
**BUSINESS SCHOOLS, LEADERSHIP AND LEADER DEVELOPMENT IN AN
AFRICAN CONTEXT**

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ABSTRACT

When an organisation loses its influence and market share, the likely reason is a lack of quality leadership. Leadership makes the difference in the success or failure of an organisation. A change of leadership can turn the tide of malfunction, and replace a state of stagnation with excitement and energy. An effective leader brings about a rejuvenation in the sense of the vision and mission in an organisation. Is it possible for leadership styles that are taught based on western paradigms to be imported and employed in a similar way transversely between cultures and nations, even on the same continent? Leadership styles undoubtedly have different effects and connotations in relation to a student's cultural environment. It is thus critical to understand that there are indeed cultural nuances around the notion of leadership. This paper asks important questions relating to leadership education as offered by business schools. What is leadership and what are the principles of effective leadership that African business schools should be imparting to their students? Are students being transformed by faculty and in any sense refurbishing their minds? Is university learning being transformed into desirable workplace practices in the public and private sectors? Can leadership be taught at all? Furthermore, to what extent do business schools provide current and future leaders with a needed sense of identity?

Key Words: Leader, manager, MBA, MBL, transformation, Africanisation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organisations today are in a constant state of flux in terms of business challenges and uncertainties and are always seeking leaders with strong leadership skills to ensure their sustainability. Many employees who are ambitious about promotions and leadership positions flock towards MBA or equivalent development programmes, hoping to acquire leadership skills as preparation for senior positions. The attraction that such programmes hold is created by the business schools themselves when they state that they can transform and develop their students into leaders. Dalton (2015) indicates that MBA programmes focus on the theories, tools and techniques for analysing, planning and controlling so that the organisations in which this

knowledge is ultimately applied can perform more efficiently and effectively. However, they place rather less emphasis on the preparation necessary for leadership in terms of change and uncertainty, flexibility, creativity and innovative thinking. McCormack (1984) reflects in his book that business schools are “teaching the past” and that they are lacking in the transmission of people-oriented skills such as listening, observing, talking, reflection and being discreet.

Sinclair (2007), reflects in her paper that leadership education is an ever-encroaching industry and that most MBA programmes make tacit claims to teach it. This raises the question, “Can leadership benefit from a critical pedagogy?” as well as the concern as to whether business schools can actually fulfil their promise to develop leaders. In many cases, graduates are driven only by the bottom-line and fail to consider the planet or people, thereby demonstrating a shortfall in their education (Wang, Malhotra & Murnighan, 2011). The purpose of this paper is to unpack leadership education from a business school perspective, which is to a large extent a ubiquitous issue from academic perspectives. The teaching of implicit leadership theories is an important aspect to consider as part of this process, as is the distinction between leadership development and leader development which are often considered to be the same thing. A critical aspect in becoming an effective leader is the acknowledgment that leadership behaviour is highly developmental. Only a small number of people are innately leaders. This implies that, on the whole, leaders are developed through experience and, to an extent, through education in specific skills and their philosophical underpinnings relating to what society considers to be apposite leadership behaviours. There are those who discard the notion that business schools are concentrating on leadership development (Mintzberg, 2004). This study takes the perspective that business schools in an African context are required to create fertile ground for leadership development and to transform current and future leaders so that they become – through their effective leading – role models of exemplary leadership. While not all people are born leaders, there are nonetheless desirable practices that are teachable and learnable and that will undoubtedly augment the leadership efficiency of a proportion of those exposed to them. It is evident from research in many areas on leadership that good education is key to ethical practice and more so for leaders as they role-model behaviour (Nicolaidis 2019a; 2019b; 2016a; 2016b).

While it is not possible to state categorically that there is an inclusive valid truth as to what “good” or “effective” leadership is, and while remaining cognisant of the fact that context plays a key role, the teaching of implicit leadership theories and ethical practice is critical in leadership development as this is what forges the identity area workspace between a business school and a student. Students cannot lead at all if they do not comprehend themselves or the impact of their actions or decisions on all the stakeholders of an organisation. The literature asserts, nonetheless, that many students are not prepared for the important work of managing, let alone leading (Datar, Garvin & Cullen 2010; Rubin & Dierdorff, 2009).

The promotional materials for virtually all business schools assert that they are educating and training the leaders of tomorrow, and they state that they are developing leadership skills as part of their various MBA and management development programmes. “Leadership” is thus the in-vogue term. The question arising here is that of how many leaders a business requires. Surely, not

all MBAs or graduates can be leaders, otherwise there will simply be no one to be led! (Bouvard, 2013).

Is leadership really a skill that suits each and every MBA student's personality? There is no advertising that promotes the contrary – that business schools are teaching managers how to be followers rather than leaders, team players rather than captains. Why don't business schools promote the other aspects of management education that they excel in? How are students selecting a business school when they all conform to a set of standards imposed by accrediting bodies, all use the same textbooks and case studies and all promote leadership as their USP?(Bouvard, 2013)

In any MBA or MBL course, students should be developing a greater sense of self-awareness and they should be reflecting on and engaging in positive self-regulating behaviour – especially in the aspects of business that have to do with ethical conduct. It is important to note that business schools do not have the monopoly on leadership education and that they should thus be ultra-careful in respect of what they market and deliver. There are myriad other players, including continuing education departments at universities and consulting companies, as well as a growing number of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) players that have entered the “leadership” market. MOOCs provide an opportunity for expansion of learner knowledge as they target the academic community to obtain clients and then strive to develop within them various skills and aptitudes, as well as consciousness and reflective practices, critical thinking and positive decision-making, all of which enhance both their leadership influence and institutional effectiveness. MOOCs generally have flexibility of course structure and use appropriate technology tools and resources. In addition, their instructors have good knowledge of MOOC design and are important to instructional content and delivery within the virtual learning environment, something that threatens traditional ODeL providers (Bryant, Trahan & Fairchild, 2018). Business school assessments are an ever expanding literature and it is evident that there are those who discard the needed emphasis on leadership (Mintzberg, 2004).

Many business schools do too few of the right things or too many of the wrong things to the extent that society is replete with graduates who are not remotely in any position to lead an organisation (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). A study conducted by Boyatzis and Renio (1989) on MBA graduates showed that interpersonal leadership skills were not adequately developed. Business school employees need to become proud brand agents and assume responsibility for maintaining and developing an excellent brand image with all stakeholders, but especially with students who are current or future leaders. Pfeffer and Fong (2004) state the danger of business schools simply emulating management consulting firms that have a habit of directing academic research towards what is usually a very narrow, market-driven agenda. Care should also be taken not to steer away from traditional leadership models and adopt less leader centric models (Schyns & Schilling, 2011). There should also be drives to develop leadership skills through

collaborative relationships and social interaction and, especially, through immersive reflective practice (Mackay & Tymon, 2016). In addition, given the plethora of scandals in mega corporations, the pedagogical stress must be on ethical leadership actions.

Key concept clarification

The concept of leadership is ostensibly uncomplicated, but it remains underpinned by significant complexity, even though there is some consensus regarding its definition. Parry (2001) asserts that leadership is the presentation by a person of some identifiable goal or vision or future state that people can aspire to, and the generation of a readiness within those people to follow the leader along a socially accountable and mutually beneficial course of action toward the desired goal. For the purpose of this study, the term “leadership”, as stated by Yukl (2002), is adopted. He asserts that leadership is the process of influencing others to comprehend and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done successfully, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to achieve the shared objectives.

Dalton (2015) states three reasons why there is a demand for leadership; (1) it is relevant as we live in increasingly complex and changing times in terms of sustainability, economic emergence, environmental concerns, geopolitics and demand for scarce resources, (2) organisations will move from a manufacturing focus to a knowledge focus with value being created by “figureheads” who can influence behaviours and (3) Individual influence and authority of the leader to developing appropriate cultures.

The concept of culture in this study resonates with Hofstede’s (1993) definition that culture is a collective mental programming which distinguishes members of one group from another and it includes the system of values which one espouses. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner maintain that “culture is the way in which a group of people solve problems and reconcile dilemmas” (1998: 6).

2. METHODOLOGY

The researchers used a systematic literature review and defined the research topic and research issues after due consideration of various aspects. They developed eligibility criteria for the articles used with stringent inclusion and exclusion criteria. Academic articles without the terms leader, manager, MBA, MBL, transformation, Africanisation, higher education, were omitted.

The researchers searched for the literature using inter alia, Ebscohost and Google Scholar

Literature was screened to assess the quality of studies, and suitable data was extracted, synthesised and interpreted. A large expansion of research outputs, both in peer-reviewed publications, and unpublished, e.g. in conference presentations or symposia, exists, but it was difficult to find work done in the area of business schools, leadership and leader development from an African context.

They contacted a librarian at the early stage of the review and this was very useful to help them identify the extent of the literature and to formulate a search strategy.

The search required searching in different databases (which each require different search strategies) as well as locating non-published opinions and research e.g. by contacting academics in the field. Data was thus extracted from wider reading and the relevant information from each of the included studies and articles was considered.

The study posed some risk of bias as some articles were clearly written with specific agendas which support only higher education institutions.

Towards leadership development

Dalton (2015) describes four major perspectives on leadership; (1) Authority and hierarchy – this is based on traits and innate qualities and the belief that leaders are born and not created, (2) Learned competencies – belief that leaders can be developed and trained, (3) Activities, tasks and practice – belief that there is a collective need that brings about a leader to overcome a challenge, problem or crises, hence demanding the “right man for the job” and (4) Systematic – belief that leadership is about a leader and the followers in a particular context.

Another way of defining leadership is to show the differentiation from management. Management is a process that is used to accomplish organisational goals. that is, a process that is used to achieve what an organisation wants to achieve, whilst leadership, according to Kotter (2001), is about setting direction and aligning, motivating and inspiring people to achieving goals. From the work of Edersheim and Drucker (2007, xi) “Management is about doing things right and leadership is about doing the right things”. Many management books define management as planning, leading, organising and controlling and leadership as directing, coaching, being supportive and delegating.

The most important differences between leaders and managers are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Management and Leadership Process Differences in the workplace (Kotterman,2006)

Process	Management	Leadership
Vision Establishment	Plans and budgets Develops process steps and sets timelines Displays impersonal attitude about the vision and goals	Sets direction and develops the vision Develops strategic plans and achieves the vision Displays very passionate attitude about the vision and goals
Human Development and Networking	Organises and staffs Maintains structure Delegates responsibility Delegates authority	Aligns organisation Communicates the vision, mission and direction Influences creation

	Implements the vision Establishes policy and procedures to implement the vision Displays low emotion Limits employee choices	of coalitions, teams and partnerships that understand and accept the vision Displays driven, high emotion Increases choices
Vision Execution	Controls processes Identifies problems Solves problems Monitors results Takes low risk approach to problem solving change	Motivates and inspires Energises employees to overcome barriers to change Satisfies basic human needs Takes high-risk approach to problem solving
Vision Outcome	Manages vision order and predictability Provides expected results consistently to leadership and other stakeholders	Promotes useful and dramatic changes, such as new products or approaches to improving labour relations

Notably, management and leadership skills are inherent in all workers. The authors of this article have postulated an illustration to show the degree of mixture between leadership skills and management skills according to level of management in figure 1. This figure shows that junior management have low leadership skills but high management skills; middle management have a mixture of both but does not peak in any one of them and top management will have high leadership skills and low management skills.

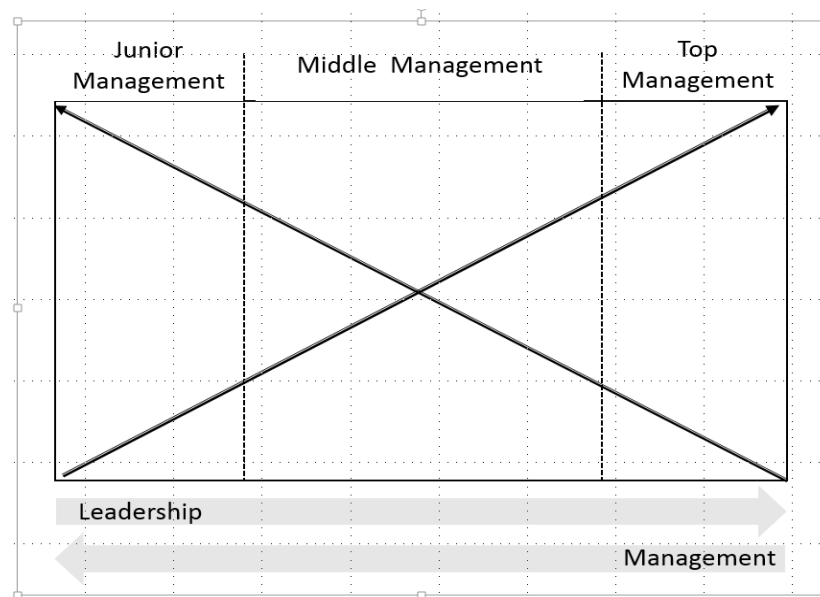


Figure 1: Mixture of management and leadership skills per level of management (Source: authors of article)

The three levels of management are best described by Dalton (2015) as; lower level management, which concentrates on learning from doing, learning the ropes and taking on responsibility for basic tasks; middle management which concentrates on curiosity to improve the way the tasks are achieved, alignment with senior management desire to create value, and implementing change; and top management which concentrates on acting as the owner of the organisation, setting strategies towards achieving the vision and scanning the business environment and navigating the organisation to ensure its sustainability.

Methodological stance

This study has applied a concept analysis approach by considering leadership education at business schools and their practices, and critically scrutinising the application of these practices. The study also applied an integrative review methodological approach (Whittemore and Knafl, 2005) which allowed for the recognition and incorporation of concepts and themes which led to theory building (Nicholson et al., 2017). Consequently, an integrative review process was used (see: Von Bertalanffy, 1968). This allowed for the assimilation of data from an assortment of secondary sources (Carey et al., 2011). The researchers examined best practices and used searches of databases, including terms such as “leadership”, “leader”, “manager”, “identity” and “business school”.

Articles dealing with the topics were engaged for assessment. Over 80 academic peer reviewed articles were included as they were considered to be the most appropriate available. Data extraction took place via a matrix which summarised the key themes and features of each article (Whittemore and Knafl, 2005), which were then pigeonholed according to themes. By the use of a thematic analysis approach, key themes were identified and data mined so as to show patterns and describe findings.

Considering Culture, “centrisms” and “wicked problems”

Business requires leaders, but also team players and managers with strong hard and soft personal skills and, especially, an ethically driven mindset free of ethnocentrism, androcentrism and chronocentrism, and also cultural sensitivity and thorough technical knowledge which often goes beyond the traditional business school offerings found on MBA and MBL programmes. As the globalised business environment is becoming progressively multifaceted and ambiguous, the corporate world requires managers who can manage the ambiguity in each of the highly dynamic environmental, technological and geopolitical contexts. Perhaps students can be trained to be good leaders, but what is it that constitutes really great leadership? When we consider the highly destructive global scandals of the last two decades in particular, and the increase in corrupt business practices globally, it becomes evident that business schools need to carefully reassess their curricula and to drive, first and foremost, an ethical business practice agenda as they mould

future leaders –that is, their graduates who should not become the protagonists of hapless economic calamities.

Schein (2004) maintains that, by understanding the dynamics of culture, a person is able to become more familiar with unfamiliar behaviours and that this also allows one to better understand oneself. When business schools offer courses to students emanating from diverse countries and continents, do they consider their cultural backgrounds in the preparation of course material? It is an important question to consider the extent to which theories on leadership developed in one culture can in fact be generalised to others (Yukl, 2002: 414). It may be convenient from a business perspective to view culture as merely framed by one's language, history, religion and values and then pigeon-hole a person as belonging to a particular group. In reality, however, the cultural identity of people within a particular geographical space may vary and often does so. Trompenaars and Hampden Turner (1998) liken culture to the layers of an onion. In order to understand the culture it becomes necessary to peel the onion and get into the internal layers. The outer layers are merely consequences of the culture. It is ultimately the norms and values that direct us are one's actions. One's expectations or indisputable reality is the true essence of culture (Trompenaars & Hampden Turner, 1998). Lewin states: "there is no hope for creating a better world without a deep scientific insight into the function of leadership, of culture, and of the other essentials of group life. Social life will have to be managed much more consciously than before if man shall not destroy man" (1943: 334). There is undoubtedly a disturbingly positive attitude toward greed (Giacalone, 2004; Wang, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2011) and this is inherent in management research into, for example, business ethics.

From a business perspective, national culture impacts on both domestic and global business practices because it influences the behaviours of business leaders. It may be argued that a single global culture is trendy and that it has an obsolescing effect on national cultures (Bird and Stevens, 2003: 405) but is this always a good thing? Ultimately, the cultures that endure will be those that are prepared and able to embrace the new on their own terms, while rebuffing anything that suggests an overall violation of their way of life (Davis, 1992). For a business school operating in, for example, Ethiopia or Ghana, is it acceptable to teach Western leadership models as the superlative approach? What we are thus asking is if a Western leadership paradigm is universally applicable. Should current or future business leaders in the countries provided as an example, be taught to accept willy-nilly a Western leadership model and styles of leadership, or should they adjust what they are taught to meet the idyllic model or style for their particular operating environment and culture?

Globalisation seeks to produce a common culture for the world, in which cultural variances must become reduced and generally be imperceptible. However, business leaders on a global stage need cross-cultural competences and a relatively high cultural intelligence that it is problematic to learn (Steers et al., 2010) and this is where their education is critical. Bird and Stevens (2003: 405) ask a critical question:

Can the emerging global culture replace national cultures—in effect, rendering them obsolete? We believe this is the most interesting question. However, discussions surrounding this last question cannot be pursued

without inevitably raising the larger question whether or not one culture may be viewed as more successful—at least in some relativistic ways—than another. For example, one might argue that a culture is more successful if it has greater adaptive capacity. In this view, cultures reflect a community's adaptive responses to the surrounding environment. Consequently, cultures that are able to maintain their adaptive prowess over time could thus be described as more likely to be successful than cultures that cannot adapt and maintain themselves over time.

Cultural considerations should be non-negotiable in leadership education which embraces diversity. Mbigi (2000b) as cited in Cerff (2004), asserts that, in the West, a leader's strength lies in technical innovation, planning and control, due to an emphasis on rational analysis, while in Asia stress is placed on excellence and in Africa the emphasis is on the solidarity of humanity. What is thus needed is an integration of each of these elements. History teaches us many lessons. If we consider classical Greece, its culture was very successful and it was adaptive and prospered – whereas, when it succumbed to the power of the burgeoning Roman Empire, it became subordinate (Bird and Stevens, 2003). In business leadership education, students must be safeguarded against ethnocentrism in any form or shape as this leads to contempt for others who emanate from different groups (Hill, 2003).

Additionally, there exist leadership biases on the grounds of, inter-alia, gender (androcentrism) and ethnicity (ethnocentrism). The former demonstrates strong gender bias (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011), while ethnocentrism creates problems in one's perception of people, places, and cultures. This is mainly the case when dealing with others without any knowledge or experience of their cultural backgrounds. A business leader must self-reflect and be fully conscious of their own ethnocentrism, as this ultimately affects their ability to appropriately perceive others. Good leadership transpires when an individual is able to define and shape the reality of others and interact socially with them to meet the diverse demands of their context and cultures (Barzanò, 2008; Collinson, 2011). Leadership is generally universally masculine and women are under-represented in the topmost leadership positions, although this is a gradually changing scenario. Women in patriarchal societies are considered a sub-species who are not ambitious and who are devoid of the "envisioning" dimension of leadership (Ibarra and Obodaru, 2009). In many cultures, women are perceived to be simply inferior beings who need to bow to patriarchal models of leadership (Panayiotou, 2010). Women are slowly but surely breaching the "glass ceiling" which precludes them from upward mobility in organisations (Bass and Avolio, 1994; 2008). Are business schools addressing this important bias as they should be? (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Torchia, Calabro and Huse, 2011). Many "leaders" emanating from business school education display a total absence of concern for the well-being of society in general (Khurana, 2010) and are caught up in the ethic of self-preservation.

There is also a bias in leadership based on one's age and which needs to be obviated (Riach & Rich, 2007; Wilson et al, 2007) as it is morally indefensible. A lack of cultural sensitivity and diversity in modern leadership, as a social construct, moving into the Fourth Industrial Revolution is intolerable and it serves to destabilise sustainable business systems. "These biases

might be originated in the unconscious unethical choices of the participants, but at the roots of these leadership icons is a powerful and ubiquitous process of social construction. In the age of globalisation and postmodernism we expected a more creative and vast range of business leaders' examples" (Sofica and Negrusa, 2012: 353). Pfeffer and Fong (2002) argue that business schools add no value at all to leadership or to one's career prospects as such. In fact, some business schools may well be cultivating leaders whose ethics and activities reveal amoral thoughts (Ghoshal, 2005),

Grint (2005 cited in Clayton, 2012), asserts that the challenges leaders face today in business are "wicked problems". These tend to be unique and are generally socially complex due to a lack of stakeholder congruence as to understanding of issues at hand. Solutions are thus difficult to arrive at and, for the most part, the problems are not able to be resolved. Leaders are thus required to think innovatively and laterally as they make decisions around such problems. Business schools should make a point of exposing their students to tricky situations such as moral dilemmas and other wicked problems (Faustenhammer & Gössler, 2011). It is critical to teach a mix of transformational and transactional leadership to better position current and future leaders to become resilient and cope with the challenges of the world of the 4th Industrial Revolution (Adler, 2006; Schyns, Kiefer, Kerschreiter & Tymon, 2011; Kwasi Dartey-Baah, 2015).

Transformational leaders are especially needed in an African context, as they are cognisant of the need to uphold principles of human dignity and worth, human rights, good social values, and individual and socio-political transformation (Mwambazambi & Banza, 2014). Furthermore they are able to distinguish and augment the needs or various demands of their followers (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership would be best suited to developing nations (De Vries & Korotov, 2007), but it is equally important to consider gender issues in leadership education and the breaking of glass ceilings that preclude women from attaining the highest possible levels in organisational matrices (Ely, Ibarra & Kolb, 2011). It is likely that some business schools select their applicants very carefully and only accept those who are already primed for transformational leadership roles. Business school programmes should contribute more meaningfully to the transformation of leaders, as they are directly involved in the development of leaders for nations following a socio-political transformation agenda (Mwambazambi & Banza, 2014). Transformational leadership education is thus essential for the effective development of African leaders and business schools should be providing the conceptual underpinning knowledge base, philosophical foundation based on the notion of Ubuntu, and skills required by today's and also tomorrow's leaders. The education on offer should stress why and how the myriad challenges in today's Africa can be understood and dealt with far more effectively than was the case in the past.

What traits should African leaders possess and be taught?

African leaders as indeed elsewhere, need to be authentic. They are required to be people who identify needed change and then forge a vision to execute it with the help of their team. The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates coined the maxim "know thyself". Leadership development should not focus on developing charisma or emulating leaders who are considered to be great,

but rather focus on ethical practice that is inspirational. Datar et al. (2010) suggest that in the absence of applied skills, knowledge alone has very little worth. This is why authentic leaders must know themselves and apply their skills and empower those whom they lead and be role-models of exemplary behaviour and servant leadership which is fundamentally focused on placing the needs of followers before one's personal interests. It is vital for leaders to know themselves and also their followers' characteristics so they can manage and direct them towards truly positive work outcomes (Clayton, 2012; Faustenhammer and Gössler, 2011). Van Rensburg (2007) advocates that psychological restoration is required in the development of archetypal African leadership for a socio-political transformation agenda. African leaders should be taught to do things in a manner which is effective and that is benchmarked against best practices, so that African dignity can be restored after centuries of psycho-social dominance by colonial powers. Thus, African traditional philosophies and values must be taught and their positive leadership aspects emphasised.

A true leader is self-confident, group-oriented, applies distributive justice, and does not thrust their opinions on subordinates (De Cremer, 2006; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). Authentic leaders are perceived to be honest, or 'real'. They also possess a sense of purpose, knowing what they are about and where they want to go (Northouse, 2016). George (2010) emphasises that the authenticity of a leader, rather than their style, is of the utmost importance. He states that the core characteristics that define an 'authentic leader' are knowing themselves, practicing their values and principles, leading rationally and with compassion, forging lasting relationships, and self-discipline. An authentic leader is also one who is passionate, enthused and intrinsically motivated to care about what they do (Northouse, 2017). Environmental stewardship and the sustainability of the planet should be a primary concern for all leaders in all organisations.

Schein (2004) contended that culture and leadership are interrelated and co-exist. It is necessary, for a leader to be an active leader that listens to followers and understand their thoughts and needs, have good self-awareness, self-management and an empathetic spirit. African leaders should exhibit the ability to lead from above and exercise their influence through the legitimate use of the power which is allied to their position, and always strive to value the individual's sense of dignity and worth. Leaders invariably impact upon workplace culture and it is the culture which then offers appropriate constraints on the building of effective and ethically driven leadership (Keyton, 2005; Modaff & DeWine, 2002). An organisational leader has the ability to inspire, create, and role-model the desired culture in the organisation so that employees become exemplars of the desired actions and mindsets (Alvesson, 2002; Keyton, 2005). Small and Dickie (1999) contend that leaders who exhibit values such as ethical practice and integrity, as well as trust and impartiality, become immensely valuable to an organisation in the medium to long term. It is thus also vital that they lead from within and be viewed as partners with others around them. Their roles require that they be competitive, but refrain from exclusionary and divisive actions which can turn their organisation into a societal pariah. While taking risks is often necessary, they should not be reckless but strive to promote growth in individuals and in work teams. In this way they are likely to promote innovation and realise the organisational objectives which flow out of the strategic plan, the mission and also the vision of their organisation.

Leaders' actions and their followers' responses reflect the behaviours which are considered to be legitimate and appropriate in a society (Shahin and Wright, 2004). There are thus dissimilar styles of leadership which are favoured by followers and differences in behaviour which are reflective of those styles. It is common for leaders and managers to demonstrate transformational leadership practices mixed with transactional practices so that they make a single continuum. Burns (1978: 141) has defined a transformational leader as a person who "...raises the follower's level of consciousness about the importance and value of desired outcomes and the methods of reaching those outcomes". He defined transactional leadership as that which transpires when leaders approach followers with the objective of exchanging rewards and benefits.

As Silvia and McGuire (2010) assert, managers who succeed in achieving organisational targetsoftenexercisetask-orientedandpeople-oriented leadership. In other words, they demonstrate transformational leadership by caring about the led (e.g. idealised influence and individual consideration), while at the same time demonstrating transactional leadership (e.g. select performance measures) to get things done by the organisation, team and individuals (Garcia-Morales et al., 2012). Therefore, it is essential to train public sector managers to align their leadership style with the workplace environment (Døjbak,Haakonsson et al., 2008).Transformational leadership exemplifies the ideal leadership style which is required of leaders by organisations and their followers. This can be attributed to the important impact it has on organisational outcomes such as employee job satisfaction (Ngadiman et al., 2013).

Transformational, servant and authentic leadership all embrace a strong moral element (Northouse, 2013). Although a servant leader's primary objective is to serve, and an ethical leader wants to be ethical, an authentic leader's key objective is to be authentic (Northouse, 2013). Business schools should be creatingauthentic leaders with each having their own style, integrating various behaviours and skills which suit very specific contexts (George, 2010). Transformational leaders try to develop the leadership capacities of their followers and promote the idea that their followers should question systems, processes and any conventions, thereby triggering them to develop innovative and creative ideas to myriad problems in the workplace. They inspire learning to build individual, team and organisational capacities.

Honest and transparent communication with all stakeholders is important in forging interpersonal networking and obtaining their buy-in within a spirit of inclusion, cooperation and sincere collaboration in a team-oriented approach to business conduct (Parry, 2001). From an emergentcultureofan organisation,aleadercan select the leadership characteristics that are more appropriate to meet a particular corporate condition (Schein, 2004). However, it is critical that good governance be the hallmark of a leader's tenure. Thus, decision-making is required in which autonomy is distributed amongst all stakeholders who ultimately participate in organisational decision-making processes so that no single entity can have total control (Kooiman 2003; Sorenson and Goethals 2006). A good leader has a clearfocus that is understood by each team member and makes available on-going learning opportunities for the various team members.As servant leaders, African leaders within the spirit of ubuntu should strive to serve by putting the goals and needs of others before their own and then lead ethically and with

compassion and a sense of solidarity (Senjaya & Sarros, 2010). Pfeffer and Fong (2002) argue that MBA students can be assisted immensely by having access to more pragmatic opportunities to learn and prepare themselves to gain essential leadership soft and hard skills.

An authentic leader recognises that failures will materialise and resolve to see such failures as a sanitising process. They allow failures to be handled by their team, they recognise the learning curve and they brainstorm on steps to be taken to avert failure. They stay flexible and maintain their authenticity. Walumbwa et al. (2010: 910) posits that the “more leaders are seen as authentic, the more employees identify with them and feel psychologically empowered, are more engaged in their roles and demonstrate more citizenship-rated behaviours”. Authentic leadership is a positive leadership model that accentuates integrity, ethical practice and moral behaviour and should be the desired style promoted by business schools. Authentic leadership is also adaptive leadership and exhibits a positive relationship with strategic leadership. Authentic leaders provide direction, maintain norms and also safeguard the employees by managing the degree of change which is required to be sustainable and operate optimally (Serfontein, 2010: 225).

Is it possible to teach leadership?

Leadership is invariably an intangible and personal skill which some people possess without realising it, and sadly many others lack while imagining they are leaders of note. Leadership education, “...like leadership, must rely on experiential approaches such as mentoring, coaching, patterning, and, trial-and-error experience (Doh, 2003). It is not merely a case of obtaining a body of knowledge and practising skills. Great introspection is required (Petriglieri, Wood & Petriglieri, 2011) and if leaders are to be sustainable, they will require careful coaching and also empathy for their stances on issues (Boyatzis, Smith & Blaize, 2006). The New Global Economy represents a historic shift in values which is transforming societies (Capra, 1997) and business schools need to embrace this change in what they are teaching.

In recent years there has been a greater emphasis on the teaching of leadership, particularly what is termed authentic leadership (Datar, Garvin & Cullen, 2010; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Roche, 2010; Bennis, 2009; George, Sims & Gergen, 2007). Future leaders see their roles in a way which is informed by the way they view things from adolescence, but they continue to grow socially, physically, and intellectually. Their early grounding and foundation and social context strongly influences their career choices and attitudes toward work relationships, and clearly then, the manner in which they approach managerial roles and interact in leadership roles (Doh, 2003; Mirvis, 2008). It is vital that students acquire a sense of self and find their identity as leaders in business school education which aligns with their personal values and resolution. The importance of experiential learning – and also teamwork learning exercises – cannot be overstated (Yazici, 2005; Miglietti, 2002; Lancaster & Strand, 2001) as these help forge a sense of identity in students. While leadership education is valuable in providing vital underpinning knowledge and skills, both hard and soft, experience is undoubtedly the best teacher for a leader, followed by continuing reflection. There is much merit in what quality education environments can offer. Where offerings are well thought out, future and even current leaders get to experience challenging issues from a diverse range of perspectives and, thereby, often learn far more than might be offered in a workplace scenario. This is particularly the case where groupwork plays a

significant role. Of course, the business school needs to exhibit that it is teaching a sequence of core modules that it is anticipated business leaders will most likely be required possess and at least have some workable knowledge about. The strong networking and socialisation aspects inherent in business leadership education in business schools are important since they, to an extent at least, shape individual leaders and give greater meaning to the notion of leadership (Petriglieri&Petriglieri, 2010). It needs to be stressed that one does not emerge as a leader after having completed an MBA, MBL or Executive Education programme. Rather, leadership *per se* is the product of lifelong learning.

Students must acquire knowledge and the requisite skills, be cognisant of diversity and transformation issues, planetary sustainability, human rights, and ethical practice, and must also be critically self-reflective (Sitkin& Hackman, 2011). A wide-ranging spectrum of levels of competence should exist in each module to be taught so as to enhance the aforementioned aspects. Business schools thus need to expand the opportunities available to their students and to facilitate transitions relying on the communities of practice that develop both within their walls and beyond. Datar et al. (2010) assert in their article *Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads*, that business schools are falling short in their efforts to develop leaders. Business schools can and often do pursue excellence and create passion while crafting an inspiring approach in students who are then more likely to inspire their employees and thus make a real difference in society based on teamwork. Good leadership education enables students to be able to calmly evaluate a situation, and solve myriad potential and real problems while demonstrating integrity which ultimately bolsters trust in their employees as their followers. The theories taught in business schools can, and often do, present the fundamentals needed by actual or emerging leaders. What is needed are imaginative approaches such as case study evaluations based on teamwork approaches which, in themselves, enhance leadership skills.

Business schools bolster identity

Business schools are for many a place of identity in which they are able to articulate their viewpoints and thus develop their self-concept. This is due to the notion that an individual is unable to develop identity in isolation (Kreiner et al., 2006). When students are involved in teamwork they may become uncertain or confused and such occurrences tend to stimulate identity (Alvesson & Wilmot, 2002), as do all collaborative learning endeavours (Yazici, 2005). A business school is thus a social and psychological space that is important for students as future managers and leaders. It assists in the development of a student's personal as well as professional identity. An MBA, MBL or other executive education must forge a sense of identity and pride in participation and achievement by students who are top-level executives or employees in the lower echelons of an organisation. They should be able to balance the demands from a myriad of stakeholders and the challenges of the marketplace. In this regard, corporate branding must be of a high quality and used by business schools to enhance the external profile of the institution and also to drive internal culture changes which make students proud to be attending an institution of good repute and immediately identify with it.

If students acquire carefully crafted knowledge and skills they are likely to deal with tricky situations in their workplace more effectively and the courses they do should ultimately give

them either real or imagined, greater managerial and leadership status in group relations (Hirschhorn, 1990). Managers and leaders are able to trust the skills they acquire and their identities from their business schools, in whichever workplace they may find themselves. Their place of study should thus provide students with a sense of belonging and serve as a place where a community of practice and networks are forged and this may indeed assist in career progression (Parker, Arthur & Inkson, 2004). It is thus critical that business schools create opportunities for students to reflectively introspect and to engage in social experimentation alongside more traditional lectures so that the students can more easily unpack their identities in business schools as identity workspaces (Petriglieri, Wood & Petriglieri, 2011).

What is most needed is to deepen the questions we ask in business schools to include motives, purpose, and beneficiaries of leadership. We also need to broaden the questions business schools ask of students and their employers to enable change in the way leading and following are understood, internalized, and enacted in organizations, that is, what leading means, who gets to do it, and how. (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2015)

A way forward

Business schools are required to adapt their teaching and learning strategies in order to address the dynamic needs of businesses, whether they be micro, medium or mega organisations. Whether offering an MBA or other leadership-oriented programme, it is important to inspire students

to self-reflect and comprehend their personal strengths and weaknesses and also develop their interpersonal skills. Leadership is a dynamic quality that empowers people to not only distinguish themselves from others, but more importantly to add real value to their workplace duties. Students need to acquire relevant knowledge and skills and also be enabled to use them. This implies that the learning environment must be optimally suitable and well resourced. Students should learn and explore their study areas under expert guidance rather than be taught and, in this regard, problem-based learning (PBL) is an ideal solution. Complex real-world problems should be used as a means of stimulating student learning of key concepts, philosophies and principles. PBL has been shown to support the development of critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and needed communication skills. It also delivers opportunities for groupwork in which there is collaboration in discovering, and ultimately evaluating, research materials, and the prospects for life-long learning are enhanced (Duch et al., 2001). PBL is thus an important pedagogical approach that permits students to acquire knowledge while actively engaging with evocative real-life problems (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Miglietti (2002) stresses the importance of using cooperative small groups in academic exercises to enhance engaging with problems. Lancaster and Strand (2001) concur with Miglietti's approach. By using cooperative games, students become team-players, critical thinkers, and apply their skills to achieve team objectives. They thus learn to collaborate with one another and are able to bring their identity to the fore as leaders, followers, and negotiators. By working in small groups, students get to share

strengths and develop weaker skills. Importantly, they develop invaluable interpersonal skills that leaders require. By engaging in activities that develop their understanding of the subjects they are reconnoitring, they gain a greater self-concept and confidence. Bachelder (2015) indicates in her book that, for successful teamwork, leaders must be developed to be coaches and mentors to others.

Some students go

“... to business school with clear pre-defined objectives: to enhance their careers, to change industry or to build a robust business understanding to complement their earlier degree... While most MBAs carry the leadership seed inside them, many choose not to plant it, despite the fertile soil of the graduate programme. While leadership cannot be developed in a classroom, business schools provide ample occasions to develop such skills, even through such simple things as group work or serving on the student government. What schools fail to do is align incentives to encourage students to take on a greater burden.” (The Economist, n.d.).

There needs to be a vigorous combination of both theoretical and applied content which is transformational in orientation and which aligns with Africa's 'rebirth' after decades of paradigms imposed on the continent from predominantly Western business perspectives and the political machinations of non-African nations who seek to colonise Africa economically. Bennis and O'Toole (2005) maintain that there should be less theory-based learning and additional prominence given to teaching students applied skills through, for example, case study group analysis. Such an approach helps facilitate a self-discovery experience that allows students to become better leaders, and the process is enhanced with teamwork case study evaluations since students then get to interact with a wider range of viewpoints and perspectives as well as cultural approaches. They learn to obtain co-student support in what may become mini-discussions leading to acceptable decisions on complex business issues and dilemmas which they are confronted with.

The literature points to the notion that leaders are inclined to do superlative work when they have a deep understanding of the fundamental business of the organisation (Nicolaidis & Manyama, 2020). However, experience of leadership and management are equally significant (Williams, 2013). A major benefit of undertaking a formal qualification is that it imbues students with greater levels of confidence based on the knowledge that they have at least some of the required skills. Students need to be active partakers in the learning process. Given the globalised orientation of business, business schools have a responsibility to boost the cultural intelligence of their students beyond a merely African paradigm (Thomas & Inkson, 2004). This is not to minimise African values in any sense, but rather to make students global thinkers who are able to scrutinise their assumptions and cultivate a deeper understanding of their potential or actual stakeholders (Peng and Dess, 2010). Assessment must be based on problem solving and reflection on key global issues (Varela, Burke & Michel, 2013). The challenge is that every experience and

lesson obtained at business schools should provide new insights for students and forge greater hope and courage that will enable them to contribute profoundly to their organisation's achieving of a strategic competitive advantage which is sustainable (Nel & Beudeker, 2009) and highly empathetic to mitigating global environmental challenges.

Business schools must strive to deliver to the private and public sectors people with the desired profiles and who are likely to help in, inter alia, poverty alleviation and the sustainable use of natural resources as they forge durable communities. Leaders will need to deal with current and future problems and should be able to assimilate free enterprise, leadership and management in meaningful ways. This implies that learning content must be relevant and must motivate students to engage in deeper learning (Ambrose et al., 2010). Students need to be allowed to feel capable by being given reasonable challenges and also opportunities to feel effective and gain confidence. This is where faculty need to frame tasks to assist students to improve, rather than to merely assess their performance. Students need to have numerous opportunities to take control of their informed choices rather than have predetermined practices or actions imposed upon them by others.

Business schools should be developing "...innovators, leaders, creators" (Cornuel, 2010). The curricula and courses on offer must be stimulating and must ensure that students are actively engaged in what becomes co-operative learning where they work together to realise shared goals. Within such cooperative situations, students will pursue outcomes that are advantageous to themselves and beneficial to all the other group members. The students thus work in tandem to make the most of their own and each other's learning experiences and embark on a personal exploration of what is, or is most likely to be, their own leadership style in a given situation. Such activities provide students with the opportunity for self-reflection on what leadership is about and are ideal asynchronous discussions in online forums (Bowden, 2012). Students get to share with their fellow students and faculty their vision of themselves and their understandings of what constitutes good leadership. The most effective cooperative base groups are relatively long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with unchanging group membership (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Group members develop skills by ensuring that each member makes good academic progress and they hold each other answerable for striving to learn. They also support, encourage and assist the group to complete assignments in what is a type of interaction important for future leaders. Reflection on their experiences completes their learning.

Students need to be motivated (Ambrose et al., 2010), and while self-motivation is vital, so are learning environments that prime student motivation, support learning and encourage the ability to transfer knowledge to innovative contexts with the ideal way here being through the use of real-life examples in case studies (Doyle, 2011).

Sinclair (2007) has reported on teaching leadership in a structured class and the same course in an unstructured class. The unstructured class took the form of open sessions where students worked on cases in groups and where assessments and feedback took place in the class, assisted by co-facilitators. The structured class consisted of lectures, slides and traditional teaching. The unstructured approach appeared to be more successful with the students starting to see themselves

with new eyes and starting to commit to a collective goal of group learning and their subsequent development.

3. CONCLUSION

The main contribution of this limited study is the assessment that business schools need to step up and become more positively allied with developing leaders who are able to operate admirably and perform optimally in business organisations in South Africa. Leader authenticity is paramount, as is the development of leadership skills such as effective self-management and apposite communication ability. Leaders also need to act with integrity and adapt ethically to change in turbulent times. Developing authentic leaders requires thorough learning and education able to provide the required knowledge and skills. Authentic ethical leadership is non-negotiable – as Walumbwa et al. (2010:910) state, the “...more leaders are seen as authentic, the more employees identify with them and feel psychologically empowered, are more engaged in their roles and demonstrate more citizenship-rated behaviors”.

Leadership which seeks to be transformational must be about philosophies, principles and ethical values and it needs to consider collective requirements and the greater good. Leaders must make sound decisions in a global business, political and organisational milieu of cynicism and scandal. Authentic leadership will assist in forging positive long-term outcomes for leaders, their followers and the organisations which they serve. Most of the skills desirable for business leadership and management can be learned as part of an MBL or MBA programme, provided that the institution is focussed correctly on what is needed and why. Business schools which focus on universal ethical conduct, global financial insights, excellent business knowledge and persuasive communication skills – and that are performance driven, innovative and entrepreneurial – will tend to be inspiring and to drive excellence and quality. The most effective leaders are made gradually, are competent and established and, with a few noteworthy exceptions, were not born to lead.

Great leaders appreciate that the wellbeing of their organisation encompasses the boardroom, all employees, and every other stakeholder, as well as including the natural environment. Great leadership inspires others to follow the leader's vision so that it becomes a shared effort leading to accomplishment. The skills commonly gained by MBA graduates or graduates of other related courses certainly help them to become better leaders. The legal, governance, and economic responsibilities of leaders should always be underpinned by ethical principles which endorse responsible conduct and illustrate how individual values can play a critical role in effective leadership. Having said this, leadership *per se* is an ongoing and often evolutionary developmental process of human refinement which guides organisations and changes them so that they are able to achieve superior performance in a triple-bottom-line approach. Business schools should be investing their resources in enhancing their brand image and in improving the quality of administration, teaching and research which informs their offerings.

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