

LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS IN MANAGING CHANGE, MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES AND COMMUNICATION AND THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

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Abstract

This study assesses first line supervisors' perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership in managing the change process. This is analyzed in terms of employee's perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership communication, ability to motivate staff and to effectively manage change. The prevailing leadership styles are also assessed. The study was undertaken in a municipal fire and emergency services division in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and the population comprises of 60 first line supervisors from which a sample of 52 employees was drawn using the systematic sampling technique. Data was collected using an established questionnaire that was modified for the purposes of this study. The psychometric properties of the questionnaire (validity and reliability) were assessed using Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha respectively. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results indicate that first line supervisors believe that the leadership of the organization is able to effectively manage change though improvement is needed in terms of their ability to motivate employees and communicate effectively. The dominant leadership style is autocratic leadership followed by impoverished leadership styles which explains the lower concern for motivation and communication that surfaced in this organization. The study also found that only team/participative leadership style correlates significantly with leaders' potential to motivate employees, communicate and manage change respectively. Recommendations are made to enhance leadership effectiveness.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Motivation, Communication, Managing Change

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Introduction

In a rapidly changing and challenging environment employees require continuous guidance in order to perform optimally. Leadership by its very nature ought to provide a clear path for employees to be able to cope with new and seemingly uncertain goals and challenges. Such is the case in the target municipal fire and emergency services division that is undergoing a restructuring process which involves the incorporation of other local authorities into a single entity under one management structure. The added complication of the 'Unicity' concept creates further problems as the boundaries of the division increases dramatically. The previously under-serviced areas that have been included in the Unicity require the same high levels of services which increases the burden due to the tight budgetary constraints. Furthermore, the move from a three-shift to a four-shift system and resultant lower manning levels on all emergency response vehicles will have a huge impact on the manner in which employees operate in the future. Service delivery with limited resources could become a major problem. Morale of employees

appears to be at the lowest and management recognizes this as a major obstacle to the change process. In addition, the retention of skilled, well trained and experienced staff is a challenge. Effective leadership is perhaps the only solution to the challenges being faced in the division.

This study therefore assesses first line supervisors' perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership in managing the change process. This is analyzed in terms of employee's perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership communication, ability to motivate staff and to effectively manage change. The prevailing leadership styles are also assessed.

Leadership and leadership styles

Leadership can be described as influencing and motivating the behaviour of individuals and groups (House, 1999) and facilitating individual and collective efforts in such a way that they are willing to pursue the shared objectives and goals of the organization (Yukl, 2002). It is the process of influencing other employees so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the attainment

of shared goals (Akinbode & Fagbohunge, 2012). Leadership involves, amongst others, such activities as formulating the organization's mission, objectives and plans and explaining these to subordinates, giving direction and guidance to subordinates, supervising their work, taking steps to improve performance, disciplining subordinates, dealing with conflict and most of all ensuring that plans are successfully implemented. Leadership characteristics include having drive, the desire to lead, self-confidence, and cognitive ability.

Leadership and management are distinct but complementary and interdependent. Kotter (1990) explains that management is about coping with complexity and that without good management, complex enterprises tend to become chaotic in ways that threaten their existence and emphasizes that leadership is about coping with change. As organizations are becoming engulfed with continuous competition and change such as technological advancements and the changing demographics of the workforce, making small improvements is no longer a recipe for success; instead increasing rates of change demand more effective leadership. Organizational restructuring to meet an ever increasing demand for services places enormous demands on leaders to transform the organization effectively. Very often organizational restructuring is accompanied by employee resistance to the change process and leaders face the challenge of making the transition from the old order to the new order as painless as possible for employees. Leaders have to develop a vision that is clear, compelling and highly appealing to followers and articulate a strategy for bringing that vision to life; a clear vision guides followers toward achieving organizational goals and makes them feel good about doing so (Yukl, 2002). They need to provide employees with a sense of mission, instill pride, gain respect and trust. High expectations must be communicated and important purposes expressed in simple ways. Intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving must be promoted. Personal attention and individual treatment of employees together with coaching, advising and motivating will assist in achieving success. Robbins (2005) highlights the importance of transformational leaders and their ability to pay attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers, to change followers' awareness of issues by helping them to look at old problems in new ways and to be able to excite, arouse and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve group goals. This description underpins the notion that leadership is also a social influence process (Erkutlu, 2008).

The effectiveness of the leadership especially during a change process largely depends on the leadership style which relates to the type of relationship wherein someone uses his/her rights and methods to influence numerous employees to work together towards the attainment of a shared goal

(Buble, Juras & Matić, 2014). Bosiock and Sad (2013) maintain that each style of leadership is a mix of different kinds of behaviour and qualities of leaders. The Blake Mouton Managerial Grid identified two dimensions of leadership behaviour, namely, 'employee-oriented' and 'production-oriented'. Employee-oriented leaders are described as being high on interpersonal relations, that is, they take a personal interest in the needs of subordinates and accept differences among individuals (Smit and Cronje, 2002). Production-oriented leaders' main concern is to accomplish their groups' tasks with very little consideration for employees' needs and individual differences. Hence, the two main behavioural dimensions in the Managerial Grid are concern for people and concern for results and plotting these on axes generates five different leadership styles with various levels of concern for people and for results, namely, impoverished management (low results/low people), country club management (high people/low results), autocratic management (high results/low people), middle-of-the-road management (medium results/medium people) and team/participative leadership (high production/high people). Therefore, each style has a degree of authority that can be applied by the leader and a corresponding degree of freedom within which subordinates can act. Although the grid has five main leadership styles, it is really divided into nine possible positions on each axis thereby, creating eighty-one possible positions into which a leader's style may fall. Movement through the leadership grid from left to right and bottom to top indicates a change from autocratic to democratic leadership (Smit and Cronje, 2002). The ideal style appears at the top right corner where production is optimized as a result of democratic management and a team of well motivated workers.

Leadership effectiveness

Central to the debate on leadership is the question of which factors affect the effectiveness of leadership to the greatest extent. Harari (1996, p. 36) believes that "great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate and doubt, to offer a solution everybody can understand". In a change environment, the ability of the leader to effectively communicate the solution, the change process and its impact in a compelling manner will motivate, inspire and energize employees towards its successful implementation and realization. This study therefore, assesses leadership effectiveness in terms of ability to motivate, communicate, manage change and the prevailing dominant leadership style.

Motivation

A crucial aspect of organizational behaviour that most managers and leaders have to address is what drives

their subordinates to perform in order to achieve organizational goals, that is, what motivates employees? According to Greenberg and Baron (2000), motivation is described as the set of processes that arouse, direct and maintain human behaviour toward attaining some goal. Therefore, motivation is the formulation of goal directed behaviour where employees are encouraged to achieve individual, team and organizational goals which are interlinked such that the achievement of one indirectly but concurrently means the achievement of other goals (Buble et al., 2014). The performance of employees who are low in motivation is equivalent to those who have low ability; yet, high motivation leads to high performance. Furthermore, Binfor, Boeteng, Abbey, Osei, Swanzy and Gyeip-Garbrah (2013) maintain that the effects of leadership and motivation on employees' performance have a large impact on the overall wellbeing of the attitude of workers in general. However, contrary to this, Almansour (2012) believes that it is difficult to maintain with certainty that a motivated workplace means that the organization would attain high performance and higher revenue.

Various theories of motivation emphasize the importance of recognizing employee needs and fulfilling them in order to remove a tension state and restore satisfaction. Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains individuals' progression through 5 levels of needs, namely, physiological needs, safety or security needs, social or belongingness needs, self-esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Alderfer (1972) categorized needs into existence, relatedness (interpersonal) and growth needs. The Hawthorne studies conducted by Elton Mayo and his team discovered that answers to motivation lay not in the production aspects of the job but in the way people felt management viewed them. Obtaining and implementing employees' suggestions made them feel important, part of the operation and of the future of the organization. Herzberg's theory is that people have two different categories of needs that are independent of each other and affect behaviour in different ways, namely, motivators (which relate to the job itself and include achievement, recognition of accomplishment, challenging work, increased responsibility, growth and development) and hygiene factors (which relate to the environment and include policies and administration, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, money, status and security) (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

From the aforementioned theories, it is evident that employees may be motivated by meeting their needs, by setting goals and by ensuring that fairness prevails in the workplace. It is also important to alter employees' expectations and this can be done by clarifying people's expectations that their effort will lead to performance, by administering rewards with valence to employees and by clearly linking valued rewards to performance (Greenberg & Baron, 2000). Employees may also be motivated by structuring jobs

to make them more interesting and this may be achieved by combining tasks, opening feedback channels, establishing client relationships and by loading jobs vertically and giving employees greater responsibility for the particular job. According to Kotter (1990), just as direction setting signals the path for action and effective alignment channels employees down the path, successfully motivating employees ensures that they will have the drive to surpass obstacles.

Communication

Communication is the process of interaction and exchange between people and has to do with the transmission of meaning and intentions to others such that those receiving the messages, in turn, have to interpret them so as to give them meaning (Misselhorn, 1998). According to Smit and Cronje (2002), the ultimate goal of all communication is to obtain a response from the recipient of the message or to evoke a certain behavioural reaction. This would lead to the execution of a task and is an inherent part of the communication process. The aspects of the behavioural reaction include thinking, talking, listening, perceiving and acting. The communication message contains one or more of three specific aims, namely, to inform, to persuade and/or to remind. According to Peter Drucker, cited in Lowy and Reimus (1996), 60% of all management problems occur as a result of faulty communications. This emphasizes the need for the relationship between employees and the organization to be the pinnacle of management thinking. It is pointless having a well-developed business plan if employees are unaware of it and are not working cohesively towards achieving its goals. Effective communication is pivotal to the optimal functioning of the organization and to optimally utilize the organization's human capital; good communication is the "lifeblood" of any organization (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 327). Similarly, Buble et al. (2014) maintain that the enhancement of communication in the organization significantly influences its business performance. Greenberg and Baron (2000) maintain that the communication techniques adopted by an organization influences the structure, extent and scope of the organization. Ekman (1990) emphasizes that whilst most people believe communication to be verbal, it is only 7% verbal, 37% tonality determined by the tone and pitch of voice and 56% body language. Barrett (2006) believes that leadership communication uses a full array of communication skills and resources to overcome disturbances and to formulate and transmit clear messages that guide, direct, and energize others into action. A leader will be able to measure the influence of the communication through the amount of impact, action or change in the receiver caused by the communicated message. The effectiveness of the communicated

message can be measured by how well the message is received and understood by the recipient. Effective communication can only be attained if the Chief Executive Officer of the organization is philosophically and behaviourally committed to the notion of communicating with employees (Robbins, 2005) and ensures that effective communication is ingrained into the organizational culture.

According to Hersey and Blanchard (1993), leaders can use the unique communication systems within their organizations to communicate effectively and efficiently. In order to satisfy organizational members' needs for information, leaders need to provide for formal communication in three distinct directions, namely, upward, downward and horizontal communication. Informal communication channels also exist and consist of an assortment of facts, opinions, suspicions and rumours which bypass the formal lines of communication but can supplement it, for example, the grapevine and social networks. Verbal and non-verbal interpersonal communications and written and electronic communications are also important sources of communication. Fundamental to most communication channels is the need for active listening which can avoid misunderstandings in communication that often results in complicated and costly setbacks.

Managing Change

Change is inevitable and because of the uncertainty it brings with it, change is perceived as being 'bad'. However, change is bad if leaders ignore it but if leaders prepare for it and exploit it, change can be beneficial to the organization (Lucas, 1997). In other words, leaders cannot let change occur as it will, if they hope to be effective. Instead they have to develop strategies to plan, direct, control change and analyze the demands of the change on their environment in order to adapt their leadership styles to fit these demands so that they can proactively manage change (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Smit & Cronje, 2002; Misselhorn, 1998). It is important to note that change does not occur in a vacuum and does not take place within a short space of time; instead it is deliberate, involves a tremendous amount of work and takes time (Okantey, 2012). Change creates an extremely dynamic business environment, thereby requiring leaders to ensure that the change management process is also adaptive (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). There are numerous forces of change that leaders need to respond to by adjusting their leadership styles and thinking and these include changing competition, technological advancements, economic shocks, changing nature of the workforce, social trends, world politics, population growth and the process of urbanization, international trade relations and consumer preferences and behaviour (Robbins, 2005; Smit & Cronje, 2002). Pryor, Taneja, Hymphreys, Anderson and Singleton (2008)

categorize these forces of change into the global environment (uncontrollable), domestic environment (uncontrollable), political/legal forces, competitive structure and economic climate.

According to Smit and Cronje (2002), the management of change can be depicted as a systematic process that can be broken down into sub-processes. This involves Lewin's three step process of:

- *unfreezing* the status quo which involves recognizing the forces of change, recognizing the need for change and diagnosing the problem,
- implementing the necessary *change* processes which involves identifying alternative organizational development methods, recognizing limiting conditions, selecting the appropriate method for change to take place and overcoming resistance for change, and
- *refreezing* the desired new state which entails implementing and monitoring change (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Robbins, 2005; Smit & Cronje, 2002).

Most change efforts experience some form of resistance due the uncertainty that the change brings with it. Two types of resistance to change include individual and organizational resistance. Individual resistance to change lies in the employees' perceptions, personalities and needs and may be triggered by habit, perceived threat to their security, economic factors, fear of the unknown and selective information processing (Robbins, 2005). Organizational resistance particularly occurs in conservative organizations that resist change such as government departments and educational institutions and this kind of resistance may be triggered by structural inertia, limited focus of change, group inertia, threat to expertise, threat to established power relationships and threat to established resource allocations (Robbins, 2005). Numerous strategies may be adopted to overcome resistance to change, namely, education and communication, participation, facilitation and support, negotiation and agreement, manipulation and co-optation and coercion and their use must be carefully considered and may be utilized in different situations and in varying combinations (Smit & Cronje, 2002). By identifying which resistance factors affect employees the most during the change process and employing the appropriate mechanism to address this issue, leaders will greatly reduce the severity of the trauma created by change and hence, enhance the effectiveness of change management. Binfor et al. (2013) believe that effective leadership and motivation is fundamental to altering employees' perceptions from viewing change as a threat to viewing it as an exciting challenge and Belias and Koustelios (2014) emphasize that change resides at the core or heart of leadership. Pryor et al. (2008) summarize that irrespective of the speed of organizational change, it is the motion of an organization from its current plateau toward a desired

future state that is aimed at enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in the organization.

Aims of the Study

This study assesses first line supervisors' perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership in managing the change process. This is analyzed in terms of employee's perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership communication, ability to motivate staff and to effectively manage change. The prevailing leadership styles are also assessed.

Research Design

Respondents

The study was undertaken in a municipal fire and emergency services division in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and the population comprises of 60 first line supervisors from which a sample of 52 employees was drawn using the systematic sampling technique. According to Sekaran's (2003) population-to-sample size table, for a population of 60 the corresponding minimum sample of 52 is needed, thereby confirming the adequacy of the sample of 52 first line supervisors used in the study.

The sample may be differentiated based on age, gender, race, length of service in the organization (tenure) and division/section. With regards to age, half of the sample (50%) is between 30-39 years old, followed by 40-49 years (40.4%), 20-29 years (5.8%) and 50 years and over (3.8%). Evidently, the majority of the sample is between 30-49 years old (90.4%). Due to the nature of the work in the fire and emergency services division and the stringent physical fitness requirement, 98.1% of the sample comprises of males and only 1.9% consists of females. In terms of race, the majority of the sample (50%) is Indian, followed by White (26.9%), then African (19.2%), and then Coloured (3.8%). With regards to tenure, 40.4% of the first line supervisors worked in the organization for over 15 years, followed by those who are serving the organization for 12-15 years (36.5%), then 4-7 years (13.5%), then 8-11 years (7.7%) and finally those with a tenure of 0-3 years (1.9%). Evidently, the majority of the employees have long tenure, that is, 12 years and over (76.9%). In terms of division, the majority of the employees are in Operations (75%), followed by Fire Safety (15.4%) followed by Training (9.6%).

Measuring Instrument

Data was collected using an established, pre-coded, self-administered questionnaire by Devraj (2000) that was adapted for the purpose of this study and consists of two sections. Section A relates to biographical data (age, gender, race, tenure, division/section) and was assessed using the nominal scale with precoded option

categories. Section B relates to first line supervisors' perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership in managing the change process. This is analyzed in terms of employee's perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership communication (9 items), ability to motivate staff (8 items) and to effectively manage change (7 items). The prevailing leadership styles are also assessed (13 items). Section B was measured using the Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4) to strongly agree (5). The questionnaire was formulated on the basis of identifying recurring themes that surfaced while conducting the literature review. These ensured face and content validity. Furthermore, in-house pretesting was adopted to assess the suitability of the instruments. Pilot testing was also carried out on 8 first line supervisors using the same protocols that were utilized for the larger study to test the process, the appropriateness of questions and employees' understanding thereof. No inadequacies were reported and the final questionnaire was considered appropriate in terms of relevance and construction.

Research procedure

The research was only conducted upon completion of the pilot study.

Reliability of the questionnaire

The validity of the questionnaire was assessed using Factor Analysis. A principal component analysis was used to extract initial factors and an iterated principal factor analysis was performed using SPSS with an Orthogonal Varimax Rotation. Only items with loadings >0.5 were considered to be significant and when items were significantly loaded on more than one factor only that with the highest value was selected. Four factors with latent roots greater than unity were extracted from the factor loading matrix. Factor 1 relates to motivation and accounts for 17.86% of the total variance, Factor 2 relates to communication and accounts for 8.56% of the total variance, Factor 3 relates to leadership style and accounts for 7.52% of the total variance and Factor 4 relates to managing change and accounts for 6.75% of the total variance in determining leadership effectiveness. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The items were reflected as having a high level of internal consistency and reliability, with the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha being 0.8185.

Statistical analysis of the data

Descriptive statistics (percentages, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum) and inferential statistics (correlation) were used to evaluate the objectives and hypothesis of the study.

Results

First line supervisors' perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership in terms of communication, their ability

to motivate staff and to manage change was assessed (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Effectiveness of leadership in terms of communication, motivation and managing change

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Critical Range
Motivation	2.375	0.6163	1	4	2.20 – 2.55
Communication	2.374	0.5511	1	4	2.22 – 2.53
Managing Change	4.35	0.6229	3	5	4.18 – 4.53

Table 1 reflects that first line supervisors believe that the leadership of the organization are able to effectively manage change. Although leaders are perceived as being able to motivate employees (Mean = 2.375) and to communicate (Mean = 2.374) at an almost equal extent, the mean score values against a maximum attainable score of 5 shows that there needs to be a lot of room for improvement in these areas.

In order to engage in deeper analysis of first line supervisors' perceptions of the leadership effectiveness in terms of communication, their ability to motivate staff and to manage change, frequency analyses were undertaken. With regards to managing change, 90.4% of the first line supervisors were convinced that leaders do counsel employees on their personal concerns and 84.6% felt that leaders supported employees during the change process. The majority of employees also felt that leaders view change as a challenge and initiate change. Whilst a significant segment of employees felt that leaders challenge outdated process/procedures and regulations/norms, not all employees shared this view.

With regards to motivating employees during the process of change and in general, 88.5% of the employees believed that leaders in their organization reward individuals for excellent performance, 86.5% felt that leaders in their section promote an equitable

reward system, 77% felt that leaders give recognition if objectives are achieved and 73.1% respectively were of the opinion that leaders stimulate/enable employees to achieve objectives and appreciate their employees' contributions. However, employees were not convinced that leaders are supportive of their development, identified their strengths and developmental areas or provided them with the challenge that they seek.

With regards to communication, 86.5% of the employees felt that leaders provide them with the necessary information about the organization's strategy, 82.7% believed that leaders are never too busy to communicate with employees on important issues, 78.8% were convinced that the leadership communicates a shared vision and that they receive more valuable information from leaders than via the grapevine. Furthermore, 73% of the employees felt that leaders in their section provide regular feedback on agreed objectives. However, employees were not convinced that the roles/responsibilities are explicitly communicated by leaders, that objectives are clearly stated, that priorities are explicitly communicated and that strategic/relevant information is shared with team members.

The leadership styles adopted by the leaders were also assessed using the leadership grid (Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics: Perceptions of first line supervisors of the prevailing leadership styles

Leadership Style	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Critical Range
Autocratic	3.71	0.99	1	5	3.44 – 3.99
Team/Participative	1.74	0.51	1	3	1.60 – 1.88
Middle-of-the-road	1.76	0.56	1	3	1.60 – 1.91
Impoverished	3.05	0.70	1	5	2.86 – 3.24
Country Club	1.3	0.54	1	3	1.15 – 1.45

Table 2 reflects that the autocratic leadership style (Mean = 3.71) is perceived as prevailing in most sections of the organization, followed by the impoverished leadership style (Mean = 3.05), then the middle-of-the road leadership style (Mean = 1.76), negligibly followed by the team/participative leadership style (Mean = 1.74) and lastly, the country club leadership style (Mean = 1.3). This implies that

the majority of the leaders are perceived as demanding performance with minimum consideration of people (autocratic leadership style) and as exerting minimum effort to get work done (impoverished management). Only a small segment of leaders are viewed as attaining adequate performance by means of a combination of pressure for performance and adequate job satisfaction (middle-of-the-road). Minor

segments of leaders are identified as engaging in team or participative management or, leaders who pay attention to the needs of people and sound relations that lead to a pleasant atmosphere and workplace (country club). Evidently, the leaders in this organization are more task-oriented than employee-oriented.

The relationship between the leadership styles and the leaders' potential to motivate staff, communicate and manage change were also assessed.

H 1. There is a significant relationship between the respective leadership styles and leaders' perceived potential to motivate staff, communicate and manage change (Table 3).

Table 3. Relationship between team/participative leadership style and leaders' potential to motivate employees, communicate and manage change

Leadership Style	r p	Motivation	Communication	Manage Change
Autocratic	r p	0.146 0.301	0.185 0.188	0.098 0.487
Team/Participative	r p	0.396 0.004*	0.578 0.000*	0.318 0.022**
Middle-of-the-road	r p	0.319 0.021**	0.131 0.356	0.086 0.546
Impoverished	r p	-0.092 0.519	0.006 0.965	-0.134 0.344
Country Club	r p	0.113 0.427	0.319 0.021**	0.062 0.662

* $p < 0.01$

** $p < 0.05$

Table 3 reflects that there is a significant relationship between team/participative leadership style and leaders' potential to motivate employees, communicate and manage change at, at least the 5% level of significance. There is also a significant relationship between the middle-of-the-road leadership style and leaders' ability to motivate employees at the 5% level of significance. In addition, there is a significant relationship between the country club leadership style and communication at the 5% level of significance. No other significant relationships were noted. Hence, hypothesis 1 may only be accepted in terms of the team/participative leadership style and partially accepted in terms of the middle-of-the road and country club leadership styles.

Discussion of Results

First line supervisors believe that the leadership of the organization is able to effectively manage change though improvement is needed in terms of their ability to motivate employees and communicate effectively.

With regards to managing change, first line supervisors were convinced that leaders do counsel employees on their personal concerns and support them during the change process. They also believed that leaders view change as a challenge and initiate change. This is imperative since Binfor et al. (2013) maintain that leaders should be a substance of change and uncertainty and take cognisance of its impact on its people. However, in this study, first line supervisors were not convinced that leaders challenge

outdated process/procedures and regulations/norms. This is of concern as Curtis, Vries & Sheerin (2011) maintain that leaders not only innovate, develop and inspire but also challenge the status quo and concentrate on a long-term vision. Furthermore, Von Eck and Verwey (2007) believe that a leader operating in a constantly changing environment should have cognitive, emotion and spiritual intelligence in order to successfully lead people through change and uncertainty.

With regards to motivating employees during the process of change and in general, leaders were complemented for recognizing and appreciating employees' contributions, for equitable rewards and for stimulating employees to achieve their objectives. Similarly, Buble et al. (2014) found that the dominant aspect for employees' motivation is their participation in decision-making that makes them feel responsible, and they also find material rewards to be a significant motivation. However, in this study, first line supervisors were not convinced that leaders are supportive of their development, identified their strengths and developmental areas or provided them with the challenge that they seek. Perhaps, the shortage of staff and the fast pace of work in the fire and emergency division leaves leaders with little time to engage with employees on self development issues. Likewise, Bezuidenhout and Schultz (2013) found the constant pressure to be productive results in leaders in the mining industry being unable to engage with employees and suggest that leaders have to pay individual attention to followers, provide balanced feedback and provide opportunities for growth and

development. Detert and Burris (2007) emphasize the importance of subordinate voice and feedback in ensuring a dynamic leader-employee relationship.

With regards to communication, leaders were complemented for communicating the organization's strategy and a shared vision and for never being too busy to communicate with employees on important issues. Employees also believed that they receive more valuable information from leaders than via the grapevine and provide regular feedback on agreed objectives. Buble et al. (2014) found from their research that communication is both horizontal and vertical whereby subordinates willingly accept information given by managers and also inform them of their personal problems thereby ensuring that senior levels of management are fully aware of the problems experienced at the lower levels. However, in this study, first line supervisors were not convinced that the roles/responsibilities are explicitly communicated by leaders, that objectives are clearly stated, that priorities are explicitly communicated and that strategic/relevant information is shared with team members.

The results also reflect that the leaders in this organization are more task-oriented than employee-oriented and the autocratic and impoverished leadership styles dominate with the focus respectively being on demanding performance with minimum consideration of people (autocratic leadership style) and on exerting minimum effort to get work done (impoverished management) as opposed to team/participative leadership which focuses on achieving goals via highly motivated employees who dedicatedly pursue organizational goals and where joint decision-making is central. The prevailing dominant leadership style being autocratic explains the lower concern for motivation and communication that surfaced in this organization. The focus on task may also be due to the nature of work in the fire and emergency division where response time, service quality and immediately attending to the task at hand automatically becomes priority. The impoverished management may be due to the mindset of minimal work for pay which does prevail in a public sector organization where close monitoring may be absent. Similarly, de Vries, Bakker-Pieper and Oostenveld (2010) found that charismatic and human-oriented leadership are mainly communicative while task-oriented leadership is significantly less communicative. In their study, Buble et al. (2014) found that amongst Croatia managers a soft authoritarian leadership style with numerous aspects of consultative leadership style dominates such as participation, rich communication and superior-subordinate interaction. Buble et al. (2014) found from their research that amongst Croatia managers, only decision-making as an aspect of the manager's leadership style is constant and that other dimensions like motivation and communication vary according to the level of management. This perhaps explains why

Bowery (2004) emphasizes the need to differentiate between leadership as personal quality and as organization function. A study undertaken by Alkahtani, Abu-Jarad, Sulaiman and Nikbin (2011) found that Malaysian managers that are achievement-oriented and persistent predominantly utilise the consultative leadership style and even those that use the autocratic leadership style tend to be open to experience. Inandi, Tunc and Gilic (2013) found that autocratic and laissez-faire leadership behaviours reduces resistance to change but cautions that this does not mean that they support change. Furthermore, in this study, it was found that only team/participative leadership style correlates significantly with leaders' potential to motivate staff, communicate and manage change respectively, which is expected as it is characteristic and typical of this category of leadership.

Recommendations and Conclusion

From the results of the study, it is evident that first line supervisors believe that the leadership of the organization is able to effectively manage change though improvement is needed in terms of their ability to motivate employees and communicate effectively. The dominant leadership style is autocratic leadership followed by impoverished leadership styles, thereby indicating that the leadership predominantly focuses on the task and results rather than people. This would explain the lower concern for motivation and communication that surfaced in this organization. The study also found that only team/participative leadership style correlates significantly with leaders' potential to motivate employees, communicate and manage change respectively. The recommendation therefore, is that every effort should be made to train and transform the leadership culture to inculcate in its daily practice a concern for people just as much as for the task at hand as the nature of work in the fire and emergency division demands. The bonus is that when the leadership culture changes, the organizational culture also changes thereby benefiting the human capital in the organization. Leaders will thus, motivate and communicate with employees more effectively thereby, having the potential to enhance the overall effectiveness of the organization.

Recommendations For Future Research

This study was undertaken in one public sector division. Future studies should compare the prevailing leadership styles in a public sector and private sector organization in order to assess key differences and provide insight into the leadership characteristics that bring about a combination of greater concern for people and results and thus, generate enhanced organizational effectiveness.

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