layouts, all were unanimous in the fact that due to the way the Group as a whole is managed that they are not free to deal with these issues. While the suggestions provided at interview by participants were quite interesting to the researcher, they were not relevant to this research as the leaders focused on here are actually not leaders within the organisation when it comes to these two areas. This is a clear demonstration of Likert's linking pin theory in action, while the leaders are a leader in their own store, they are also followers in another group.

4.5.8 Rites and Rituals of the Organisation

The purpose of this section was to identify cultures that were no longer in existence in the stores and also to ascertain whether the leaders were instrumental in the abolition of those cultures.

This wasn't very useful to the researcher as the only leader who identified an old culture was the leader of Store B who spoke about his battle with seniority which has already been dealt with as part of this research. However, as the leaders and followers were

unable to identify cultures that had now become obsolete, it would seem to this researcher that cultures do not change easily in the stores.

4.5.9 Stories about important people and events

While many interesting stories were available to the researcher from the participants in the stores and were useful for the cultural descriptions, with the exception of one, they did not show any link between the leader and the culture. The exception came from Store B and was referred to by all participants in that store. The incident in question took place one year into the leader's appointment as General Manager. As discussed previously, there had been many referrals to third parties on industrial relations issues, after a particularly tough conciliation which had gone on late into the night, all parties were at work the next morning. All the staff were huddled together talking about what had happened and the leader spoke with them and said after greeting them said *"what has happened has happened, it's over and done with so let's get back to normal"*. It might seem like something small but it had a huge impact on the culture of the store. One of the staff members interviewed, who is also on the house committee, said that this was when they realized that they didn't have to 'fight' about issues any more and that they begun to believe that they could have a good working relationship with the leader. The Supermarket Manager also said that at the time a staff member had said to him that it was after this incident that they believed that the open door policy could work. This has resulted in a decline in the union dependent culture and also the birth of the culture of fairness in the store.

4.5.10 Formal Statement of Organisational Philosophy

Schein proposes that the formal statement of an organisation's philosophy should reflect the culture. As the Group does not have a formal mission statement, the researcher instead asked the leaders to formulate their own mission statement for their store. They put forward the following:

Store A:

"The mission of Store A is to provide the goods that the customer wants at a price that is affordable to the general public and also to provide fair and just employment"

Store B:

"To work as a team to achieve our agreed targets and goals"

Store C:

"Get it done"

These are three very different philosophies but do the leader's thoughts impact on the culture in their stores? The researcher cannot see a link between the culture in Store A and its leader's philosophy but what is interesting is that it reflects the original philosophy propounded by the founder of the Group in the early 1900's that is given in it's entirety in the introductory chapter. This would seem that the leader has been influenced by the culture rather than him influencing the culture.

However it is possible to identify clear links between the leaders' philosophies in Stores B and C.

The philosophy espoused by the leader in Store B proposes fairness ('agreed') and also collectiveness ('team'), which reflect the culture in the store. Following interviews with other members of staff and management it was established that these cultures did not exist before this leader was appointed. This shows a definite influencing of the culture by the leader.

The philosophy propounded by the leader in Store C is reflected in the no-nonsense culture and the culture of order. These cultures did not exist prior to this leader taking charge according to the staff and management interviewed.

4.6   Conclusion: Can Leaders Influence Culture

In an attempt to establish whether the hypothesis can be proven, a review of the influence of the leader on culture in each of the stores will now take place.

4.6.1   Store A: Leader's Influence on Culture

From the study that took place last year it was possible to identify a number of long standing cultures in Store A including a focus on stock, a task focus along with a short-term focus.   Other cultures noted were demarcation, 'them and us', seniority, lack of ownership and an entitlement culture.

These were then linked to the six point cultural classification developed by the researcher. Store A was placed as follows on this classification:

- Distribution of Power: leans towards management
- High need for predictability
- Strong collectivism
- Balance between masculine and feminine cultural traits
- Short-term time orientation
- Not very adaptable.

From the primary research mechanism of semi-structured interviews at all levels it was found that the leader in Store A had no influence on the culture in the store, it may even be that this leader is impeding the development of more positive cultures. This can be seen when this leaders thoughts about achieving sales are analysed. He is of the opinion that he has to detail exactly what each member of management has to achieve and how they should achieve it.   It is this researcher's contention that if he allowed his management team more freedom then it is possible that would develop ideas to promote sales and reduce costs that are more effective than the tried and tested methods. However, to be fair to this leader it must be noted that it is only in the last couple of years

that he has had managers available to him that can be allowed to work to their own initiative.

This leader seems to have been influenced by the culture of both his store and the Group. During his interview a number of comments about the way he conducts business reflect on the historical way of doing things within the company, this can be evidenced in his unwillingness to share information and only communicates when necessary and in making decisions based on the facts and figures only rather than communicating with members of his team.

This leader does not help the researcher in proving the hypothesis that leadership influences culture.

4.6.2 Store B: Leader's Influence on Culture

The existing study on culture in the organisation provided the researcher with the following cultures prevalent in Store B:

- Customer Focus
- Task Culture
- Lack of ownership
- Class culture
- Fairness

These fit into the cultural classifications as follows:

- Marginal power distance
- A falling need for predictability
- Positive collectivism
- Strong feminine traits with some masculinity
- Short-term orientation

- Becoming more adaptable

The researcher believes that this is the store that shows the clearest indication of the leader influencing the culture. Over the last four and a half years since this leader was appointed General Manager of the store, there has been a marked change in the culture of the store. The most significant changes occurred in the move away from the culture of seniority and the development of a culture of fairness. Interestingly, this leader spoke about deliberately setting out to change some of the cultures within the store and is currently attempting to make the store more adaptable, or as he said *"make it move quicker"*

What is interesting to note is that this store, and indeed this leader, lean more towards feminine cultural traits that involve nurturing, and more importantly cooperation something that is clearly lacking in Store. This mutual support between the leader and followers may be at the root of these changes in the culture.

Store B is a clear example of a leader influencing the culture.

4.6.3   Store C: Leader's Influence on Culture

From the study conducted last year, the following culture were found to exist in Store C:

- No-nonsense/ 'Just Do It'
- Order
- Sales/Figures Awareness
- Flexibility
- Increase in union dependency
- Task Focus

Again, in an attempt to have all participating stores described similarly, the culture of Store C was also described using the six culture characteristics:

- Minimal power distance
- Need for predictability is not too high
- Individualsim
- Short-term time orientation
- High adaptability

As this is a newer store it can be seen to a certain extent that the culture was developed at its inception by members of the Group team to include positive cultures like flexibility and adaptability. However, even though the leader has not been in his role very long two significant changes in the culture have manifested themselves. The 'just do it' culture and culture of order were not in existence when this leader commenced in his role as General Manager. Unlike the leader in Store B the leader in this store does not seem to have deliberately attempted to change the culture. The researcher believes that in this instance it was through staff observing their new leader that they adopted his way of thinking in relation to these two cultures.

Again, the researcher believes that this is an indication that leadership can influence culture.

4.6.4 Hypothesis – Proven or Unproven?

On reviewing the findings in all three stores, the researcher is of the opinion that the leader of an organisation can have an influence, either positive or negative, on the culture of their organisation.

However, to support this hypothesis, the researcher believes that further research would need to take place. In her own organisation it would seem prudent to undertake this study in all stores in an effort to further prove the hypothesis.

The researcher conducted further study in an attempt to analyse why two leaders influenced the culture in their stores and one did not. The findings were interesting but at this stage only tenuous links can be taken from it.

The leaders of Store B and C, the two leaders who the researcher believes have influenced their culture, scored very similarly on their preferences for task and people in that they had significant concern for both task and people. The leader of Store A scored very high in concern for task but not for people.

The researcher believes that it is perhaps the concern for people that makes it possible for leaders to influence culture. But as this study was only concerned with three leaders it is difficult to describe this as a conclusive finding, however it does warrant further study. If it is proven then it would be possible for organisations to use testing at the selection stage to recruit/promote only those leaders who have concern for both task and people.

Also interesting was the fact that both leaders who influenced the culture in their stores showed preferences for referent and expert power while the leader in Store A showed a preference for expert and legitimate power. It may be that as referent power draws on the traits a leader possesses and the behaviours he or she subsequently learns, that the leaders in Stores B and C possess different traits and so display different behaviours to the leader in Store A. However, no study was conducted as part of this research on what traits and behaviours the leaders in the stores have.

It would be interesting for further study to attempt to establish what traits and behaviours leaders with referent power display as it would seem that those leaders with referent power are more successful in influencing culture.

As a result of this, the researcher concludes that leaders can influence culture in an organisation. Furthermore the researcher has established a tenuous link between a leader who displays both concern for task and people and an ability by that leader to influence

culture. A further tenuous link was discovered between a leader with referent power and the ability to influence culture.

APPENDIX 1: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Section 1: What leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis.

A)   What are the most important duties that you perform. Why?

B)   How do you measure your success/if you are successful?

C)   What controls do you use to ensure that your store is successful?

Section 2: How leaders react to critical incidents and organisational crises.

A)   Since you became a GM what has been the most stressful/critical situation that you have had to deal with?

B)   How do you find you deal with these situations

C)   Who do you turn to for guidance/assistance at these times

Section 3:   How leaders allocate resources

A)   When you have to make a decision about allocating resources e.g staff/space etc, how do you come to your decision?

B)   Insetting targets/goals do you tend towards optimism/negativity

Section 4:   Deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching,

A)   If you were to be compared with someone who works with or who has worked with RS, who would you like to be compared to and why?

B)   What traits/skills that you possess make you a successful leader?

C)   Do you like to see staff/managers who act like you? Who act differently to you?

D)   If you notice that someone has potential to go further with in the company, how do you try and develop them (formally and informally)

Section 5:   How leaders allocate rewards and status

A)   What rewards are available to staff in this store – what are the rewards available for?

B)   Who decides how and when rewards are given?

C)   Is status important to you as an individual?

D)   Is status important in this store?

Section 6:   How leaders recruit, select, promote and excommunicate.

A)   When recruiting for any level of staff or management, or promoting someone, what are the key things you look for any why?

B)   If 2 people have applied for the same job and both have the exact same experience, how do you decide which one gets the job?

C)   What goes through your head when you are making a decision to dismiss

Section 7:   Organisation Design and Structure

A)   The company structure is designed mainly by members of the Senior Team in GSO. What, if any, changes have you made to this and why?

B)   What changes would you like to make to the company structure and why? Why haven't you made/been able to make these changes?

Section 8: Organisation Systems and Procedures

A) What daily/weekly routines do you have? What are they for? Why are they important?

B) What daily/weekly routines do you impose on the store – other than the ones put in place by the company?

C) Looking at the systems/procedures that the company has in place, which ones would you change. Why?

Section 9:   Rites and Rituals of the organisation

A)   What 'traditions' have you noticed in this store that don't seem to be in other stores?

B)   Have you tried to change/remove any of these traditions? Have you been successful?

Section 10   Design of physical space, facades and buildings

A)   As a company, the store layouts etc tend to be set down by GSO. Have you made any changes in this store? Why?

B)   If you were able to change anything about the layouts etc what would it be?

Section 11   Stories about important people and events

A)   Looking back on events that have occurred while you have been the leader in this store, what are the important ones that (1) helped shape you as a leader and (2) helped shape the store?

Section 12   Formal Statement of organisational philosophy

A)   If you were to put into words the philosophy of this store, what would you say

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRES

PERSONAL POWER PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Below is a list of statement that describes behaviours that leaders can direct towards their followers. Read each descriptive statement, thinking in terms of how you prefer to influence others. Mark the number that most closely represents how you feel where the ratings are as follows:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

To influence others, I would prefer to: (please circle one number for each statement)

1. Increase their pay level	1	2	3	4	5
2. Make them feel valued	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give undesirable job assignments	1	2	3	4	5
4. Make them feel I approve of them	1	2	3	4	5
5. Make them feel they have commitments to meet	1	2	3	4	5
6. Make them feel personally accepted	1	2	3	4	5
7. Make them feel important	1	2	3	4	5
8. Give them good work related suggestions	1	2	3	4	5
9. Make work difficult for them	1	2	3	4	5
10. Share my experience and/or training	1	2	3	4	5
11. Influence a pay increase	1	2	3	4	5
12. Make working here unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5
13. Make being at work distasteful	1	2	3	4	5
14. Make them feel that they should satisfy their job requirements	1	2	3	4	5
15. Provide them with sound job-related advice	1	2	3	4	5
16. Provide them with special benefits	1	2	3	4	5
17. Influence promotions	1	2	3	4	5

18. Give them the feeling that they have
       responsibilities to fulfill   1   2   3   4   5
19. Provide them with knowledge that they need   1   2   3   4   5
20. Make them recognise that they have tasks to
       accomplish   1   2   3   4   5

T-P LEADERSHIP STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following items describe aspects of leadership behaviour. Respond to each item according to the way you would most likely act.

Circle whether you would most likely behave in the described way:

Always (A), Frequently (F), Occasionally (O), Seldom (S), Never (N)

1. I am most likely to act as the spokesperson of the store   A F O S N

2. I encourage overtime work   A F O S N

3. I allow staff complete freedom in their work   A F O S N

4. I encourage the use of procedures   A F O S N

5. I allow staff to use their own judgement in
   solving problems   A F O S N

6. I always point out that we should try to be ahead
   of other stores   A F O S N

7. I speak as a representative of the store   A F O S N

8. I hassle staff so that they put in greater effort   A F O S N

9. I get my ideas out at team meetings   A F O S N

10. I let staff do they work the way they think is best   A F O S N

11. I work hard for promotion/recognition   A F O S N

12. I tolerate postponement and uncertainty   A F O S N

13. I speak for the store if outsiders are present   A F O S N

14. I keep work moving at a rapid pace   A F O S N

15. I turn staff loose on a job and let them go for it   A F O S N

16. I settle conflicts when they occur   A F O S N

17. I get swamped by details   A F O S N

18. I represent the store at outside meetings   A F O S N

19. I am reluctant to allow staff any freedom in

how they do things	A F O S N
20. I decide what should be done and how it should be done	A F O S N
21. I push for increased sales	A F O S N
22. I let some staff have authority	A F O S N
23. Things normally turn out as I predict	A F O S N
24. I allow the staff a high degree of initiative	A F O S N
25. I assign staff to particular tasks	A F O S N
26. I am willing to make changes	A F O S N
27. I ask staff to work harder	A F O S N
28. I trust the staff to exercise good judgement	A F O S N
29. I schedule all the work that has to be done	A F O S N
30. I refuse to explain my actions	A F O S N
31. I persuade others that my ideas are to their advantage	A F O S N
32. I permit staff to set their own pace	A F O S N
33. I urge the staff to beat previous figures	A F O S N
34. I act without consulting the group	A F O S N
35. I ask that staff follow standard rules and regulations	A F O S N

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