

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 6 presents the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the research. The discussion focuses mainly on the literature review and the empirical study.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of this research are formulated based on the literature review and the empirical study.

6.1.1 Conclusions: literature review

Chapter 2 explored the concept, “organisational culture” focusing on its theoretical development based on studies conducted within the field of organisational theory. It may be concluded that organisational culture constitutes values, beliefs, attitudes and behavioral patterns shared by organisational members in pursuit of organisational goals, which gives the organisation a distinctive character. Harrison’s model of organisational culture, which is characterised by four dimensions, namely achievement, power, role and support dimensions, was adopted for this study (Harrison, 1993).

In chapter 3 the concept, “organisational commitment” was explored focusing on its theoretical development by reviewing the available literature. It may be concluded that organisational commitment reflects to what degree an employee is willing to maintain membership in an organisation, because he or she identifies with the organisation’s goals and values. The tri-dimensional model of Meyer and Allen (1997) was adopted for this study, which conceptualise organisational commitment in three dimensions, namely affective, continuance and normative commitments.

Furthermore, chapter 3 also included a brief discussion integrating the concepts organisational culture and organisational commitment, based on the literature review. It may be concluded that organisational commitment is an outcome of organisational culture and that there is a need for a scientific study to further determine the relationship between these two variables.

6.1.2 Conclusions: empirical study

The aim of the empirical study was to determine the relationship between organisational culture and organisational commitment. It may be concluded that organisational commitment has a significant relation with organisational culture. In chapters 4 and 5, the empirical study and its results were reported and interpreted.

Firstly, affective commitment has a significant relation to achievement, role, power and support cultures. It may be concluded that the respondents are more affectively committed to the organisation when:

- ❖ Existing achievement culture is dominant.
- ❖ Existing role culture is dominant.
- ❖ Existing and preferred power culture is least dominant.
- ❖ Preferred support culture is dominant.

Secondly, normative commitment has a significant relation to role, support, power and achievement culture. It may be concluded that the respondents are more normatively committed to the organisation when:

- ❖ Existing role culture is least dominant.
- ❖ Existing support culture is least dominant.
- ❖ Existing power culture is least dominant.
- ❖ Preferred achievement culture is dominant.
- ❖ Preferred role culture is least dominant.

Lastly, continuance commitment has a significant relation to role culture. It may be concluded that the respondents are more continuance committed to the organisation when the existing and preferred role culture is least dominant.

In general, it may be concluded that respondents who are affectively committed to the organisation are more willing to maintain their relationship with the organisation, than those who are normative and continuance committed. This suggests that the organisation should create an organisational culture which ensures the development of affective commitment. If the organisation fails to do so, this will affect the overall organisational commitment, as was determined in the literature review.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

The discussion of the limitations of this research focuses on the literature review and the empirical study.

6.1.3 Limitations: literature review

The researcher limited the literature used in the discussions on organisational culture and organisational commitment, to the theoretical relationship between these variables. This was deemed necessary to determine the theoretical relationship between organisational culture and organisational commitment.

There are several studies, which investigated the relationship of these variables and other variables, such as job satisfaction, performance, etc. As a result very little literature exists on the relationship between organisational culture and organisational commitment.

There is no evidence of similar studies conducted in South Africa.

6.2.2 Limitations: empirical study

The following are limitations of the empirical study:

- ❖ The limitation of the empirical study is the sample or population group. All respondents are from one organisation which can influence their perceptions due to its practices and other factors.
- ❖ The restriction of the empirical study being conducted in one organisation makes it difficult to verify results and interpretations with similar studies in other organisations. Therefore, the present results cannot be generalised to other populations groups without further research.
- ❖ Both questionnaires were based on the perceptions of the research subjects and therefore increase the chances of subjectivity when completing the questionnaires.
- ❖ The survey used in the empirical study was a cross-sectional design, which entails obtaining the results at one time only. A longitudinal study, conducted over time, would be of value to determine the effect of a changing organisational culture on organisational commitment.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to the empirical aim, the purpose of the research is to develop proposals that can assist the organisation to successfully implement organisational culture change to enhance organisational commitment.

The following recommendations are made in an effort to address the challenges identified in the empirical study. The main purpose of the recommendations is that these actions will lead to the development of an organisational culture that enhances organisational commitment. This study leads to several implications for leaders in today's organisation, who have an important role to play in developing the needed organisational commitment and organisational culture. The

researcher proposes that both organisational commitment and organisational culture be addressed in this organisation. These two areas will be used to categorise the required actions.

6.3.1 Organisational commitment proposals

The main purpose of recommendations to address organisational commitment, is to increase the level of affective commitment and decrease the levels of normative and continuance commitments. Meyer and Allen (1997, p 107) state that “affective commitment to the organisation has the strongest and most consistent relations with desirable outcomes such as retention, attendance, performance and citizenship”. This supports the recommendation that affective commitment to the organisation is the most desirable form of commitment in an organisation due to its positive implications for on-the-job behaviors and performance.

Meyer and Allen (1997, p 41 – 56) propose the following actions to build affective commitment:

6.3.1.1 Organisational policies and procedures

- ❖ The organisation needs to develop and enact policies and procedures that organisational members, consider to be fair.
- ❖ These fair policies and procedures will lead to fair decision-making by the organisation's leadership; this will be influential in shaping affective commitment to the organisation.
- ❖ Leadership must strive to ensure that rewards and resources are distributed fairly in the organisation.

6.3.1.2 Met-Expectations

Organisational members enter an organisation with a set of expectations about what they will encounter.

- ❖ It is recommended that the organisation uses its recruitment, selection and induction strategies to identify newcomers' expectations about their job and the organisation.
- ❖ The organisation should then be able to communicate the expectations that it will be able to meet and how it intends to do this.

6.3.1.3 Person-job fit

Organisational members find work experiences that are congruent with their personal values or goals to be rewarding; and thus influence affective commitment.

It is therefore recommended that the organisation should recruit and appoint individuals who perceive their values and goals to be congruent with those of the organisation.

6.3.2 Organisational culture proposals

When diagnosing organisational culture, one culture can be found to be dominant or least dominant than the other culture dimensions. The results of this study indicate that power and role cultures are perceived to be dominant in this organisation; while support and achievement cultures are perceived to be least dominant. It is recommended that organisational culture should be characterised by a balance of all the four culture dimensions, namely achievement, power, role and support cultures (Harrison, 1993). A balance of all these cultures suggests that neither of the cultures should be found to be least dominant or most dominant than the others.

When there is a balance of organisational culture dimensions; organisational culture becomes a tool to empower employees rather disempowering them. As a result the organisation will be able to enhance its members' affective organisational commitment.

In order for the organisation to create a balance between these four cultures, Harrison (1993, p 55 -58) proposes the following methods for each organisational culture dimension that the organisation can use to empower employees in a way that builds organisational commitment:

6.3.2.1 Achievement culture

It is recommended that achievement culture be used to empower organisational members through identification with values and ideals of a vision; through the liberation of creativity and freedom to act. Achievement culture disempowers organisational members through burnout, stress, treating the individual as an instrument of the task and inhibiting disagreements about goals and values.

The organisation should use the following achievement behaviors to empower organisational members:

- ❖ Celebrate a victory.
- ❖ Push a decision to a lower level.
- ❖ Share the vision of excellence.
- ❖ Create a team mission and logo together.
- ❖ Bend or ignore a rule to get the job done.
- ❖ Supports a subordinate's idea.
- ❖ Publicly recognise a group or personal achievement.
- ❖ Share organisational "secrets" and "inside information".

6.3.2.2 Power culture

It is important that the use of power culture in an organisation empowers organisational members through identification with a strong leader. Power culture disempowers organisational members through fear and inability to act without permission.

The following ways of using power and position are suggested for the organisation to empower its members:

- ❖ Set an example for others to follow which should include strength, fairness, integrity and responsibility.
- ❖ Set a clear direction when others are fearful and confused.
- ❖ Use authority to focus energy and resources of the organisation on what's really important.
- ❖ The expectations and requirements of the organisation should be presented forcefully, while avoiding threats, blame and put-downs.
- ❖ The organisation should ensure mentoring subordinates through guidance, coaching and supporting their careers.
- ❖ Reducing fear by being clear and consistent about what behaviors and performance the organisation will reward and punish.
- ❖ Insist on doing what is right.

6.3.2.3 Role culture

There seems to be a need to use role culture to empower organisational members through systems that serve people and the task, reducing confusion and conflict. It is essential to prevent organisational members from becoming disempowered. This can be done by giving them autonomy and allowing them to be creative and to cooperate by removing barriers which prevent that from happening.

The organisation can use systems and structures as part of role culture to empower employees in the following manner:

- ❖ Design jobs that enable organisational members to control the outcomes for which they are held accountable.
- ❖ Keep it simple by minimizing the number and complexity of rules, procedures and approval processes.
- ❖ Involve organisational members in designing their own rules, methods, and procedures.
- ❖ Invent information systems that allow organisational members to track their own results in “real time”.
- ❖ Create structures where information and influence flow laterally and diagnostically, rather than only vertically.
- ❖ Periodically change the rule book and start over.
- ❖ Use Quality Management approaches to involve all employees in improving systems and procedures.

6.3.2.4 Support culture

It is recommended that support culture be used to empower organisational members through the power of cooperation, trust, providing understanding, acceptance and assistance. Support culture can disempower organisational members through suppressing conflict, preoccupation with process and conformity to group norms.

The following support behaviors can be used in an organisation to empower employees in support culture:

- ❖ Show trust in the integrity and dedication of team members.
- ❖ Ask for help and acknowledge uncertainty.
- ❖ Take time to listen to a personal problem.
- ❖ Acknowledge the contribution to a conflict or misunderstanding.
- ❖ Bend or break a rule to meet an employee's personal need.

- ❖ Share credit for an achievement with all those who contributed.
- ❖ Promote a good “people” person.
- ❖ Encourage groups to lend another group a helping hand.
- ❖ Spend time helping new organisational members “learn the ropes”.

6.3.2.5 Implementing organisational culture change

The effects of implementing organisational culture change which the organisation should be aware of when initiating culture change are discussed in chapter 2. It is also recommended that the organisation should reduce the fear, anxiety and confusion that may arise due to culture change through open communication (Harrison, 1993).

Harrison (1993, p 22) presents the following conditions that are required for successful culture change:

- ❖ The organisation should be performing adequately, with resources available to invest in culture learning and change.
- ❖ The leaders of the change initiative must have influence and freedom to act.
- ❖ Key leaders should embody the values and behaviors that typify the new culture.
- ❖ Organisational members should be psychologically ready for the new change by internalising the values of the new culture and understanding how it functions.

In addition to the above, Van Tonder (2004, p 212) suggests that a change initiative will be successful when:

- ❖ It is aligned with company objectives.
- ❖ It ensures employee participation.
- ❖ It incorporates customer participation.
- ❖ It maintains a reasonable balance between risk and cost-benefit analysis.
- ❖ It includes the continuous monitoring of progress.

- ❖ It conveys or communicates the change as it unfolds.

6.3.3 Specific proposals for the organisation

- ❖ It is recommended that this organisation communicates the findings of this study to all its employees, in order to create awareness of the organisation's culture and the commitment of its employees.
- ❖ The organisation should formulate a strong business-related need for change, based on this study, with the objectives of the change initiative aligned with the organisation's needs.
- ❖ In order to gain buy-in of all stakeholders in the organisation such as employees and the union, it is proposed that this organisation encourages participation or involvement of all stakeholders in the change process.
- ❖ Communication and transparency of the change process can also enable this organisation to avoid inadequate dissemination of information and dysfunctional rumours.
- ❖ Visible management support and commitment to the organisation's change initiative will have a positive influence on the process.
- ❖ Finally, it is recommended that the organisation develops and implements a reward system that supports the change process.

6.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this research were discussed.

Herewith, the specific aim is met, namely to formulate recommendations that will assist the organisation to create an organisational culture that enhances employees organisational commitment.