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Strategic Leadership in the Department of Labour in Gauteng

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Strategic Leadership in the Department of Labour in Gauteng

By

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management.

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ABSTRACT

The Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit of the Gauteng provincial office of the Department of Labour experiences challenges due to the lack of strategic leadership. This research was aimed at exploring these challenges in the execution of the Gauteng Department of Labour's provincial office merger with regard to the implementation of the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit. Using a qualitative approach and qualitative interviews, the factors that lead to the lack of strategic leadership in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit were investigated.

The findings reveal that the merger of the former North and South Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit of the Gauteng Province affected the functioning of the business unit. This was found to be as a result of the lack of an updated strategy of the business unit. These results in managers in the unit not to being able to play their strategic leadership role, as planning, communication and strategic understanding affected the implementation of the unit's strategy.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Date:

…….

Signed:

…….

DEDICATION

To my GOD Almighty, who made sure my parents, Thengimuzi Solomon Maseko and Thandiwe Grace Maseko, took me to school.

To my parents, who always supported me despite all the challenges we faced as a family.

To my sister Lillian “Mede”, I thank GOD for having a resilient sister like you.

My late sister Nobayeni “Noby” Charity - may your soul rest in peace and I hope we meet again in the next life.

My brother Elias “Lasi”, thank you for your support bafo, you are the best man I know.

Kholofelo Ruth (Maseko) my dynamite for your support, patience, understanding, faith and love.

To my children Calvin, Nomvula, Ntokozo and Katlego, I pray you all get inspired by this academic achievement and be the best in life.

To all my brothers and sisters from my other mothers and fathers; thank you for being part of my life.

My sister, Fentse Ndzalo Maseko, for your unwavering support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First to GOD, who alone indeed knows everything.

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To all MMP & DM lecturers for challenging, shifting my perspectives, and for broadening my academic and skills capacity. Through you I am no longer the same. Thanks to all ADU, library staff and the P&DM management.

My appreciation goes to the Department of Labour, especially the Gauteng provincial office of the Department, for financing my master's studies; and the LMI and S colleagues and managers for affording me the opportunity to interview them.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **I**

DECLARATION ..... **II**

DEDICATION ..... **III**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **IV**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **V**

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS ..... **VII**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **VIII**

CHAPTER ONE **1**

INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 INTRODUCTION 1
1.2 BACKGROUND 2
1.2.1 Strategic Objectives of LMI&S Business Unit *7*
1.2.2. LMI and Strategic Implications *8*
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT 9
1.4 PURPOSE STATEMENT 11
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS 11
1.6 CONCLUSION 12

CHAPTER 2 ..... **13**

LITERATURE REVIEW **13**

2.1 INTRODUCTION 13
2.2 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP 13
2.3 TRAIT-BASED LEADERSHIP STUDIES 16
2.4 PRINCIPLE-CENTRED APPROACH 16
2.5 BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH 17
2.6 CONTINGENCY APPROACH 18
2.7 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP 19
2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP 20
2.8.1 Strategic leadership challenges in the public sector *23*
2.8.2 The integrated model *25*
2.9 CONCLUSION 30

CHAPTER THREE **31**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **31**

3.1 INTRODUCTION 31
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH 32
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN 33
3.4 DATA COLLECTION 34
3.4.1 Primary Data *34*
3.4.2 Secondary Data *35*
3.4.3 Sampling *35*
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS 36
3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY 37
3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY 37
3.8 CONCLUSION 37

CHAPTER FOUR **39**

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS 39

4.1 INTRODUCTION 39
4.2 STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN LMI&S 40
4.3 MANAGERIAL PLANNING 41
4.4 LEADING SUBORDINATES 43
4.5 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION 44
4.5.1 Leadership trends in LMI&S 45
4.5.2 Leadership philosophy 46
4.5.3 The people and production in the business unit 47
4.5.4 Managing subordinates 48
4.5.5 Vision and mission as a driving force to strategic implementation 50
4.6 WHAT SHOULD BE CORRECTED? 51
4.7 CONCLUSION 52

CHAPTER 5 53

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS 53

5.1 INTRODUCTION 53
5.2 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND THE BUSINESS UNIT 55
5.3 COMMUNICATION AND INFLUENCE 57
5.4 LEADERSHIP TRENDS 59
5.5 WORK TASKS AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT 61
5.6 MANAGING DIVERSE EMPLOYEES AND STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION 62
5.7 ENFORCING ESTABLISHED REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS 63
5.8 CONCLUSION 65

CHAPTER 6 66

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 66

6.1 INTRODUCTION 66
6.2 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS 66
6.2.1 Merger 67
6.2.2 Leadership trends 67
6.2.3 Inspiration 68
6.2.4 Understanding the business unit's strategy 68
6.2.5 Management development 68
6.2.6 Organisational governance 69
6.2.7 Organisational Structure 69
6.2.8 Tools of trade 69
6.2.9 LMI&S Business unit culture 69
6.2.10 Recommendations 70
6.2.11 Strategic review 70
6.2.12 Management development 70
6.2.13 Organisational governance 71
6.2.14 Organisational structure 71
6.2.15 Tools of trade 71
6.2.16 Business unit culture 72
6.3 CONCLUSIONS 72

REFERENCES 74

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

LMI and S:	Labour Market Information and Statistics
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
AU:	African Union
NEPAD:	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPM:	New Public Management
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
DoL:	Department of Labour

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: LMI and S business unit organogram

Figure 2: LMI and S Business Unit

Figure 3: Leadership Grid

Figure 4: Different types of leadership

Figure 5: Strategic implementation factors in the public sector

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was established in 1919, based on the belief that collaboration between employers, employees and governments globally is an important factor to attain social justice; that is equality, solidarity and also equal rights and opportunities in the workplace (International Labour Organisation, 2011). The manner in which the International Labour Organisation is structured makes it the only agency; which has a three way co-ordination mechanism to draw in all actors in the labour market fraternity; namely employers, employees and governments to engage in a social dialogue on labour market issues (International Labour Organisation, 2011).

The 'decent work' objective is a key agenda that dominates labour market issues globally, and seeks to ensure that governments, employees and employers work together in the development of rights and policies that protect all employees (International Labour Organisation, 2011). Through this plan all partners in the labour fraternity endeavour in a deliberate manner to create economies that can afford people to live sustainable lives, get employed and also enable them to create their own businesses through comprehensive labour policies (International Labour Organisation, 2011). Skills development and a promotion of social dialogue as chief components of this agenda ensures that all partners participate in the drafting of labour and economic policies that aim to make the decent work agenda a social reality (International Labour Organisation, 2011).

The ILO's department of statistics seeks to globally assist countries' that are affiliated to it, to compare labour market trends and labour statistics related

indicators (International Labour Organisation, 2011). For instance, the South African Department of Labour (DoL) uses the global labour market information in order to regulate and create a better labour market in South Africa in line with the United Nation's (UN) global development goals, in particular goal number one, that seeks to ensure that in all countries people do not languish in poverty and suffer from hunger (International Labour Organisation, 2011 and United Nations Department of Public Information, 2010).

1.2 BACKGROUND

It is important to consider the history of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa in general and its political policies' impact on the labour market of South Africa, in particular in order to understand the role of the DoL in the current democratic context that characterises South Africa (Department of Labour, 2011). Colonialism and apartheid systems' were not designed to deliver public services to all citizens of South Africa in an equitable manner. In this regard, the establishment of democracy in 1994 compels the government to provide services to all South Africans (Department of Labour, 2011).

Linked to the ILO's agenda of decent work, in 2009, the national government of South Africa identified the creation of decent jobs as a critical priority to ensure that people of South Africa live sustainable and meaningful. The Department of Labour's (Dol) role is to ensure that in South Africa the labour market is regulated through sound policies and programmes in a manner that recognises that workers issues are human rights issues (Department of Labour, 2011).

In its quest to transform the labour market of South Africa, the DoL has 421 service delivery points; this number includes 126 labour centres, 19 mobile offices, 31 satellite offices and 153 visiting points. The total staff complement of the department is about 5 767 (Department of Labour, 2011).

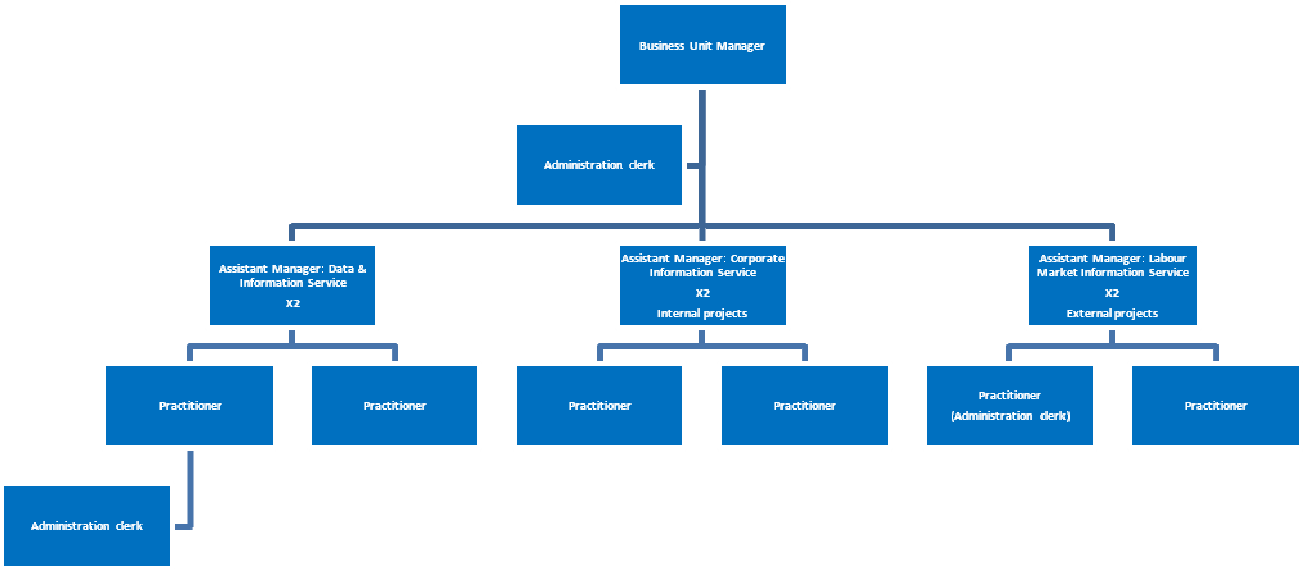
The Labour Market Information and Statistics (LMI and S) business unit is a provincial unit that exists in all nine provinces of South Africa. This business unit's role is to ensure that the DoL leadership, managers and labour market actors are kept informed of statistical information and reports that depict the level of the department's progress in transforming the South African labour market and to monitor and evaluate the DoL's projects (Department of Labour, 2011; LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009).

The legislative programmes and projects that form part of the LMI and S business unit strategic objectives are the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Unemployment Insurance Act, Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, Employment Equity Act, Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and the Labour Relations Act (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009). The progress of these programmes in Gauteng province must be monitored, evaluated and reported on so that appropriate decisions and interventions can be made.

The current staff complement of the Gauteng provincial LMI and S business unit is 1 Deputy Director (Business Unit manager), 5 Assistant Directors (Assistant Managers), 7 practitioners, and 3 clerks (15 personnel in total).

Figure 1 below depicts the structure of the LMI and S business unit:

Figure 1: LMI and S business unit organogram



Source: Adapted from the Labour Market Information and Statistics Business Unit strategy, 2005-2009

The crafting of an organisational strategy requires managers and leaders to consider the global and the environmental context where the organisation is based. The global drive of the LMI and S business unit strategy has been the realisation that South Africa, after 1994, became part of the global society (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009).

South Africa therefore committed to international labour agreements and systems which have an impact on how the government of South Africa performs in relation to international labour-related problems. For instance, numerous agreements such as the Forced Labour Convention of 1933, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention of 1948, Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention of 1949, Equal Remuneration Convention of 1951, Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention of 1958, Tripartite Consultation Convention of 1976, Minimum Age Convention of 1978, Occupational Safety and Health Convention of 1981, Safety and Health in Mines Convention of 1995, and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999 (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009). These international agreements also relate to the Millennium Development Goals adopted in the year 2000 whereby most countries, including South Africa, agreed to reduce by half the number of people who are poverty and hunger by the year 2014. These developments signalled a need for the formation of the LMI and S business unit in all the provincial offices of the DoL in order to monitor, evaluate and report on the labour market changes in South Africa (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009).

In the African continent-wide context, the LMI and S business unit was established to capture and reflect on the economic developments within the continent. This is in line with the African Union (AU) requirements. This union of African countries, which was formed in 2001, aims to establish a basis for development in Africa (via the New Partnership for Africa's Development) for economic integration in the African continent (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009; NEPAD, 2001:1-59).

At the Southern African regional level, South Africa is a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The SADC countries, through the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, aim to, among other objectives, ensure that there is economic growth and holistic development in the Southern African region. The Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan also strives to form standard political, value and institutional systems to improve the quality of life in the region through employment creation and effective utilisation of the region's resources (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009; NEPAD, 2001:1-59).

At the national level, the LMI and S business unit was intended to analyse and comment on key labour market-related policies and legislation of South Africa (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009). The LMI and S business unit strategy embodies the international, continental, regional and national links even though it is based in the Gauteng province.

With the establishment of the Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Administration in the national government of South Africa, it becomes crucial that the LMI and S business unit in Gauteng plays a key role in statistical and information capacity for government planning.

The operational strategic model of the Labour Market Information and Statistics Business Unit is illustrated in the vision, mission statement and strategic objectives of the business unit as outlined below.

- The vision is that of well-informed labour market actors.
- The mission is to provide labour market information that is accurate and responsive to the needs of external users, the DoL and its clients through delivering labour market information, corporate information and data management and information services. This is done to facilitate improved policymaking, planning and implementation through monitoring and evaluation.

1.2.1 Strategic Objectives of LMIS and P Business Unit

I. The Labour Market Information Service sub-unit strategic objectives are:

a) The impact of labour legislation is monitored and evaluated by developing indicators and producing quarterly monitoring and annual analysis reports, clarifying areas for research and evaluation, and identifying sources of labour market information.
b) The impact of socio-economic policies on the labour market is monitored and evaluated though bi-annual labour market reviews, establishing information quality assurance systems and producing bi-annual quality assurance reports.
c) Provincial growth and development planning and implementation processes are supported by gathering the information needs of Provincial Growth and Development Strategy planning and implementation processes as identified annually, producing the annual narrative regional analytical profiles, and establishing relationships with producers and users of the labour market.

II. The Corporate information service sub-unit strategic objectives are:

a) Provincial service delivery being monitored and evaluated by consolidated quarterly monitoring reports, analysis reports that include performance reviews and recommendations, and by producing annual placement rate surveys.
b) Client satisfaction surveys are conducted; and annual external client satisfaction and annual internal client satisfaction reports produced.

III. The Data Management and Information Service sub-unit's strategic objectives are the following:

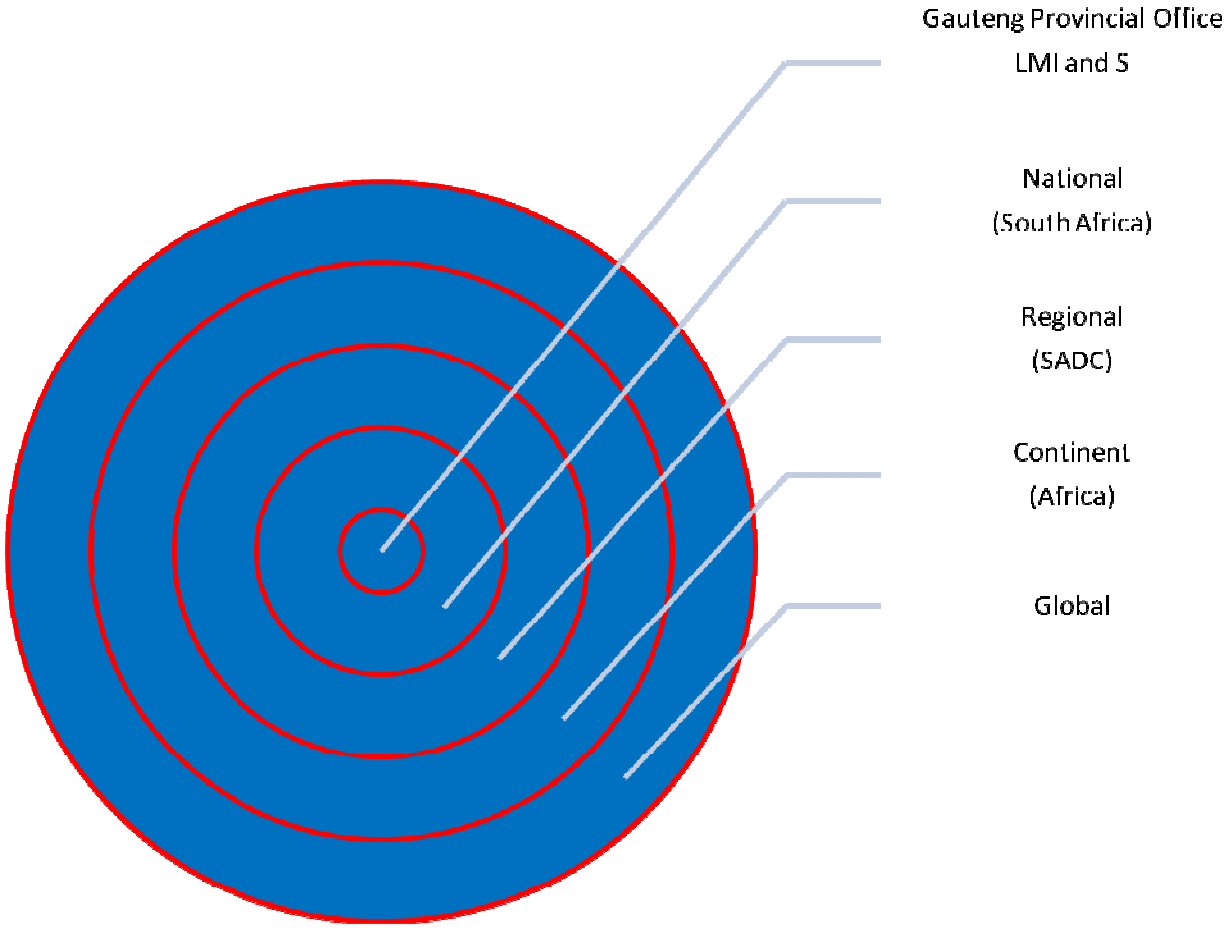
a) Data and information management is improved by databases that are established and maintained; ensuring the availability of software and forming a relationship structured with Public-Private Partnerships.
b) LMI data is sourced by means of data collection from internal sources monthly and external LMI data collected through requests.
c) Management of labour market information documentation and queries is improved by means of document management systems, resource centres maintained and updated resource centre security systems developed and implemented, and requests for information (queries) responded to within 24 hours.
d) Data and information quality assured by means of a data quality assurance system established, data and information verified and validated monthly and audit of administrative data conducted monthly.

The unit is thus well-placed to implement this strategy in the Gauteng provincial office.

1.2.2. LMI and S Strategic Implications

Figure 2 below shows the complex strategic overview of the LMI and S business unit. Managers of the unit have to, according to the 2004-2009 strategy, understand the different worlds that have an impact on, and inform, the work they do in the LMI and S unit.

Figure 2: LMI and S Business Unit



Source: (LMI and S Business Unit Strategy, 2005-2009).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In 2010 the DoL embarked on a project to merge the Pretoria and Johannesburg provincial offices in order to create one Gauteng provincial office of the DoL. The reason why the Gauteng Labour department had two provincial offices is most likely that Gauteng has 26 labour centres, which is highest number of labour centres in any province. Another reason may be that all other provinces have one DoL provincial office.

The merger process seems to have brought about many changes and thereby exposed some challenges in relation to the function and strategic role of the LMI and S business unit in Gauteng. This merger involved the two LMI and S offices (Pretoria and Johannesburg) that worked differently, had different strategies, and were composed of different sub-units to merge and use one single operational strategy.

There is a strategic leadership problem in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit's strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the Department of Labour. This is seemingly depicted in governance issues of the unit; for instance, challenges are experienced in ensuring that the unit does exactly what it is mandated to do. Such a challenge reveals the need for strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit of Gauteng to address these problems. This situation can negatively impact the objective role of the LMI and S business unit.

Much research has been undertaken on matters that relate to strategic leadership in work organisations. However, there is a need to explore issues of strategic leadership in the public sector in the South African context, such as in the LMI and S business unit of the Gauteng DoL's provincial office in the execution of the change mandate to merge the LMI and S business units of Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Managers in the public sector face complex strategic leadership challenges, for instance the global economic recession experienced in 2008 had a significant impact on government budgets and South Africa is no exception (Gordhan, 2010:13; COSATU, 2010; Kucera, Roncolato & Von Uexkull, 2010; Vollgraaff, 2012:4; Harding, 2012:1). In this context, government managers are expected to lead and deliver services to the public in the best way they can despite such challenges.

The role of government is to ensure that its services are rendered to all citizens and to ensure that international agreements are carried through the public sectors (Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland & Walsh, 2010). It is vital for LMI and S managers and leaders to be strategically knowledgeable in providing employees with clear guidance as regards their jobs (Lustig, et al, 2010).

1.4 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this research is to explore the challenge of the lack of strategic leadership in the execution of the Gauteng Department of Labour's provincial office merger with regard to the implementation of the LMI and S business unit. The research will investigate factors that lead to the lack of strategic leadership, provide the findings, interpret and analyse the findings, and recommend mitigating strategies for consideration.

In addressing the knowledge gap identified above, the research will focus on understanding how the lack of strategic leadership in relation to the merger of the Gauteng provincial offices (North and South) of the LMI and S business units of the Gauteng Department of Labour has resulted in challenges. Drawing on the conclusions of the research data analysis, the research will put forward recommendations on how to remedy the situation and address the issue of lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors leading to the lack of strategic leadership in the Gauteng Department of Labour: Labour Market Information and Statistics Business Unit?

2. What are the leadership trends in the Department of Labour and in the Labour Market Information and Statistics Business Unit in particular?
3. What are the strategies for consideration in order to remedy the lack of strategic leadership in the unit?

1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that the ILO critically influences the strategic direction and role of the DoL with regard to drafting of labour policy and labour market policies of South Africa.

The LMI and S business unit is a vital unit for the provincial Gauteng DoL, in that it deals with statistical and monitoring and evaluation reports. These reports capture the progress of programmes and projects of the Gauteng provincial office. Hence it is important to explore the challenges of the lack of strategic leadership in the execution of the LMI and S business unit strategic implementation.

The following chapter provides the literature review for this research. This section is critical in relation to understanding previous research undertaken in line with strategy and leadership concepts (strategic leadership) and helps this project to draw meaningful and credible conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides the literature review for this research with the aim of learning from other researchers and also building on what has been researched in the area of strategic leadership matters and its related challenges in the workplace and in the public sector institutions (Neuman, 2011). This literature review contextualises key leadership perspectives by considering views from the upper-echelons theory, the supervisory theories and the recent some leadership theories in organisational behaviour located in the field of management. This is achieved by clarifying the difference between leadership, management and strategic leadership, discuss trait-based leadership studies, principle-centred approach, behavioural approach, contingency approach and transformational leadership in terms of how they form part of strategic leadership as a framework of this research within the public sector.

2.2 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Several writers in the field of leadership and management like Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland and Walsh (2010); Badenhorst-Weiss, Cant, duToit, Erasmus, Grobler, Kruger, Machado, Marx, Mpofu, Rudansky-Kloppers and Maxwell (2005); and Werner (2007) define leadership as the manner in which people, regardless of their levels of position in the workplace, are able to influence employees to be energised and work willingly towards the realisation of the organisationally set goals and objectives.

This definition depicts some distinct components of leadership that appear to assign to it a different role compared to the role of management in the work place. Management is mostly defined as an activity in the workplace that is characterised by "planning, organising, problem solving and control activities, which are related to the everyday running of [an organisation]" (Werner, 2007:288).

Writers like Kotter (2001:2-11), Werner (2007:288), Maxwell (2005), Michaelides and Kardasi (2010) and Yukl (1989) share the same opinion as they state that contrary to management, leadership is associated with change, the development of strategies, the ability to inspire people, the capacity to do the right things in the organisation, like living and embodying the values of the organisation, constantly planning for the future, and connecting with employees.

On the other hand, management is associated with the implementation of the initiated change, maintenance of developed strategies, monitoring of the work performed by employees in line with the strategy, doing things right according to set strategies and objectives, actively reacting to daily events and ensuring that order and authority is preserved within the organisation (Kotter, 2001:2-11; Werner, 2007:288; Maxwell, 2005; and Michaelides & Kardasi, 2010).

The understanding of the difference between leadership and management is important in this research so that both terms are not used interchangeably, as it is easy to assume that people become leaders by virtue of their positions in organisations of work (Werner, 2007: 288).

Strategic leadership in relation to the public sector in South Africa can be better understood in relation to strategic management, as this management tool emphasises the role of planning, using influence to get commitment from all employees and to ensure that all the resources; human and non-human, are used in line with achieving the objectives of an organisation (Mpofu, 2010:43; Lane, 2008:15-23; Stewart, 2004:16-21).

Strategic leadership in the public sector context can promote the leadership components of influencing, directing, motivating and connecting with subordinates in the functions of management in accordance with the New Public Management perspective (Lane, 2008:15-23; Stewart, 2004:16-21). According to Cope, Stephen, Leishman, Frank, Starie and Peter (1997), Stewart (2004:16-21), & Lane (2008:15-16), the New Public Management perspective seeks to afford managers in the public sector an opportunity to have some discretion as they make decisions so that government programmes can be implemented in a more efficient and effective manner to improve the quality of life of all citizens.

Elenkov, Judge and Wright (2005) in their quantitative study conducted in the private sector shows that strategic leaders are able to be innovative in the work place, whereas this is a challenge for public sector managers. Stewart (2004:16-21), Lane (2008:15-16), Denner & Oosthuizen (2008:41-55) and Naidoo (2004:47-55) argue that strategy is still very much a challenge in the private sector and strategic management is considered as a valuable tool for effective strategic implementation.

Research studies conducted on leadership in the workplace reveal differences in strategic leadership between the upper echelons and supervisory leadership theories. The former are premised on and pay more attention to the leadership of organisations, meaning members in the organisation who are part of management, responsible for making decisions, formulating strategy and implementing work plans within an organisation (Mpofu, 2010; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). The latter (supervisory leadership perspectives) focus on leadership in organisations and assist in understanding the influence employees have in relation to the objectives and outcomes of an organisation without them necessarily being part of any senior management structure in the workplace (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Elenkov, Judge & Wright, 2005).

Leadership theories are discussed in some detail below with the aim of understanding strategic leadership issues and trends in the workplace.

2.3 TRAIT-BASED LEADERSHIP STUDIES

With regard to leadership theories it becomes clear that leadership as a concept is not new. Many studies were, and are still, undertaken that aim to further the understanding of challenges of leadership in the workplace (Elenkov, Judge & Wright, 2005; Yukl, 1989: 251-289). As early as the early twentieth century, trait aligned theories were dominant with regard to leadership research (Yukl, 1989:251-289).

Trait-based studies were driven by the belief that leaders are born; these studies were not, however, reliable, and current research focuses on other aspects of leadership with the hope of understanding leadership better, like principle-centred leadership instead of focusing on traits (Werner, 2007:290;Middlehurst, 2008).

2.4 PRINCIPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

A leader, according to the principle-centred approach, is characterised by embodying the organisation's vision, mission and values in line with his/her ethically influenced deeds and plays a critical role in instilling such values in the followers (Werner, 2007:290-291). In line with this theoretical leadership approach, Pretorius (2005) states that values such as integrity, teamwork, respect, honesty, mutual trust, non-discrimination, participation, equal opportunity, empowerment, recognition for performance, customer focus and quality are important values to be instilled in the work organisations of South Africa.

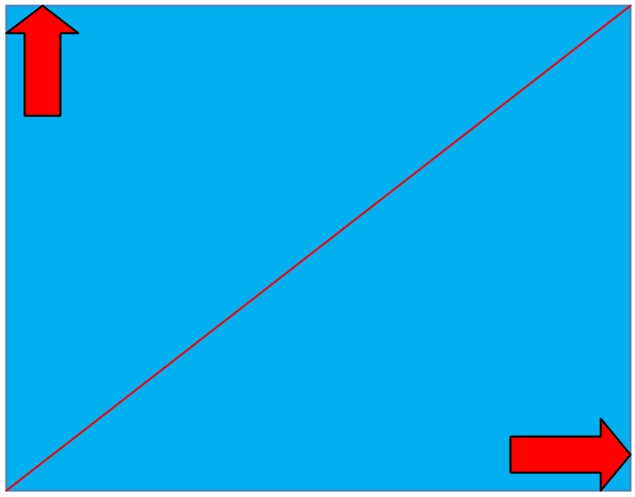
The principled-centred leadership approach seems to be a critical style that has to be instilled in the South African public sector, especially since corruption remains the greatest challenge to the efficient and equitable delivery of public services (Pretorius, 2005).

2.5 BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH

During the 1950s, leadership research shifted from focusing on traits to behaviours of successful leaders in workplace organisations. This school of thought propounds the view that successful leaders are those who conduct themselves in a superior matter in terms of how they delegate tasks and responsibilities, communicate effectively, motivate, connect and are able to influence employees to be committed to their jobs and still manage employees in line with meeting their output and objectives (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:215; Werner, 2007:287-312).

The behavioural leadership perspective is explained below in line with the popular leadership grid developed by Blake and Mouton in 1978.

Figure 3: Leadership Grid



Source: Adapted from Blake and Mouton, 1978

According to Blake and Mouton's leadership grid (1978), good or effective leaders consider both leading and managing people in the work place as crucial, and such leaders are able to sell change initiatives to all employees (Blake & Mouton, 1978; Rukmani, Ramesh and Jayakrishman, 2010). The impoverished leader, however, is poor in two aspects: managing the tasks and people's concerns (Blake & Mouton, 1978). The authority-compliance leader has only a high level of commitment towards production and relies on his/her authority to intimidate the employees under him or her to work (Badenhorst-Weiss. et al, 2010:215).

The country-club leader scores high on the concern for people area, because of the drive to be popular and avoid workplace conflicts, whereas the middle-of-the road leader is characterised by a balanced ('sit-on-the-fence') style of leadership; in this case an average concern for both variables is maintained in a satisfactory manner (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:215; Werner, 2007:291-293).

2.6 CONTINGENCY APPROACH

The postulations forwarded by the contingency theories of leadership are that managers' personalities do not change, in a sense that one can either be mostly concerned with the work or with their relationship with people Fiedler (1967). Theorists aligned to this school of thought argue that a manager's success in the workplace is largely affected by the manner in which his/her dominant style is suitable to a specific situation (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al; 2010). Fiedler's way of thinking as a key proponent of this school of thought is significant in that he developed the preferred co-worker scales to determine the correlation between a specific situation and the leadership style, emphasizing the notion of adaptability between a leader and a situation (Fiedler, 1967, in Werner, 2007:291-293).

According to Fiedler (1967) the leader-member relationship is an important factor that affects leadership in the workplace, because it provides a leader with space to establish support, trust and loyalty which are critical in helping the leader influence the employee/s. The task structure refers to the manner in which the jobs

of employees are designed for employees; the better the job design and employees' capacity and capability, the more the likelihood that the leader will be able to influence the employee/s Fiedler (1967). Last but not least, position power takes into account the formal or authoritative power a leader has over the employee/s in the workplace, where the higher the level of position occupied by the leader, the more his/her influence grows because of the power associated with the leader's position (Werner, 2007:291-293).

The contingency perspective is critical, because it shows that most research undertaken on leadership have come to focus more or less on one or more of the three mentioned variables: the leader, followers and the environment, and that some leaders may not effect change on certain situations without changing themselves or the environment before they can have a positive influence on employees (Michaelides & Kardasi, 2010).

2.7 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

This type of leadership is said to have developed over the last nineteen years and can largely be seen as a product of globalisation, as manifested in the changes in the macroeconomic management and environmental issues in many countries' workplace institutions (Werner, 2007:299). The public sector is not an exception in this regard, as governments worldwide, including South Africa, continue to face challenges of monetary policy, limited information about the consequences of future policies and programme outcomes, lack of control over the manner in which markets function, and lack of flexibility within government bureaucracy (Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland & Walsh, 2010; Vollgraaff, 2012:4; Harding, 2012:1). For instance, it is not easy to effect change in government and managers in government have to function in a context that has politically imposed limitations (Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland & Walsh, 2010:38-39; Rukmani, Ramesh & Jayakrishman, 2010).

Transformational leadership can be defined as a form of leadership in which a leader is able to influence employee/s through a well-articulated vision and mission in a manner that convinces employee/s to view change in terms of opportunities it brings rather than threats it may present (Burns, 1978; Werner, 2007:299; Pryor, Humphreys, Taneja & Toombs, 2011:968).

Transformational leadership as discussed above contains some elements of the mentioned principled-centred and contingency leadership perspectives, because it acknowledges trust as an important element that affects the interaction and the situation between a leader and the follower/s. The transformational leadership approach is important, because it shows that managers are capable of using their charismatic abilities to influence followers to willingly adopt their leader's behaviour and vision, which is in line with the institution's accepted and desired cultural values, norms and beliefs needed to drive the organisation in the new direction that will enable it to achieve the desired objectives (Block, in Pryor, Humphreys, Taneja & Toombs, 2011:968).

Given the transformation agenda that characterises the South African society in terms of its development, it is vital for the Gauteng provincial office of the LMI and S business unit of the DoL to have managers that can also lead so that the Department of Labour can transform the South African labour market in line with the vision embodied in the Constitution of South Africa.

The literature reviewed thus far demonstrates that leadership is not a new concept in management studies. Historically many researchers have under-taken various research projects and focused on different facets of leadership. In this research strategic leadership serves as the framework of this study.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The literature discussed above shows that management research is not stagnant on leadership in workplace organisations (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). In all workplace

institutions, strategy is important because it is crafted with the concern for the future of work institutions; it reveals the aims, objectives, mission, vision, resources and the institution's relationship with the world (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010). All components of an organisation's strategy, such as its technological, human and capital resources and its external environment require effective leadership for any work institution to succeed in carrying out its strategic objectives (Mpofu, 2010:43).

Strategy is critical and applies to both the public and the private sectors and it is in this regard that strategic management is viewed as a key managerial tool in the public sector with the public sector reforms embodied in the NPM philosophy that seeks to improve service delivery in South Africa (Lane, 2008, 15-23; Stewart, 2004:21; Denner & Oosthuizen, 2008:41-55).

In evaluating strategic leadership research, Boal and Hooijberg (2001) mention those strategic leadership researches has been progressive and argue that it is composed of elements that include the capacity for leaders to change workplace organisations. Workplace leaders have to posses the ability to learn and also the managerial wisdom or skills to manage well (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). This statement is vital in this work as it clearly shows that strategic leadership research is not stagnant, but always evolves and many of its variables continue to be better understood.

It is significant to note that located within the strategic leadership framework is the influence and dominance of globalisation (Lane, 2008:15-23; Stewart, 2004:21; Denner & Oosthuizen, 2008:41-55), because the NPM reforms now characterise many countries, since most countries now experience similar public service delivery, fiscal and monetary challenges (Gordhan, 2010; Cope, Stephen, Leishman, Frank, Starie & Peter, 1997).

It is crucial for public sector managers in South Africa to consider the forces of globalisation and the influences on the policy framework, such as the Public

Finance Management Act that governs the South African public service institutions and which reflects the transformation agenda of South Africa aligned to the NPM. This is necessary in order to ensure that financial management is done strategically in line with the desired outcomes (Lane, 2008:15-23; Stewart, 2004:21; Denner & Oosthuizen, 2008;41-55; Bovaird & Offler, 2003:313-328).

This context portrays a need to assemble a very strong and professional army of managers in the public sector that can lead, manage change, understand strategy, design clear and reasonable standards and measurements, and be able evaluate and measure the performance of employees and project outcomes (Lane, 2008:15-23; Cope, Stephen, Leishman, Frank, Starie & Peter, 1997:444-460). Public sector managers have to delegate effectively, and be knowledgeable in comprehending that, like their private sector counterparts, they can use management tools such as project management and strategic management to manage well where such tools are applicable (Bovaird & Offler, 2003:313-328; Cope, Stephen, Leishman, Frank, Starie & Peter, 1997:444-460; Lane, 2008:15-23).

These strategic leadership roles and management tools promoted by the New Public Management philosophy in the public sector are aimed at creating effectiveness utilising government resources in a similar manner to the private sector, meaning that the public has to get value and satisfaction for the services rendered to them (Batho Pele notions in the case of the public sector in South Africa) (Bovaird & Offler, 2003:313-328; Cope, Stephen, Leishman, Frank, Starie & Peter, 1997:444-460; Lane, 2008).

In this regard, managers in the public sector are expected to become strategic leaders, to provide the necessary energy and drive, and to ensure that all employees in work organisations do their tasks in a manner that is aligned to ascertaining that the strategic objectives and goals of the organisation are achieved (Hughes & Beatly, 2005:1; Lane, 2008:15-23; Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:533). Public sector managers, in adopting strategic leadership roles, will be able to manage, in a manner that emphasises the role of planning, using influence

to get commitment from all employees and to ensure that all the resources of the workplace are used in line with promoting the objectives of an organisation (Mpofu, 2010:43). Strategic leaders ensure that order and stability in the daily management activities of the organisation is restored by taking into their scenario plans the strengths, weaknesses of their workplaces and opportunities, threats, political, economic and the overall legal framework that can have an impact on the workplace (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:533).

In the workplace and particularly in the public sector, strategic leadership and strategic management issues reveal the importance of having not only managers in the public sector, but managers who are also leaders, who can manage and lead along the lines of the organisation's crafted strategies, so that the public sector can deliver efficient services that will improve the quality of life of citizens.

2.8.1 Strategic leadership challenges in the public sector

Jooste and Fourie (2009:51-68) mention that many organisations of work today, the public sector being no exception, fail to fulfil their mandates as employees because of poor leadership and are unable to influence the development of strategies and implement them effectively. In some cases, managers do not even know their organisation's strategies and even the developed strategies are not realistically crafted (Fourie, 2009:51-52). Mpofu (2010:44-177) and Fourie (2009:51-52) make known that currently in strategic leadership research it is widely acknowledged that strategic implementation is identified as the most critical phase in the strategic process rather than its formulation.

Jooste and Fourie (2009:51-68) undertook a quantitative study which investigated the role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation in South African organisations. This study made use of structured mail questionnaires, which were e-mailed to 930 randomly selected managers of the Financial Mail Top 200 companies. The research findings reveal that respondents think that organisations are better in formulating strategies than implementation of strategies. Jooste and

Fourie (2009) further advocate in that strategic understating and poor communication of the strategy are the two major problems in organisations.

This seems to be the case in public sector institutions, like the DoL's LMI and S business unit, as challenges continue to mount in implementing and putting together work plans into sound and meaningful projects. Strategic leadership, according to Jooste and Fourie (2009), is viewed as a vital catalyst in strategic implementation, as strategic managers are able to pull everyone together in the workplace to work in a direction that leads to the desired outcomes.

In another quantitative study which develops the concept of integrated leadership in the public sector, Fernandez, Jik Cho and Perry (2010:308-323) propose that the integrated leadership takes into account the challenges that overwhelm the public sector worldwide, including South Africa, as governments struggle with fiscal policy due to growing levels of unemployment, government lack of control over the manner in which markets function, and limited information about its policies and programmes future outcomes.

Stewart (2004:16-21) mentions that in leading strategy in the public sector, managers face challenges in this utilizing this tool as compared to the success of their private sector counterparts, because strategy by its nature is competitive but this is not the case in the public sector. Several writers (Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland & Walsh, 2010; Mpofu, 2010; Vollgraaff, 2012:4; Harding, 2012:1; Lane, 2008:15-23) comment that the context and the regulatory framework that governs the public sector negatively impacts in terms of how public service managers carry out their strategic role, given that public administration is rule-oriented, tax-funded, public value is not traded in place, too high a gap exists between a manager's decision and politicians as owners or heads of public resources.

These challenges create difficulties in making links between budgets for projects, as even outcomes are not clear, the rigid bureaucratic system slows down the pace

of creativity and innovation of managers as they struggle to make decisions. It not always reasonable to blame managers for poor performance as these challenges mostly stem from policy design, which weighs more heavily on outcomes than the knowledge and skills of managers (Stewart, 2004:16-21). It is not easy to effect change in the public sector and managers in government have to function in a context that has politically imposed limitations, as politicians bring their own interests into the situation (Lustig, Reynolds, Ringland & Walsh, 2010:38-39; Rukmani, Ramesh & Jayakrishman, 2010).

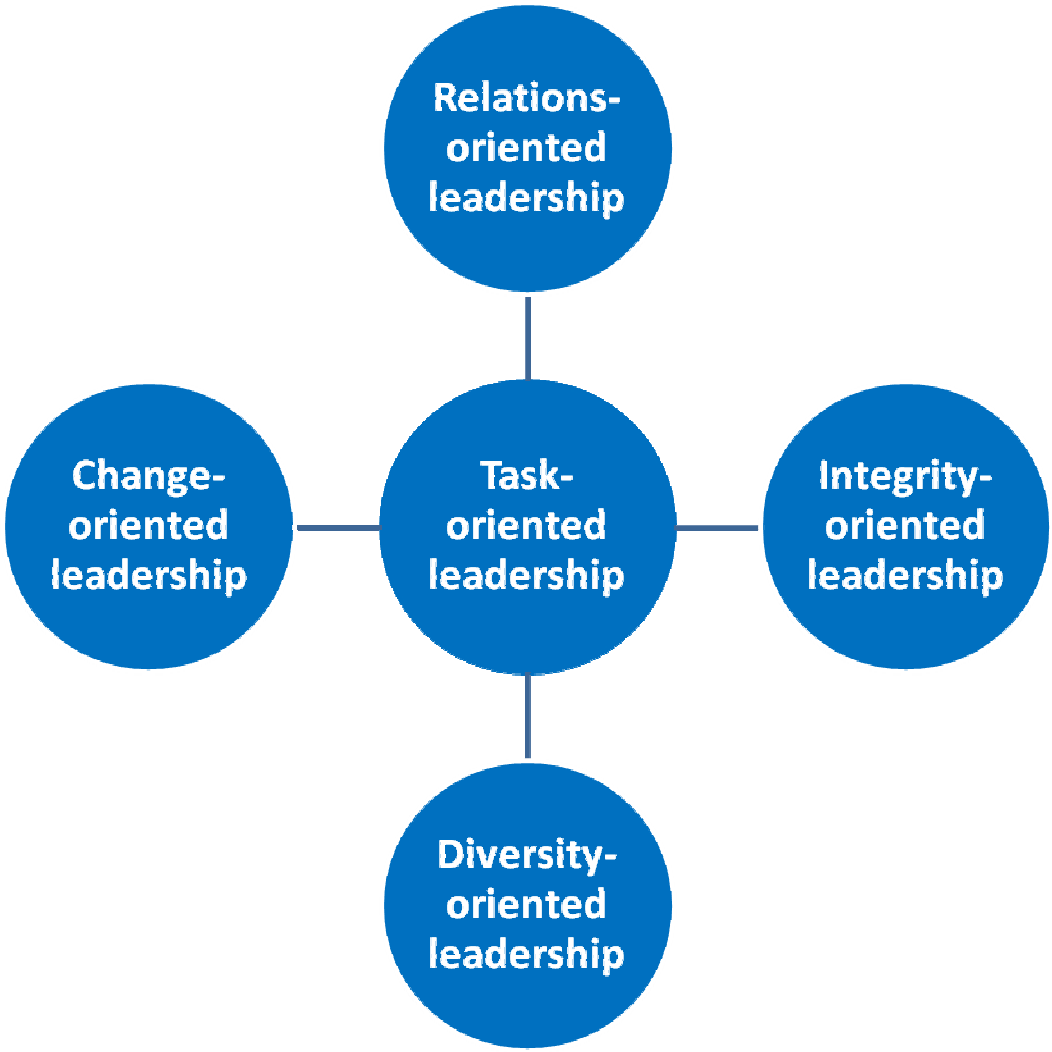
The subsequent paragraph discusses the components of the integrated leadership model as proposed by Fernandez (Jik, Cho & Perry, 2010: 308-323) to counter strategic leadership challenges in the public sector.

2.8.2 The integrated model

Fernandez, Jik Cho and Perry (2010:308-323) propose that for public sector managers to successfully implement their strategies it is vital for them to be able to play such roles. *Task-oriented leadership* is mostly relative to management functions, like initiating structure and clarifying roles, allocating work, explaining what to do and why, while also monitoring and setting up performance standards.

Figure 4 below depicts the different types of leadership that can be applied.

Figure 4: Different types of leadership



Source: Adapted from Fernandez, Jik Cho and Perry, 2010:308-323

Relations-oriented leadership refers to managers being able to satisfy the well-being of employees, for instance by ensuring that all employees are respected and treated equally at work, are empowered to make inputs into decision-making, have their work valued and appreciated, and are afforded the space to develop and grow in the organisation (Fernandez, Jik Cho & Perry, 2010:308-323), Badenhorst-Weiss et al, 2010:215; Werner, 2007:291-293). This role acknowledges the work of Goleman (1995), Abraham (1999), and Caruso (2002), who strongly show in

their work that managers lead well when they are able to control their emotions to suit the environment, despite the fact that such behaviours are not measured or even considered useful in the work place. Emotional intelligence can be seen when managers are skilled in handling workplace conflicts suitably, are able to control their feelings when they articulate their views and reason with others, and notice the feelings of other and adjust their approach appropriately as they work (Goleman, 1995; Abraham, 1999; Caruso, 2002).

Diversity-oriented leadership refers to the benefits that can be derived in the workplace when managers are able to exploit the benefits of diversity around ethnicity, race, age and education as they work together (Fernandez, Jik Cho & Perry, 2010:308–323).

The *change-oriented leadership role* is an important element of the integrated leadership model as it acknowledges that change is a vital aspect of the public sector in South Africa. Managers have to constantly find means of creating value for money by effecting service delivery in a context characterised by the transformation agenda of the public service (Fernandez, Jik Cho & Perry, 2010:308-323 & Badenhorst-Weiss et al, 2010; Werner, 2007:291-293).

Finally, another leadership role that managers in the public service have to execute is the *integrity-oriented leadership* role. This role in the South African context alerts managers in the public sector to adhererence to New Public Sector Management principles, like Batho Pele, and also ensures that due diligence is applied around ethics, including the Public Financial Management Act in dealing with financial matters (Fernandez, Jik Cho & Perry, 2010: 308-323; Pretorius, 2005).

Fernandez, Jik Cho and Perry (2010:308-323) research study indicates a correlation between integrated leadership and public sector organisational performance. This means that if managers, like the LMI and S managers, are able to play these identified roles, the strategic implementation process may be

affected positively. The integrated leadership concept is critical as it contributes to the advancements made in line with strategy and leadership research.

Several writers, like Fernandez Jik Cho and Perry (2010:308-323) and Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache and Alexander (2011:422-438) share the same opinion and further point out that in implementing planned changes in the workplace it is important for strategic leaders to ensure that change initiatives are communicated well.

With regard to change, task-oriented leaders tend to be more likely to engage in activities related to mobilising employees for change in accordance with the strategic changes that are developed (Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache & Alexander, 2011:422-438).

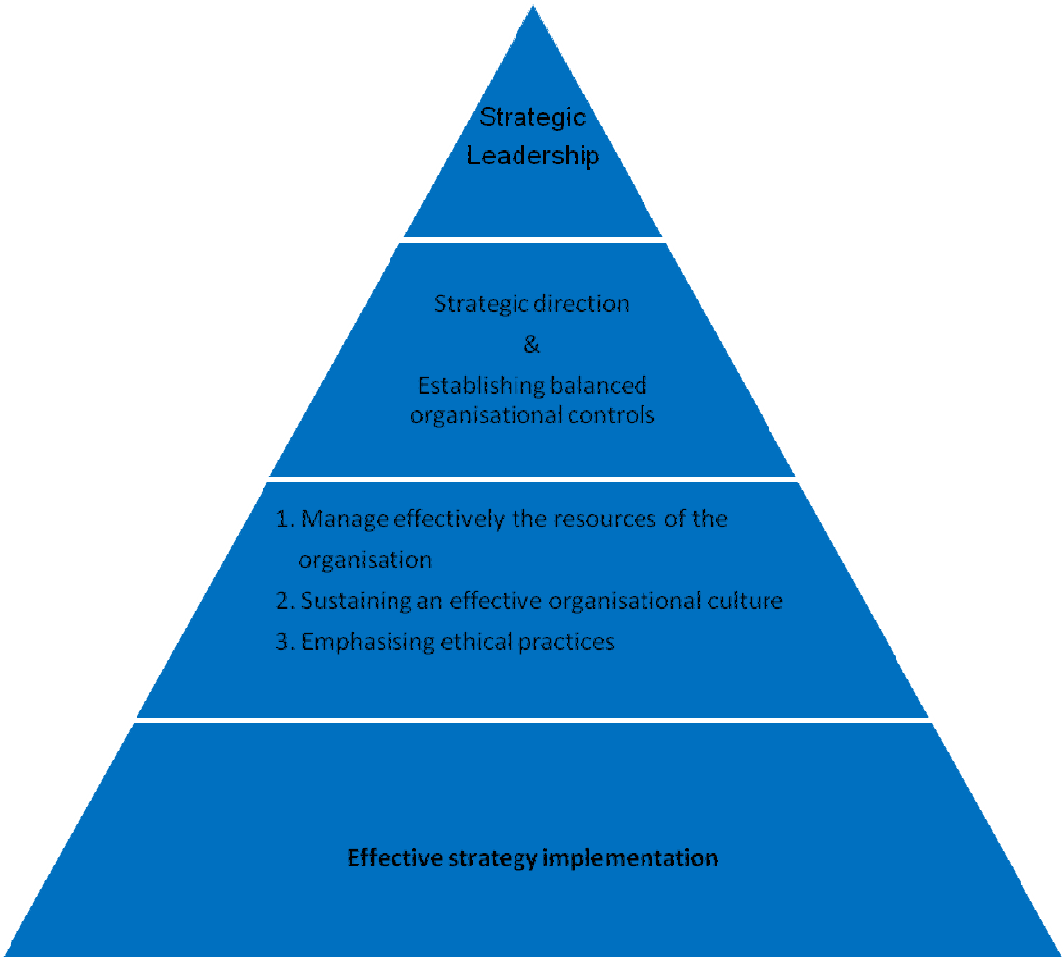
Critical in strategic leadership and change issues in the workplace is the assertion by Battilana, et al (2011:422-438) that leaders who are task-oriented tend to value evaluating planned change implementation processes more than other leaders. However, Fernandez, et al (2010) mention that all the leadership component roles discussed, namely task-oriented leadership, relations-oriented leadership, diversity-oriented leadership, change-oriented leadership and integrity-oriented leadership, have to be executed simultaneously in dealing with change effectively.

For a strategy to be successfully implemented around strategic leadership, managers must provide a sense of direction in terms of vision clarification (Jooste & Fourie, 2009:51-53). Governance in strategy implementation is also important so that systems and processes are put in place to ensure that all employees in the unit work towards the accomplishment of the unit's vision (Hope, 2005:283-311). Management systems like monitoring and evaluation are vital, so that all activities of work can be controlled to effect successful change (Jooste & Fourie, 2009:51-53). All resources of work should be managed in an effective manner, taking into account all the regulatory frameworks, ethical frameworks and a sound

organisational culture that can ensure continuous well-being in line with the purpose of the organisation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009:51-68).

Figure 5 below discusses strategic implementation factors in the public sector.

Figure 5: Strategic implementation factors in the public sector



Source: Adapted from Jooste and Fourie, 2009:53

Mpofu (2010) observes that challenges of strategic leadership in Eskom and Transnet, which are two of South Africa's parastatals, are strategy-related. Public money is wasted on activities and projects that are not aligned with the organisations' strategies, ineffective governance slows down decision-making and decisions are made just to keep busy. A culture that promotes silos and does not

promote ethical principles exists (Mpofu, 2010). In these circumstances, strategic implementation is not likely to take place effectively.

The challenges experienced by public sector managers in leading and managing the implementation of strategy will not be easy without them utilizing strategic leadership (Lane, 2008:15-23; Hughes, 2003:136; More, 1995). Stewart (2004) acknowledges the role of strategic leadership in promoting service delivery, but suggests that for public managers to implement strategy better, the field of strategic management has to be re-conceptualised to consider the political and the bureaucratic nature of the public service. Boal and Hooijberg (2001) emphatically state that fault-finding in strategic leadership research and questioning the level of managers is not of importance. What is critical is to understand "…under what conditions, when, how and on what criteria" managers become strategic leaders.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed has shown that leadership and strategy are important concepts in order to better understand strategic leadership in the workplace. Strategic leadership shows the importance of having managers that lead the strategic process in the public sector by utilising strategic management, which is an important tool of management. Many strategic leadership studies seem to be quantitative in nature, because of the origins of this management tool in the private sector. The reviewed literature has shown the importance of exploring strategic leadership challenges in the Gauteng Department of Labour in the LMI and S business unit.

The next chapter discusses the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section outlines the research methodology, indicating the research approach and also the justification as to why the particular approach is ideal for this research. This section will also discuss issues connected to the research design; data collection method to be used; sampling, data analysis and an analysis of the reliability, validity and relevance of the research.

According to Neuman (2011) and Gravetter and Forzano (2006), there is a clear distinction between research method and research methodology. Research method, as defined by Neuman (2011), is a specific technique used for data collection whereas research methodology refers to the philosophical and epistemological roots that underpin a particular research method.

In terms of its broad goal, this research will be explorative in nature. Exploratory research is undertaken on an issue on which there is little information or understanding available (Neuman, 2011; Babbie, 2005). The purpose of exploratory research is mainly to develop preliminary ideas or further the understanding of a particular issue with the intention of formulating and focusing questions, so as to add to the understanding of a particular social phenomenon and contribute to enhancing future research on it (Neuman, 2011).

The exploratory nature of this study is appropriate as there are not many studies on strategic leadership challenges being undertaken in the South African public sector context. Most of these are undertaken in the private sector in developed societies.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This research study will be based on the interpretive social science paradigm that is qualitative in nature, in a sense that it seeks to understand the strategic leadership challenges in the DoL's provincial office with regard to the implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy context.

The interpretive social science paradigm is vital for understanding human beings in their context, because it is based on the assumption that human beings socially define and construct their own reality, which influences their actions and activities they engage in that are meaningful to them within a particular context (Neuman, 2011:87-94; Babbie, 2005:32-34).

The interpretive social science paradigm is important in that it also allows a researcher/s to analyse data in a manner that acknowledges that the truth about the findings of a research can be limited to the people who were studied (Babbie, 2005:32-34). This view is contrary to the goal of a positivist research which is to uncover universal laws that do not change and that can be predicted (Neuman, 2011:87-94; Babbie, 2005:32-34).

This paradigm of interpretive social science is suitable to pursue this research study, as it may contribute to understanding the factors that contribute to the lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit context. It will further contribute to identify leadership trends and also guide this research study in regard to strategies for consideration in the LMI and S business unit in order to better implement the business unit's strategy.

The interpretive research nature allows for qualitative interviews to be conducted with the managers, who are responsible for crafting the strategy and putting together work plans of the LMI and S business unit in the Gauteng provincial office of the DoL. Interviews will be conducted using open-ended questions, so as

to allow all participants to express themselves in a manner that enhances the understanding of strategic leadership matters in the LMI and S business unit.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research takes the qualitative approach. This approach is the most relevant approach for this particular research in that it strives for a deep understanding of the challenges of strategic leadership in the context of the LMI and S business unit. This research is concerned with lived experiences of the managers of LMI and S in their workplace. However, the term qualitative research is an overarching term that covers several forms of inquiry (Badenhorst, 2007) including the following:

- Field study
- Naturalistic enquiry
- Interpretive research
- Participant observation
- Inductive research
- Case study
- Ethnography.

The form of inquiry that the research will follow is the field study, because a field research study is critical in this case in order to understand the strategic leadership issues of the LMI and S business unit managers with regard to the implementation of the LMI and S business unit's strategy (Neuman, 2011:379).

Qualitative research interviews with open-ended questions will be conducted so as to allow the participants to express themselves regarding strategic leadership challenges in the LMI and S business unit. Qualitative interviews are important also because they allow the researcher to probe in order to understand the respondents in the context of their setting (Neuman, 2011:379).

In the literature reviewed in the previous section, it emerged that most studies undertaken in line with strategic leadership research were quantitative in their nature, focusing on numbers and statistical models which are concerned with prediction. This study with the qualitative focus will be advantageous in a sense that it will deal with interpreting and analysing soft data - mainly words, body language and sentences. Qualitative interviews do not minimise the LMI and S managers' meaning of their context and their world views in line with what is happening in the LMI and S business unit on strategic matters (Merriam, 1998; Badenhorst, 2007; Neuman, 2011:379).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 Primary Data

According to Badenhorst (2007), Neuman (2011), Gravetter and Forzano (2006) and Merriam (1998), primary data collection is the process whereby the researcher collects the data using methods such as interviews. The data the researcher collects is unique to that particular research and no-one has access to it until it is published. The methods of collecting primary data include the following:

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Focus group interviews
- Observation
- Case studies.

For the purpose of this research interviews are used as the method of collecting primary data. The focus is on understanding the strategic leadership issues in the LMI and S business unit with regard to the merger and the implementation of the LMI and S business unit's strategy.

Primary data for this research study will be the data collected by the researcher through the interviews conducted with the participants; such data will be recorded in the researcher's journal and they will be presented, interpreted and analysed.

3.4.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data for this research are the views of other researchers or writers in the field of strategic leadership with regard to workplace institutions and change. This type of data is depicted in the literature review section which shows that leadership and strategy are important concepts with regard to strategic leadership.

The primary views on strategic leadership challenges in the Gauteng Department of Labour's LMI and S business unit will be assessed in line with the secondary views in order to assess the reality of the LMI and S strategic leadership challenges.

3.4.3 Sampling

With regard to a sampling, the sampling technique used to undertake this research study is a non-probability sampling method in the form of convenience sampling. This sampling technique is in line with the purpose of this study which is to explore the challenges of lack of strategic leadership in the execution of the Gauteng Department of Labour's provincial offices merger, in particular as it relates to the LMI and S business unit strategy implementation.

Convenience sampling as a method will be used to interview LMI and S business unit managers in line with strategic leadership issues of the LMI and S business unit. Various writers indicate the weakness of using such a non-probability sampling technique for its lack of representivity (Badenhorst, 2007; Neuman, 2011; Gravetter & Forzano, 2006; Merriam, 1998). The objective of the research is to acquire a deeper understanding of the lack of strategic leadership matters in

LMI and S business unit, therefore non-prediction representativeness is not a barrier to this objective as it would if this study was a quantitative one.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Neuman (2011), Babbie (2005) and Merriam (1998) assert that qualitative data analysis is largely about developing explanations and generalisations that are close to concrete data and contexts. In a qualitative analysis, explanations of the data are often sensitive to context, rich in detail and tend to be capable of showing the complex processes and sequences of social life. In contrast to quantitative research, the researcher in qualitative research is involved in the process (Ritzer, 2008).

The main data analysis technique used in this research is the successive approximation method. This method entails repeated iterations or cycling through steps, moving towards final analysis using the conversational analysis method to analyse the primary data (Neuman, 2011:469). This method basically means that the researcher moves back and forth analysing the data thoroughly, from vague ideas to a more comprehensive analysis.

In this method, the researcher repeatedly goes through the data collected during interviews in a conversational analysis, scrutinising and analysing it thoroughly each time, looking at what he/she could possibly have missed before. The researcher in this process actively engaged the data and in an involved manner, identified particular themes and assessed the meaning of such themes in line with the secondary data in the literature review to give it meaning (Neuman, 2011). This is unlike quantitative research, where statistical models are used to analyse data with the aim of being able to repeat the findings and also use them to predict behaviour (Badenhorst, 2007).

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Merriam (1998), Badenhorst (2007) and Gravetter and Forzano (2006) argue that the aim of qualitative research is not to replicate results but to account for the changing context within which the research takes place. Qualitative researchers, Badenhorst (2007) further argues, believe that each researcher brings a unique perspective to a study; hence replication is not possible as researcher experiences differ. This is critical for this research, as the purpose of qualitative research is more on having a deeper understanding of strategic leadership issues within the LMI and S business unit.

The findings of the study will give insight to other units within the DoL and also to other government departments due to the fact that strategic leadership procedures issues and strategic plan processes are similar in most government departments and challenges faced by government departments are similar. To enhance the validity of the research, a thick description of the research context and the assumptions around the research will be provided to ensure that the sample of the study gives as much detail and information as possible.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitation of this study is the fact that the interview sample will be very small due to the size of the LMI and S business unit.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that this study is an explorative one. It has also demonstrated the appropriateness of utilising a qualitative research study to understand the lack of strategic leadership in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the Department of Labour.

The field study as a research design of this research is aligned to the qualitative methodology that is grounded in the interpretive social science paradigm, which allows data collected through interviews using a non-probability sample to be analysed in an iterative way to reveal the meaning that humans construct to define reality in their context.

The next chapter presents the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study conducted on the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit managers. The research explores the lack of strategic leadership in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the Department of Labour.

The interview questions were divided into three parts: part one focussed on finding out more about issues that may have given rise to the challenges around lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit. Part two focussed on finding out more about the leadership trends in the LMI and S business unit. Part three presents information obtained from LMI and S business unit managers about what they think could address the unit's strategic leadership challenges.

The findings from the interviews are presented under different headings which embody different themes. For this study respondents were conveniently selected based on the researcher's familiarity with this business unit in terms of work as a practitioner. To maintain anonymity, the respondents' data is presented using alphabet letters as a form of representing respondents.

The interview questions for part one of the interview questions are as follows:

1. Is there anything that might have happened recently or at some point that might have given you challenges in terms of your strategy and leadership role in the unit? (In terms of its development, implementation or other?).

2. As part of management in the unit, do you think planning for the unit's programmes is done well?
3. Do you think you are influential in such a way that people (employees reporting to you) are able to put their maximum effort into carrying out the tasks?
4. Do you communicate effectively the unit's vision and mission to employees?

4.2 STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN LMI&S

In understanding strategic leadership challenges in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit as outlined in part one of the interview questions, in response to question 1, four respondents out of the possible six mention that the merger between the former Johannesburg and Pretoria LMI and S provincial offices has in a way caused problems in terms of them strategically implementing the LMI and S business unit strategy. LMI and S business unit managers also experience challenges in developing work plans for the unit and there is generally poor communication between the National office of the DoL and the unit on work plan matters.

Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) captures such challenges by mentioning that:

"The one Gauteng issue really affected the development and implementation of the unit's strategy, is a sense that before the merger we had two LMI & S units in Gauteng, but worked differently under different strategies and had different Deputy Directors as leaders in each unit. In this one Gauteng project I cannot manage people I do not see close by as I am based here in Pretoria and they are in Johannesburg. I feel the Deputy Director is not effective in managing all of us well as LMI & S Gauteng."

The role of the Provincial Management Committee and its interference on the LMI and S strategic objectives also presents a challenge:

"My current experience is that the strategy of the unit is not observed in the province as it has no buy-in I believe, so it changes as it does not get support and this affects how I function in a management role. For example, we have our strategy but the Provincial Management Committee (PMC) decides on how we should do our work. I do not know if they have powers to override our strategic plans, but the PMC interferes and this affects the planning arrangements, control one has, work plans, leadership role and the ability for one to motivate employees" (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

One manager sums up the strategic leadership challenges the unit faces by admitting that, "We have a number of challenges, for instance our strategy is not updated" (Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012).

The findings presented thus far show that the merger between the former (North and South) LMI and S provincial offices has challenges, the interference of the Provincial Management Committee and that the strategy of the business unit itself is incomplete. These are factors viewed by LMI and S as challenges that weaken their strategic leadership abilities to implement the strategy of the unit.

4.3 MANAGERIAL PLANNING

Generally, respondents do not believe that planning is done effectively in the unit. These findings are similar to those presented above as managers are struggling to plan and properly execute the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit strategy which is not updated by using the finance allocated to the unit appropriately. Managers in the LMI and S business unit are not sure of what to do and struggle to make a connection between work plans and the daily work activities.

"We are working towards planning well; the merger of the two offices gives us challenges when it comes to developing the new structure of the unit and creating new work plans and new activities. I am not involved with finance, as we have a financial section. From my observation we are struggling to spend budget in the right manner. Salaries are paid of course, but resources that we need in office are not planned for well, for example we sometimes cannot go out because of the limitations of cars and when it comes to training we at times do not have enough budget and at times you find that we have budget, but we are told that we are under spending. I think we need assistance in this regard." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012)

Respondent C (interview, 18 May 2012) also emphasises the poor state of planning in the unit:

"We no longer have planning according to me. Our activities are not done well. This I am sure is not happening."

Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) felt confused since the merger took place especially with planning related activities and complains about the role that is not played well by other managers:

"Not at all (planning is not happening), to me this should be a top-down issue, not a bottom-up process. The problem is that our Deputy Director does not play his strategic management role very well. He has a very strong weakness from my observation. If our Deputy Director was a very organised somebody we would be very far, now I cannot do things, like planning financially for our programmes, because if I want to I must have meetings with him, he does not honour them and even when he does he does not act on our inputs appropriately. He must address his leadership challenges."

4.4 LEADING SUBORDINATES

In response to question 3, respondents indicated that they are able to influence their subordinates to perform their tasks willingly and in a motivated manner. The findings show that most managers believe they are influential and are able to use their influence to inspire, support and create a relationship of trust between them and their subordinates in terms of performance.

Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) depicts these findings well by asserting that "Yes, I am influential because I support and trust people who report to me, in a sense that they know if they have challenges they will be acted upon diligently so. I believe I am a good listener who always aligns her thinking with the unit's strategic objectives."

Respondent A shares the same opinion with Respondent B, observing that:
"I believe I am influential because the employees that report to me are able to carry out the tasks even in my absence, because they have the knowledge and skills" (talking with great confidence) (interview, 17 May 2012).

However, respondents C and E revealed some challenges that hinder them from being influential in the unit as they respectively state that:

"Not really. We do not do anything now (pause) subordinates do not carry tasks as instructed the merger issue is a problem. I now do not really understand my role. I feel there is no clarification with regards to our roles" (interview, 18 May 2012).

Respondent E reiterates that because of the lack of the strategic plan of the unit it is difficult to be influential as this challenge opens up the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit to control by the Provincial Management Committee: "that I think I am, because according our work plan agreements. I try to exact influence within those parameters. Out of this (work plan agreements) my efforts become fruitless. My challenge to influencing employees is the

interference of the PMC's decisions. We work on agreements, so it is tough if our strategy is not properly put in place and executed. Currently we are not meeting our objectives" (looking frustrated and hopeless) (interview, 21 May 2012).

4.5 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The findings for question 3 of part one shows that there is not enough strategic communication that takes place in the LMI and S business unit. This finding reveals many factors that serve as a barrier for LMI and S business unit managers to communicate well the unit's vision and mission with their subordinates. Key among these factors is that the business unit's strategy is not up to date. Respondent E maintains that:

"[Thinks for a while] I do, but again my challenge is that we still have to get our strategic challenges in order to be able to integrate it within the broader Department of Labour's strategy." (Interview, 21 May 2012).

Some respondents indicate that in the unit they do not see a need to communicate the unit's vision and mission with their subordinates, because they are of the view that subordinates ought to know the vision and mission of the LMI and S business unit:

"I think it [the vision and mission of our unit] is a hidden agenda in my mind, because as I work I am aware of the mission and vision of the Labour Market Information and Statistics in my head it is linked to my activities" (Respondent D, interview, 18 May 2012).

Respondent A remarks that "… People who report to me know the vision and mission. I expect them to know about those things [looking very serious]. However, it is difficult for employees to be motivated by the vision and mission, because of the challenges related to the merger of the two offices (Pretoria and Johannesburg)" (interview, 18 May 2012).

The two respondents generally felt they are not responsible for clarifying the vision and mission of the business unit to their subordinates and do not see anything wrong with that.

On the other hand, respondents B and C respectively felt that by and large there is lack of cohesion in how the LMI and S business unit managers interact with each other and how they also interact with their subordinates in the unit:

"…. The challenge is that of implementation of the strategy, because our Deputy Director has to play his part, like a sequence and other managers have to play theirs as well and you find that I cannot do my part well if other units have not done their part well." (Respondent B, interview, 18 May 2012). Respondent C (interview, 18 May 2012) explains that, "Yes, but not enough I think, people are aware I think, we need to make sure other people (other units) know about us as well really".

Respondent C captures an element that shows lack of interaction and visibility of the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit managers in relation to other business units within the provincial office of the Department of Labour.

4.5.1 Leadership trends in LMI&S

Part two of the interview questions focussed on understanding leadership trends in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit. This was achieved by asking the respondents the following questions:

1. Do you have any value/principle or philosophy that you believe helps you manage employees well?
2. In terms of your interaction with subordinates do you think you focus more on them as people/human beings or you pay more attention on production?

3. Are you able to manage all types of employees regardless of their education levels or other qualities (how do you deal with emotions in this regard)?
4. Do you use the unit's vision and mission as a drive to influence how employees carry out their tasks (subordinates)?

4.5.2 Leadership philosophy

Most respondents mentioned that communication with their subordinates is their dominant management philosophy or value that shapes how they interact with their subordinates. These assertions are reflected respondents A and C correspondingly as shown below:

"Communication is key for me. I believe in communicating to staff in terms of explaining to them exactly what to do and what is expected out of them in terms of their duties." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012). Respondent C in agreement with Respondent A says, "Communication is what I do, motivating, involving and also empowering people who report to me by making sure they are aware and know what I do..." (interview, 17 May 2012).

Two managers in the LMI and S business unit, however, value the people development aspect more in their interaction with their subordinates. This they believe ensures that subordinates get to grow in their areas of work and be better positioned to be promoted in their jobs within or outside the Department of Labour. Most LMI and S business unit managers believe that the development of subordinates in terms of their qualification is critical and good for the business unit.

"I believe in the development of people, not for people to remain in the same level in terms of their jobs, people have to grow."(Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012). Respondent C (interview, 18 May 2012) adds that, "…motivating, involving and also empowering people who report to me by making sure they are

aware and know what I do. I also do this by encouraging them to go for trainings and utilise the department's study bursary."

One respondent values having good working relations with subordinates that are characterised by trust, respect and understanding as depicted below:

"I am not a bureaucratic leader; I am very democratic. I respect all people and their views and think my personality complements my management style." (Respondent D, interview, 18 May 2012).

One manager, contrary to the rest, mentions that what is important is to try finding means of utilising the department's policies to create a culture of working well in the business unit:

"First I believe I have a very strong work ethos and I am committed to the instruments that the department has in place, in terms of our policies. My problem is the enforcement of a working culture and our strategy, I however keep my values anyway [moves her head in frustration] (Respondent E, interview 21 May 2012).

4.5.3 The people and production in the business unit

Most respondents indicated that in their management roles they consider both the human factor and production to be equally important. This conviction comes out well from Respondent E:

"Both, because an individual has to be well in order to execute his/her duties properly. I make sure I consider even the development of employee's skills and knowledge. I also note areas of improvement. The human aspect of employees has to be considered." (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) captures well the dichotomy that the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit managers find hard to balance between leadership and management by stating that:

"I think I focus on them as human beings, but in relation to our work. For instance every morning I go greet all of the people who report to me, we chat about family and life in general before we discuss work-related issues."

On the other hand two managers are of the view that there is not much use in focussing on the human element in the work place as work not people is important:

"Work is more important to me, not the friendship nature of things no" (Respondent D, interview, 18 May 2012).

Respondent F shares the same opinion, stating that:

"I believe I am a 60% - 40% more task oriented than people oriented." (interview, 31 June 2012).

4.5.4 Managing subordinates

The findings show that respondents in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit manage their subordinates differently based on how they (managers) view the level of their subordinates' educational qualifications. This difference stems from the realisation that subordinates are not the same; they are diverse in terms of their age, education levels, personalities and work experiences. These notions are captured below:

"I have worked with a few people of different race, age and I think I am able to manage them well. Education is an important issue with me because it helps people a lot in life. I cherish working with people who have educational

qualifications, not just people promoted. There are people appointed to posts without education, but due to experience, however to me that is a challenge. I however believe in the potential of people - some people you can tell they are willing to learn and grow." (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

One manager states the challenge at times with managing educated subordinates is that some can boast or brag about their educational successes and undermine one by stating that, "I think situations are different, I do not know but some educated staff (subordinates) can be too proud and brag like about their education, thinking they are better than you." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012). One manager believes in respecting all subordinates equally so that they can be easy managed in the same manner "Yes, I respect all people, but when they are problematic I put my foot down and tell them that I am not their friend …." (Respondent C, interview, 18 May 2012).

Respondent D (interview, 18 May 2012) indicated that a manager takes time to understand the educational background of subordinates and strives to interact with them guided by what he/she perceives to be their level of understanding:

"Yes, but I firstly conduct a situational analysis e.g. how to treat someone educated is different to how one would relate to someone not. I make sure I understand the people's levels of maturity as well."

The findings depict that different respondents in the unit could manage conflicts and handle their emotions differently too as they interact with their subordinates. Some respondents choose to go to their offices and calm down when they are angry and not engage in a heated argument with subordinates, while others do not see a need to control their emotions, but react angrily too when they are angry.

"Personally I like to always remain calm and not react just for the sake of reacting. I believe in separating emotions from work-related activities." (Respondent D, interview, 18 May 2012).

In contrast to this behaviour, Respondent E (interview, 21 May 2012) asserts that:

"When I am angry at someone I struggle to find a balance between my anger and the nature of my work, I feel I am not here to manage my emotions. I do throw tantrums, is it professional? I don't care like. You know in academia they are able to critique one another without being personal, but here personalities are bigger - I guess is a problem for me. This is not a nursing environment; I am not here to nurse people's egos. I think training is required for dealing with emotions."

4.5.5 Vision and mission as a driving force to strategic implementation

Respondents mentioned that in the unit they use the vision and mission of the business unit and the one of the DoL as a whole to influence how subordinates carry out their tasks, but this view was not shared by Respondents B and C (Respondent B, interview, 18 May 2012; Respondent C, interview, 18 May 2012; Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012).

Two managers find it hard to use the mission and vision of the business unit as a driver to implement the unit's strategy:

"Generally I think people owe it to themselves to understand the main vision of the Department of Labour. I make sure I tell them about the work plans and how they inform their personal performance agreements." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012); furthermore, "Yes I try to do, but the interference of the PMC is a challenge to me. We work in a manner that what someone does affects how my work looks, so I can know these (visions and missions) things (looking confused and angry), but for what, there is a dependable variable (other people)." (Respondent E, interview, 18 May 2012).

4.6 WHAT SHOULD BE CORRECTED?

Part three of the interviews on respondents' perceptions about what could be done to correct the challenges of the lack of strategic leadership experienced in the LMI and S business unit is provided below. The findings show that most of the issues raised by managers have to do with governance.

All respondents are of the view that all LMI and S business unit staff, regardless of rank, should participate in the crafting of the business unit strategy. All members of the unit should have the same understanding of the business unit strategy: "I think it would be best to involve all LMI and S business unit staff members to discuss the main strategy of the unit together, the merger and also how things are changing, hence affecting our work. More communication should be done in line with the way we work." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012).

Communication is another area that LMI and S business unit managers believe should be improved, including communication with the external stakeholders:

"I think better communication is needed, e.g. between staff and managers in the unit, but also between us (our internal and external stakeholders).

Leadership is needed from LMI and S business unit managers in terms of advocating for the acquisition of IT systems (statistical packages) and programmes in order to move the business unit from just collecting information to also making it easy for the analysis of data:

"We need a better IT system in the province, because for us to do our work ... address our strategic challenge of collecting data and move more towards being able to analyse data. I believe we need to be more technologically driven (be able to utilise the internet well and integrate it in doing our job) e.g. we cannot do

internet surveys because we do not have access to the internet." (Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012).

More research-aligned training is needed by all personnel in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit (Respondent C, interview, 18 May 2012). Lastly, Respondent F (interview, 31 June 2012) is of the opinion that, "In the unit we need to come up with a quality control and statistical committee, so that our work gets to be better in quality, so that we can be respected."

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings of the study conducted on the LMI and S business unit managers, exploring the lack of strategic leadership in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the DoL.

These findings were presented under different headings with different themes, based on the commonality of the respondents' data. The presented data reveals views from respondents that there is a lack of strategic leadership in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the DoL. These views are based on the perceptions of personnel that the LMI and S business unit strategy is not updated and the merger of the former South and North LMI and S business unit provincial offices adds to this problem.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the interpretation and analysis of the findings from the interviews presented under different headings in the previous chapter. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges of the lack of strategic leadership in the execution of the Gauteng DoL's provincial office merger as regards the implementation of the LMI and S business unit. The research investigated factors that led to the lack of strategic leadership, provided the findings, interpreted and analysed the findings and recommended strategies for consideration.

Consistent with previous chapter, part one of the interview questions focussed on establishing from the respondents which issues may have given rise to the perceived problem of lack of strategic leadership in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit. The following are responses from section one.

Question 1 sought views on matters that might have given the LMI and S business unit managers challenges in terms of their strategy and leadership role in the unit, in particular with the development and the implementation of the unit's strategy. All the respondents are of the view that the merger posed challenges in how the unit has to function, given that the two merged LMI and S business units were using different strategies before the merger.

Question 2 shows that with regard to planning, all six respondents are in agreement that planning within the LMI and S business unit is not done well.

Questions 3 related to whether LMI and S business unit managers are influential enough and are able to use their influence to drive the performance of employees reporting to them. The findings reveal that four out of the six managers believe they are influential.

The findings for question 4 indicate some degree of confusion that takes place in the Gauteng provincial office of the LMI and S when it comes to the lack of strategic leadership. This is so because most managers – but not all - believe they communicate effectively the unit's vision and mission to the employees.

Part two of the interview questions focussed on understanding more from the respondents on the leadership trends in LMI and S business unit in particular. The following presents the analysis of responses.

Question 1 attempted to understand if the LMI and S business unit has any value/principle or philosophy that they utilise in managing and interacting well with employees. The analysis of the findings indicates that two of the six respondents in the LMI and S business unit believe in communication, two cite career development of their staff members, while two believe in respect and a strong work ethos respectively.

In terms of understanding whether LMI and S business unit managers are stronger relative to being more people- or work-centred, Question 2 indicates that four of the six managers regard themselves as balanced between both work and people, while the other two believe they are more work-oriented.

Question 3 sought to understand the managers' views with regard to the respondent's ability to work with all types of employees regardless of their education levels or other qualities (e.g. education, troublesome, etc.). The findings indicate that LMI and S business unit managers have different opinions, in a sense that some prefer working with employees who possess educational qualifications.

One manager is of the view that educated employees are good to work with, but some become arrogant and boast about their educational qualifications. In terms of troublesome employees, most managers mention that they are able to deal with their emotions with regard to working with troublesome employees and separate their emotions from work matters to avoid conflicts. However, some managers do not feel a need to control their emotions and resort to using their authority over problematic employees.

Question 4 indicated that most, but not all, managers in the unit do their best to use the unit's vision and mission as a driver to influence subordinate's work. However, the merger presents challenges.

Part three of the interview questions is aimed at understanding from the LMI and S business unit managers' perspective what needs to be done in order to address the challenges they felt prevent them from developing or implementing the unit's strategy effectively.

Question 1 indicated that all managers believe that leadership is needed, all stakeholders of the business unit should communicate effectively and engage in the unit's strategy, better human and material resources (qualified employees and better technological systems are needed) and governance should be strengthened in the unit, so as to ensure that all employees in the unit work towards the realisation of the unit's strategy.

5.2 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND THE BUSINESS UNIT

The literature review indicated that leadership and management are different components which have different functions (Werner, 2007:288). This is reflected in how LMI and S business unit managers struggle to bring order in a context characterized by change. However, strategic leadership as a concept is easy to comprehend when one aligns it to strategic management; similarly, strategic leadership emphasises the role of planning for business unit activities, using

influence to get commitment from all employees, manage change and ensure that all the resources; human and non-human, are used in line with promoting and achieving the objectives of an organisation (Mpofu, 2010:43).

The merger to establish one Gauteng provincial office brought challenges to the LMI and S business unit in terms of its operational strategy. The merged LMI and S business units used different operational strategies in carrying out their tasks. This lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S stems from the fact that these merged business units do not have an approved and updated strategic operational strategy, as Respondent F explains:

"We have a number of challenges, for instance our strategy is not updated" (interview, 31 June 2012).

The lack of leadership revealed by some managers in the Labour Market Information and Statistics business unit makes it difficult for them to strategically manage change, as Respondent B explains:

"The one Gauteng issue that really affected the development and implementation of the unit's strategy, is a sense that before we had two LMI & S units in Gauteng, but worked differently under different strategies and had different Deputy Directors as leaders in each unit. In this one Gauteng project I cannot manage people I do not see close by as I am based here in Pretoria and they are in Johannesburg. I feel the Deputy Director is not effective in managing all of us well as LMI & S Gauteng." (interview, 18 May 2012).

The lack of an updated operational strategy in the LMI and S business unit makes it harder for the LMI and S business unit managers to know and understand their role. Respondent C (interview, 18 May, 2012) observes that:

"We are no longer having planning in my view. Our activities are not done well. Planning I am sure is not happening."

The absence of an updated LMI and S business unit strategy in a way renders the unit susceptible to control by the Provincial Management Committee in terms of what the unit should do. This is explained by Respondent E (interview, 21 May 2012):

"My current experience is that the strategy of the unit is not observed in the province as it has no buy-in I believe, so it changes as it does not get support and this affects how I function in a management role. For example, we have our strategy but the Provincial Management Committee (PMC) decides on how we should do our work. I do not know if they have powers to override our strategic plans, but the PMC interferes and this affects the planning arrangements, control one has, work plans, leadership role and the ability for one to motivate employees."

This situation reflects the observations of Badenhorst-Weiss, et al (2010:150-151) who states that planning is like a compass of a business unit in the workplace that brings order and direction in the role of management business units strategy.

The change-oriented leadership role of the Integrated leadership model acknowledges that change is a vital aspect of any workplace, including the public sector in South Africa (Fernandez, Jik Cho & Perry, 2010:311; Denner & Oosthuizen, 2008:41-42) as managers have to constantly find means of creating value for money by effecting service delivery in a context characterised by the transformation agenda of South Africa that also affects the public service in South Africa (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010; Werner, 2007:291-293).

5.3 COMMUNICATION AND INFLUENCE

The ability of most of the LMI and S managers to influence subordinates to give their best in their work is dubious if they cannot plan effectively for the unit projects (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:150).

Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) expressed doubt :in this regard "Yes, I am influential because I support and trust people who report to me, in a sense that they know if they have challenges they will be acted upon diligently, so I believe I am a good listener who always aligns her thinking with the unit's strategic objectives."

The challenges mentioned by most respondents with regard to them not being able to plan well because of the merger contradicts their view that they influentially communicate effectively. Without a clear and updated strategic plan, managers are not able to display and influence their subordinates to deliver the desired outputs and outcomes (Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:150-151).

The absence of leadership and updated business unit strategy in this regards deprives the LMI and S managers of the opportunity to influence subordinates to be motivated and purpose-driven in their tasks (Elenkov, Judge & Wright, 2005; Werner, 2007). Respondent E noted that: "[Thinks for a while] I do, but again my challenge is that we still have to get our strategic challenges in order to be able to integrate it within the broader DoL strategy" (interview, 21 May 2012).

This shows that effective planning and communication cannot take place, especially in an environment characterised by change, without leadership. In this regard, strategic leadership affords managers the ability not only to cope with the daily operations of a public office by understanding the strategic policy documents and operational plans, but also equips them with the ability to deal with change.

The challenges experienced by LMI and S business managers in terms of communication and influence indicate that LMI and S managers never planned properly for the merger, considering that all managers share the same view that the merger presents them with challenges. One manager even admits that:

"We have a number of challenges, for instance our strategy is not updated… (we have to in a way understand what strategy is…)" (Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012). Respondent B adds that, "The challenge is that of implementation of the strategy, … play … part, like a sequence and other managers have to play theirs as well and you find that I cannot do my part well if other units have not done their part well." (Interview, 18 May 2012).

These views concur with the findings of Jooste and Fourie (2009:51-68) who suggest that due to the lack of strategic leadership managers tend to not know their strategic roles and in this case the strategic implementation becomes a challenge. In support of this statement, Jooste and Fourie (2009:51-52) and Mpofu (2010:44-177) assert that currently in strategic leadership research it is widely acknowledged that strategic implementation is identified as the most critical phase in the strategic process rather than its formulation.

Jooste and Fourie (2009), Fernandez, et al (2010:308-323) and Battilana, et al (2011:422-438) advocate in their findings that strategic understanding is a problem in the public sector and poor communication of the strategy are two major problems in organisations that hinder effective strategic implementation. This view is shared by more than one writer (Lane, 2008:15-23; Stewart, 2004:16-21; Denner & Oosthuizen, 2008:4155). In the LMI and S business unit the absence of the unit's updated strategy makes managers unable to execute crucial leadership roles in the form of influencing subordinates and communicating with them in a manner that will allow subordinates to envision the future of the organisation (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001).

5.4 LEADERSHIP TRENDS

The findings reveal that most of the Labour Market Information and Statistics business managers generally value communication related to the career development of staff. This notion is captured well by the following respondents:

"Communication is key for me…." (Respondent A, interview, 17 May 2012); and "I believe in the development of people, not for people to remain in the same level in terms of their job growth." (Respondent F, interview, 31 June 2012).

Werner (2007:290-291 and Pretorius (2005) observe that values like developing and empowering subordinates are good values as they appeal to the common good of all employees. Nevertheless the creation of a culture characterised by the dominance of other related values, like teamwork, respect, participation, equal opportunity, empowerment and performance in the LMI and S business unit may be hampered by the lack of a clearly developed strategy, communication and proper planning within the business unit. This is so because not all managers in the LMI and S business unit are seemingly emotionally intelligent enough to understand the benefits of controlling their emotions and being aware of the emotions of others, which can be good for the cohesion of the business unit (Goleman, 1995). Consider these views from some managers:

"When I am angry at someone I struggle to find a balance between my anger and the nature of my work, I feel I am not here to manage my emotions. I do throw tantrums, is it professional?, I don't care like. … here personalities are bigger I guess is a problem for me. This is not a nursing environment …. I think training is required for dealing with emotions." (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012). Respondent C (interview, 18 May 2012) states that, "…tell them that I am not their friend. Emotions make us human, but I try to control my emotions, however we are not here to nurse people's egos."

These views show that the LMI and S managers have meaningful values, like communication and the development of subordinates. However, not all of them seem to be able to control their emotions in a manner that would be good for the unit objectives.

5.5 WORK TASKS AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT

The findings demonstrate that four of the six managers regard themselves as well balanced, being both work- and people-oriented, while the other two believe they are more work-oriented. However, the two managers who regard themselves as more work-oriented depict the negative effect that bureaucracy can have in the workplace, especially in the relations between managers and subordinates. This is so because not all managers realise the value of striking a balance between work and people. For instance, Respondent D (interview, 18 May 2012) states that:

"Work is more important to me, not the friendship nature of things - no no no!"

The classical and critical bureaucratic theorists mention that bureaucracy is not always ideal in the workplace, because it very much ends up being just an instrument that promotes a division between managers and subordinates and may also make managers fail to deal with change effectively (Werner, 2007). However, managers like Respondent E who values tasks rather than relations are not necessarily ineffective managers as task-oriented leadership, according to Fernandez, et al, 2010:311, Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:215 and Werner, 2007:291-293 is mostly related to management functions, like managers ensuring there is structure in the workplace, subordinates having clear roles and responsibilities, and monitoring and setting up performance standards systems.

Nevertheless, because of the lack of an updated strategy of the LMI and S business unit, managers that view themselves as being task-oriented struggle to explain further how they fulfil their functions as two Respondents indicate this frustration:

"Not really. We do not do anything now [pauses and look confused] subordinates do not carry tasks as instructed; the merger issue is a problem. I now do not really understand my role. I feel there is no clarification with regards to our roles." (Respondent C, interview, 18 May 2012).

"… My challenge in influencing employees is the interference of the PMC's decisions. We work on agreements, so it is tough if our strategy is not properly put in place and executed. Currently we are not meeting our objectives" [looking frustrated and hopeless] (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

Relations-oriented managers reflect a type of leadership that enables them to satisfy the well-being of employees, for instance ensuring that all employees are respected and treated equally at work, are empowered to make inputs in decision-making, have their work valued and appreciated and are also afforded the space to develop and grow in the organisation (Fernandez, et al, 2010:311; Badenhorst-Weiss, et al, 2010:215; Werner, 2007:291-293).

5.6 MANAGING DIVERSE EMPLOYEES AND STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

The findings gathered in terms of the ability of the LMI and S business unit managers to manage different employees in relation to their age, educational level, race and any other quality reveals that the integrated leadership model proposed by Fernandez, et al (2010) is important.

Fernandez, et al (2010) suggests that well developed workplace strategies can be better implemented when managers are able to play the diversity-oriented leadership role, which they use to exploit the benefits of racial, age and ethnically diverse groups as they work together (Fernandez, et al, 2010:311). It is, however, worth noting that even though the LMI and S business unit does not have an updated version of their strategy, it seems that LMI and S business managers take advantage of the different employees who may have experience, but no educational qualifications, as Respondent E explains:

"I have worked with few people of different race, age and I think I am able to manage them well. Education is an important issue with me because; it helps

people a lot in life. I cherish working with people who have educational qualifications …. There are people appointed to posts without education, but due to experience, however to me that is a challenge. I however believe in the potential of people - some people you can tell they are willing to learn and grow." (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

Fernandez, et al (2010) indicates that the integrated leadership model requires that task-oriented leadership, relations-oriented leadership, diversity-oriented leadership, change-oriented leadership and integrity-oriented leadership roles have to be executed simultaneously in dealing with strategy and change in the workplace.

This model shows the importance of working with a well developed strategy in the workplace, but this is not the case in the LMI and S business unit as the unit does not presently have a coherent strategy.

5.7 ENFORCING ESTABLISHED REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Part three of the interview questions sought to understand from the LMI and S business unit managers what should done to address the lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit. The respondents in general felt that most challenges experienced depict a governance theme:

"I think accountability is needed in all levels from the Director General all the way down to us. I believe in the span of control theory; that people are given tasks accordingly in line with what their positions demand in an organisation. We have no leadership in the unit …. We have a weak top management problem in the Gauteng provincial office. You know when in an organisation when your Deputy Director abdicates his duties and comes so late and expects you to be early at work what do you do as an Assistant Director?. I just become disillusioned" (Respondent E, interview, 21 May 2012).

This notion is shared by Respondent B (interview, 18 May 2012) who emotionally stated that, "Our Deputy Director should get qualifications if he does not, because from my observation I do not think he has them. I feel he cannot implement our strategy, provide any remedial action to any of our challenges. He should be rotated to other units or should definitely go for a mentorship programme. He must be willing to listen and be open to people's inputs. All of us in the unit should learn to listen carefully and also we must have people with research in different fields so that we can be effective."

Governance in relation to the LMI and S business unit can be defined as systems, processes put in place to ensure that all employees in the unit work towards the accomplishment of the unit's vision (Hope, 2005:283-311; Jooste & Fourie, 2009:51-53).

Jooste and Fourie (2009) indicate that developing a unit's strategy is important, but is not the most challenging as compared to the challenges of strategic implementation. However, for a strategy to be successfully put together and implemented, strategic leadership from all LMI and S business unit managers and participation by all personnel in the unit is critical.

Two respondents mention the need for all LMI and S business unit staff members, regardless of rank, to attend a workshop dedicated to discussing and finding a solution to strategic challenges of the unit since the merger. This is captured well by Respondent A (interview, 17 May 2012) by stating that, " I think it would be best to involve all LMI and S staff members to discuss the main strategy of the unit together, the merger and also how things are changing, hence affecting our work. More communication should be done in line with the way we work."

This remark shows the need for the participatory element in the LMI and S business unit.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the data reveals that there is a lack of strategic leadership in the process of integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the DoL. This manifest itself as managers in this business unit struggle to cope with change, plan effectively, influence subordinates, communicate effectively, and balance the work and the human element, and social interaction with subordinates.

The LMI and S business unit strategy of 2005-2009 is not updated and this causes many of these challenges, as managers struggle to put work plans together and develop a systematic way of working on a daily basis.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows the relationship between the purpose of the research and the research findings, and further reveals how the findings were reached. This is done in a manner that relates these to the strategic leadership problem in the integration and implementation of the LMI and S business unit's strategy in the Gauteng provincial office of the Department of Labour.

The purpose of this research was to explore the challenges of the lack of strategic leadership in the execution of the Gauteng Department of Labour's provincial offices merger with a particular focus on the implementation of the LMI and S business unit strategy. This research investigated factors that led to the lack of strategic leadership, presented the findings, interpreted and analysed the findings and recommended strategies for consideration.

In this research the factors that contribute to the lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit are exposed as they are understood in the mentioned business unit. The conclusions and recommendations are outlined in a context of strategic leadership, but more so in the LMI and S business unit of the Gauteng Department of Labour.

6.2 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Discussed in this section are factors that contribute to the lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit. The literature review has shown that strategic leadership is composed of not only leadership as a component, but also

the strategy component. In order to successfully drive the strategy implementation process of any workplace, it is critical for managers to understand the components of their workplace strategy.

6.2.1 Merger

The findings show that the merger undertaken to form one Gauteng provincial office of the DoL was not adequately planned by the provincial office. This situation affected the LMI and S business unit's operational strategy implementation process. Planning is negatively affected, and this results in confusion to managers in terms of communication between them and subordinates and hence the management and leadership roles of LMI and S business unit managers is reduced not to be influential.

This situation is depicted well by Respondent C:

"We no longer have planning according to me. Our activities are not done well. This I am sure is not happening." (Interview, 18 May 2012).

6.2.2 Leadership trends

It is evident from the findings that the unit's managers have good management values, like communication, career development of their staff members, and respect, and they have a sense of balance in terms of focussing on both people and work matters.

In essence, the finding is that most LMI and S business unit managers seem to be balanced in focussing on both people and work. This is contradicted, however, by the finding that not all of them are able to work well with all types of employees. This element shows a lack of managerial planning for the type of employees needed in the unit. This is critical in strategic leadership as employees

(subordinates in this case) are vital resources in the LMI and S business unit's operational strategic implementation process.

6.2.3 Inspiration

Strategic leadership is characterised by the ability of the managers to motivate, connect and care for the well-being of employees, and communicate effectively the desired state of the workplace in future through the unit's or organisation's vision and mission. The lack of this element by most staff in the LMI and S business unit seems to be a contributing factor to the challenges resulting from a lack of strategic leadership in the unit, because managers fail to communicate and promote the unit's operational strategy that will inform subordinates' personal work plans. Furthermore, not all of them are able to keep their emotions in check as they work with employees.

6.2.4 Understanding the business unit's strategy

The findings show that LMI and S business unit managers do not understand the operational nature of the unit's strategy. This is so because the findings show that there is some level of misunderstanding of the LMI and S business unit strategy by LMI and S business unit managers.

6.2.5 Management development

The LMI and S business unit managers do not share the same managerial perspectives in developing subordinates. This gives cause for concern in terms of the developmental nature of their role in the business unit.

6.2.6 Organisational governance

Findings indicate a lack of governance in the LMI and S business unit, as managers do not put in place organisational control systems to drive the implementation process of the unit's strategy better.

This factor creates a context where it is not easy for managers to establish and sustain an effective organisational culture and consequently strategic implementation will not be possible. Control systems, like performance management of sub-units, have to be put in place and decisions made about how well managers within LMI and S units manage those sub-units.

6.2.7 Organisational Structure

The formal divisional structure of LMI and S sub-units lacks a co-ordinating mechanism to properly manage all the activities done in the different units. This factor creates management chaos, as the findings show that not all managers seem clear about their role.

6.2.8 Tools of trade

Relevant tools of trade are another factor that hinders the strategic implementation process of the LMI and S business unit. Issues of software, cars, budget and continuous training for managers and all employees adds to the challenge of strategically leading the implementation of the unit's operational strategy.

6.2.9 LMI&S Business unit culture

Due to the critical and complex nature of the LMI and S business unit strategy it is clear from the findings that there is no cohesive culture in the unit which impacts on the ability of the unit to achieve its strategic objectives.

6.2.10 Recommendations

This research was not only aimed at exploring the challenges of the lack of strategic leadership in the LMI and S business unit as regards the merger of the Gauteng Department of Labour's provincial offices, but it also recommends strategies for consideration.

6.2.11 Strategic review

There is a need for the DoL's Gauteng provincial leadership to engage in strategic review of the LMI and S business Unit with the aim of understanding it better. This is because the findings show that there is some level of misunderstanding of the LMI and S business unit strategy by LMI and S business unit managers. In this regard, the National Department of Labour (Head Office) should take the lead in analysing and explaining the strategic role of the LMI and S business unit.

6.2.12 Management development

The LMI and S business unit managers should consider participating in strategy and leadership development programmes. This may enable them to understand that their role at the provincial office level is that of strategically leading the implementation of the LMI and S strategy. The reason for this is that in terms of strategy at the provincial level, the LMI and S business unit strategy is operational. However it requires LMI and S business unit managers to be knowledgeable and well-informed to grasp the complex nature that characterises the labour market and economic agendas internationally, in the African continent, regionally, and in South Africa. Educational qualifications, at the highest level, should be imperative for managers in this regard.

6.2.13 Organisational governance

Leadership and management are different concepts as outlined in the literature review section. This is vital because the lack of understanding on the part of managers of the LMI and S strategic direction renders the LMI and S business unit managers incapable of putting in place the organisational control systems to drive the implementation process.

Such a failure further impacts on the ability of LMI and S business unit managers to plan well for the unit's projects. In such a context it is not easy for managers to establish and sustain an effective organisational culture and consequently strategic implementation will not be possible. Control systems, like performance management of sub-units, have to be put in place and decisions made about how well managers within LMI and S units manage those sub-units.

6.2.14 Organisational structure

The formal divisional structure of LMI and S sub-units must enable managers to make decisions and be accountable for those decisions, but equally crucially, a co-ordinating mechanism to manage all the activities has to be developed.

6.2.15 Tools of trade

It is of paramount importance that the unit should have tools of trade to meet both the basic and complex needs in departments. In the sphere of the labour market, economics, statistics, labour relations, communication and research are the main needs as regards training and further education, since the glue that binds people is information. For better research, credible sources such as broadsheet newspapers, magazines and journals can be used by the unit to gather information.

6.2.16 Business unit culture

Due to the critical and complex nature of the LMI and S business unit strategy, it is important that a team culture should be introduced to the managers of the unit. Team culture should characterise punctuality, sharing knowledge, assisting one other, working in teams, and research. These characteristics should serve as norms that value continuous learning and inputs from all members of staff. The staff needs to be oriented to this new culture and managers should lead by example.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

This research can be a guide in assisting managers in the Gauteng provincial office of the LMI and S unit in understanding the importance of implementing the unit's strategic objectives by utilising strategic leadership. This is critical because the operational strategy must resonate with the development agenda of South Africa. In view of the apartheid challenges, development requires a new culture of management that affords managers the opportunity to become leaders that can lead change processes. Strategic leadership reflects the NPM philosophy in that it promotes an holistic approach to operations. The NPM emphasises the importance of governance structures and systems in workplaces; in this regard LMI and S managers would be able to implement and lead the strategy of the unit effectively.

The change that took place as a result of the merger between the former Gauteng North and South LMIs exposed the lack of strategic leadership in the unit. Managers of the unit are unable to coherently articulate the unit strategy because both units worked differently before. The LMI strategy was drafted in 2004 and was seemingly never finalised, as the findings show that LMI managers are not familiar with the LMI strategy.

A working culture has to be established which is characterised by cohesive team work that values knowledge sharing, continuous learning and development in the

sphere of the labour market, economics, statistics, communication and research. Tools of trade are recommended that suit the strategic implementation of the LMI and S unit: hardware and software, vehicles, and research and information tools.

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