

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE LEADERS  
SPIRITUALITY ON THE ORGANISATION:  
COMPARING LEADER AND FOLLOWER PERCEPTIONS.**

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Jacqueline Marie Christie

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the effects of the leaders' spirituality on the organisation as perceived by both leaders and followers. The literature on leadership is focused almost exclusively on the leader perspective. The Leadership and Spirituality literature largely assumes positive outcomes for followers and given the Messianic undertones associated with Transformational Leadership in general and Spiritual Leadership Theory specifically, this research set out to explore the perspectives of both leaders and followers as to both the positive and negative outcomes of the leaders' spirituality. An exploratory case study approach was taken with primary data collected through 29 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with both leader and follower participants.

The study focussed on three aspects drawn from the literature: Spiritual Leader as Person, Power and Control, and Purpose beyond Profit. Limited conceptual development and empirical evidence, uncovered a number of assumptions within the literature. Three central themes emerged from the research findings: Emotional Safety, Value Alignment and Blurred Boundaries. The results found that both leaders and followers agreed that the effects of the leaders' spirituality were a culture of freedom, the need to navigate through ambiguity, stimulation of whole brain thinking and a connection to a higher purpose. However, they both interpreted these effects differently.

The results indicate that concepts of individual spirituality create tensions within organisational realities. The practical implications of this study include the need for organisations to create shared moral standards in which to address tensions between allowing spaces for existential meaning making and in preventing against perceptions of unfairness due to leader discretion in decision making. Secondly, if spiritual freedom is to be provided to leaders and followers by organisations then the potential for followers to experience inconsistencies between expected leader behaviours and assumed organisational values is great. Lastly, the research would suggest that organisations consider a focus towards shared organisational goals as opposed to shared organisational values, in order to allow for individual spiritual freedom to be realised. Future research should include exploring tensions between leaders and followers as a means of drawing out possible hegemony that may influence follower and leader perceptions.

## GLOSSARY

**Spiritual Leadership:** “Comprising the values, attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership” (Fry, 2003, p.694).

**Workplace Spirituality:** “A framework of organisational values evidenced in the organisational culture that facilitates meaning, purpose and being connected to others and the environment in a way that provides feelings of completeness” (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003).

**Spiritual Leader:** Leaders who provide meaningful work in the context of community with a sense of joy and respect for the inner life of followers.

**Spiritual Survival:** “The need to experience a sense of transcendence, calling or being called (vocationally) and the experience of social connection or membership in order to satisfy the spiritual self” (Fry, 2003).

**Emotional Safety:** Feelings generated by the need to belong.

**Value Alignment:** The reasoning and perceptions of actions by followers and leaders based on agreed organisational values.

**Blurred Boundaries:** Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another.

**Spirituality:** Subjective feelings, thoughts, and behaviours that arise from a search for the sacred.

**Sacred:** A divine being, divine object, ultimate reality, or ultimate truth as perceived by the individual.

**Number Eight Wire Mentality:** Practical, lateral-thinking, problem-solving, capable of inventing, or fixing, anything with whatever resources are available.

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### *1.1 Background*

Leadership and spirituality emerged as a significant area of academic research in 2003. In 2005 Leadership Quarterly dedicated a special issue to Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT). Within this edition, Fry's (2003) SLT was notably the first attempt to theorize the concept of spirituality and leadership. Early research (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz; 2003; Fry, 2003) focussed on SLT as a means of contributing to organisational excellence through improved work productivity. However as leadership theories have emerged, spiritual elements such as connection, transcendence, sense of belonging and calling are being considered. These move towards reciprocal benefits for leaders and followers as opposed to an instrumental focus on organisational excellence alone.

Whilst early research (Fry, 2003; Dent, Higgins and Wharff, 2005; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003) focussed towards establishing definitions, relationships and theory building based on motivational models of leadership, more recent research (Fry and Kriger, 2009; Fernando, Beale and Geroy, 2009; Pawar, 2009) focuses towards understanding the relationship of transcendence within leadership theory and the contextual influences on SL. The overwhelming focus towards the person as leader has resulted in the 'leader as superhero' analogy with followers aspiring to be like their leaders and ignoring inconsistencies between leaders behaviours and leaders values, by making salient negative aspects that "*threaten their search for well-being and meaning at work and their needs for safety, belonging, and personal development*" (Rego, Cunha and Oliveria, 2008).

The literature on spirituality and leadership has focused almost exclusively on the leader and avoided exploring the follower perspective more fully, instead assuming that positive outcomes result from the leaders spirituality (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011).

## ***1.2 Purpose and rationale for the Study***

The purpose of the study is to explore the effects of the leaders spirituality on the organisation as perceived by both leaders and followers and exploring both the negative and positive outcomes. This study firstly investigates the benefits and disadvantages of the leaders' values and qualities as a means to distinguish differing value systems and the influence of this on the relationships between leaders and followers.

This study secondly, investigates the perceptions of leaders and followers as to the integration of the leaders' spirituality within the organisation to establish if followers feel any undue influence from the intentions of leaders. This was to determine if followers could interpret feelings of an instrumental nature from leaders.

Lastly, this research investigated the benefits and disadvantages of the relationships between leaders and followers in order to explore possible hegemonic systems acting to inadvertently suppress follower voice.

The contribution of this research is that it examines both leaders and followers perspectives, given that the literature focuses almost exclusively on the leader perspective.

## ***1.3 Significance of the study***

This thesis contributes enormously to the study of leadership and spirituality through addressing the shortcomings identified within the literature review by firstly empirically exploring the effects of the leaders' spirituality within a medium sized organisation. A lack of empirical research has stymied the acceptance of spirituality within organisational theory thus far. Further empirical testing of mainly conceptual research on leadership and spirituality will support the emergence of further theory development within this area.

Secondly, this research aims to centre the area of leadership towards the relational view of leadership focussing on reciprocal effects between leaders and followers and the associated moral considerations in adapting a non-dual perspective to leadership.

Lastly, this research is significant as it expands on research by Rego, Cunha and Oliveira (2007) who conducted empirical research to show follower reactions to leaders' behaviours suggesting that future research focus towards exploring the negative and positive deviant. This research closely examines the influence of both the negative and positive deviant in exploring why followers and leaders make salient those aspects that threaten their self-identity. This research also extends upon conceptual development by Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) and Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011) through exploring tensions that may exist between concepts of spirituality and organisational realities.

#### ***1.4 Structure of the Thesis***

This thesis is structured into five chapters. The first chapter provides the introduction and the rationale for the study to the reader.

Chapter two introduces and discusses literature on leadership and spirituality. Firstly, the chapter provides a brief introduction outlining the need to study leadership and spirituality focussing on both positive and negative outcomes and both leaders and followers perspectives. An overview is provided of the development of leadership discourse providing the reader with a context as to the influence of leadership discourse on leadership research and ultimately further influence on leadership practice. A review of the literature on SLT, outlines Fry's (2003) emergent SLT. Transformational Leadership, Authentic Leadership, Ethical Leadership and Social Identify Theory is briefly reviewed in order to place SLT within the Leadership Theory domain and to consider how SLT may extend leadership theories. Spirituality and leadership literature is reviewed to determine underlying assumptions. The literature review firstly focuses towards the spiritual leader as person, reviewing the spiritual qualities, behaviours and values of the spiritual leader. Next the literature is reviewed based on issues of power and control to determine if power differentials between leaders and followers are influenced by concepts of spirituality and lastly the literature is reviewed to explore the instrumental argument to determine if possible alternative approaches to the study of spirituality and leadership exist.

Chapter three discusses the methodology employed in this study. Firstly, an introduction is provided outlining the purpose of the study in relation to addressing the gaps identified in the

literature. Justification of the research methodology chosen is then provided in consideration of the literature review. In providing the reader with a greater perspective as to the interpretation of data, 'Emic' subjectivity and reflexivity of the researcher is shared. The interview approach is discussed, stating the method of participant selection, the number and nature of participants and the interview process in order to provide reliability of the data collection process. The data analysis process provides detail as to how results were analysed. Ethical approval and guidelines are then discussed ensuring the research complies with academic requirements.

Chapter four explains the findings of this study. Four core categories serve to structure the chapter: Culture of Freedom, Navigation through Ambiguity, Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking and Connection to a Higher Purpose. Three central themes were identified: Emotional Safety, Value Alignment and Blurred Boundaries. Evidence is provided to support the four categories and three themes. The reporting of the findings uses participants' quotes, as the research is strongly grounded in the participants' perspectives.

Finally, in Chapter five, the findings of this study are discussed to draw out implications for both theory and leadership practice. Limitations of this study are discussed and potential areas of future research identified.

Chapter six concludes this research.

### ***1.5 Summary of Introduction***

This research aims to explore the effects of the leaders' spirituality on the organisation as perceived by both leaders and followers. It aims to consider both the positive and negative outcomes utilising a single exploratory case study approach collecting qualitative data through semi-structured interviews and further utilising 'emic' insider observations to provide context. This research aims to make a significant contribution to the area of leadership and spirituality through addressing the need for empirical evidence to advance theory building in this research area and to address research gaps.

## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

It is often argued that leadership is critical to organisational excellence in that strong leadership provides direction and purpose for followers resulting in improved work performance, increased work satisfaction and a greater sense of achievement for followers (Fry, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003; Marques, 2007).

As leadership theories emerge, spiritual elements such as connection, transcendence, 'being' and calling' (Fry, 2003), which move towards greater reciprocal benefits for both leaders and followers (Fernando, Beale and Geroy, 2009) are being considered. Many potential benefits to greater spiritual integration into the organisation are proposed (de Klerk, 2005; Markow and Klenke, 2005; Reave, 2005) to result in greater wellbeing for followers. However, possible disadvantages are often ignored. The need to approach leadership research from both leaders and followers perspective that does not ignore power (Lips-Wiersma *et al.*, 2009; Campbell, 2007) is argued as being necessary. Such an approach requires examination not only through a positive lens but beyond to potential damaging influences within the leader, follower relationship and by providing consideration to the influence of leadership discourse. It is the examination of both positive benefits and tensions that allows for a greater understanding of the leader follower dynamic and which then provides potential for advancement in leadership theory.

This chapter provides a review of the literature on the influence of spirituality on leaders and followers. Firstly, a review of leadership literature examines the leadership discourse exploring the social boundaries which determine how leadership discussion takes place. Secondly, SLT is considered in relation to Transformational Leadership Theory, Authentic Leadership Theory, Ethical Leadership Theory and Social identity Theory, exploring if SLT extends on leadership theories. Thirdly, the leader as person is examined to determine how the research defines a spiritual leader from one that isn't. Fourthly, the effect of the leaders'

spirituality on followers is explored to determine if issues of power and control surface and lastly, the instrumental argument is explored to determine to what purpose SLT serves.

## **2.2 Leadership Discourse**

This section provides a theoretical context to the leadership literature and considers the discourse within leadership theory development.

Discourse can be described as “*an institutionalized way of thinking, a social boundary defining what can be said about a specific topic*” (Western, 2008, p.80). A greater understanding of the social boundaries within which leadership discussion takes place makes transparent “*assumptions and values slipped in from prevailing economic and managerial orthodoxy*” (Sinclair, 2008, p.26).

During the 1900’s a focus on scientific management led to considering leaders as technical and rational minded, seeking to maximise efficiencies through ‘utilitarian control’ mechanisms of rewarding and punishing workers. A bureaucratic system of control created a sense of alienation for workers contributing to a clear distinction between organisational identity and individual identity. Leaders controlled through organisational hierarchy and bureaucracy. The exercise of power was visible in that conflict was assumed to be a “*necessary condition for the exercise of power*” (Hardy and Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998, p. 453). Western (2008) describes this era as the ‘leader as controller’ discourse. The power differential between worker and owner was evident.

The human relations movement resulted in a paradigm shift in leadership thinking. Command and control tactics were replaced with motivational tactics. A paternalistic approach was utilized by leaders (Western, 2008), managing emotions, and relationships. As a result, leadership incorporated therapeutic elements where the exercise of power was diffused and therefore less visible because less confrontation was necessary in order to control (Hardy and Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998).

The late twentieth century introduced us to the ‘leader as messiah’ discourse. This was to be the resurrection of the hero leader (Western, 2008). Leaders sought to influence through a

collective means of shared vision and values. More subtle forms of power were used within the boundaries of normative control resulting in a stronger organisational identity for employees. The 'Messiah Leader' introduced the language of spirituality to the workplace creating spiritual imagery, supported by new symbols and rituals providing not only transformation but salvation (Western, 2008). Clan control through strong organisational cultural norms created an environment of self-policing. Tourish and Pinnington (2002) would suggest that organisations took on a cult like appearance driven by strong identification between leaders and followers, suggesting that the 'Transformational Leader' is "*overly concerned with the achievement of corporate cohesion to the detriment of internal dissent*" (p. 147). Leaders required a charismatic persona to inspire followers by creating meaning through organisational values and vision. Individual identity was tightly woven with organisational identity to strengthen normative control mechanisms (Casey, 1999). Leaders sought to empower employees through relational and motivational approaches by providing some power to employees. However, leaders' retained control over structural processes, decision making processes and resources (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998; Frye, Kisselburgh and Butts, 2007).

Post heroic leadership theories which tone down the evangelic style of the transformational leader were the next theoretical leadership preoccupation. The idea was to move past the leader as person towards leadership as a shared activity and responsibility. However, post heroic leadership is still dominated by the synthesis and tensions of the therapist and messiah discourses (Western, 2008). It is therefore argued that Post Heroic leadership may not live up to its transformational potential if discussions on power are ignored (Fletcher, 2004). Sinclair (2008) suggests that the current discourse fails to address how power is enacted by leadership and "*the emotional and often unconscious dynamics that explain why leaders are afforded legitimacy*" (p.29). Leadership discourse often takes a high moral tone but is silent on power and dominance. Cuilla (1998) suggests that leaders sought to raise followers' self-esteem to manage changed circumstances but actually only raised self-esteem to manage unchanged circumstances, a form of bogus empowerment in which the individual worker is held largely responsible for his or her circumstances. Consideration of the leadership discourse is necessary because it ultimately influences how leadership discussion takes place. Recently, there have been suggestions that the messiah leadership discourse is beginning to take on "*more contemplative spiritual-human values than more fundamentalist values*" (Western, 2008, p.182.). This can be illustrated by Fry's (2003) SLT, integrating leader messianic

qualities with spiritual concepts. This is also illustrated by the growing interest shown towards existentialist ideals within organisational theory (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011).

### **2.3 Spirituality of the Leader as Person**

Workplace Spirituality is defined by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, (2003, p.13), as:

*A framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy.*

The Spiritual Leadership (SL) paradigm is placed within the workplace spirituality (WPS) context. The emergence of SL became most notably during 2005, when Leadership Quarterly published a special edition. Fry (2003) writes in the editorial comments:

*Spiritual Leadership theory offers promise as a springboard for a new paradigm for leadership theory, research and practice given that it incorporates and extends transformational and charismatic theories as well as ethics and values based theories and avoids the pitfalls of measurement model misspecification.*

Fry's (2003) SLT is the most cited research within the SL paradigm and proposes a causal theory suggesting that the spiritual leader provides vision, hope and faith, and altruistic love to satisfy follower needs for spiritual survival of calling and membership, ultimately resulting in increased organisational commitment and productivity and movement towards the 'learning organisation' (Fry, 2003). Spiritual leadership is described "*as comprising the values, attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership*" (p.694). Spiritual survival describes the need to experience a sense of transcendence, calling or being called (vocationally) and the experience of social connection or membership in order to satisfy the spiritual self.

Fry (2003) integrates motivational theory by recognizing the potential for intrinsic motivation to be connected to an individual’s sense of meaning in their work.

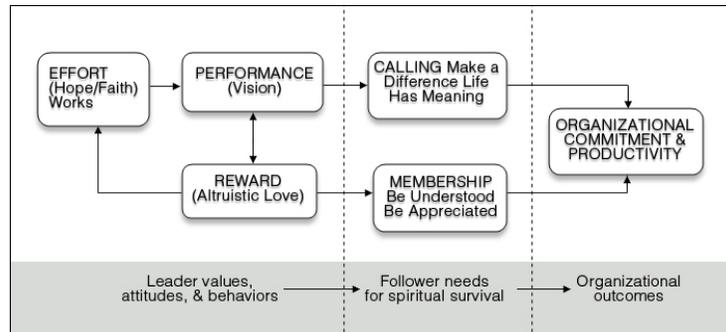


Figure 2.1 Spiritual Leadership Theory [Cited from Fry (2003)].

SLT is considered a positive ‘inner’ leadership approach, included within the construct of ‘Authentic Leadership’ (Cambell, 2007). Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2011) claim a number of assumptions underpin post-heroic leadership and which relate to Authentic Leadership and therefore by association apply to spiritual leadership theory. These assumptions are concerned mainly with the instrumental focus of leadership study, the superhuman aspects that differentiate leaders from followers, the moral undertones assuming that the leader has greater ethical insight than the follower and the role of leaders to be managers of meaningful work.

The next section will review the literature on leadership and spirituality in order to establish the extent to which SLT offers promise as a springboard for a new paradigm for leadership theory, research and practice.

### 2.3.1 The contribution of Spiritual Leadership Theory

SL is proposed to extend upon transformational, ethics and values based leadership theories (Fry, 2003), this section discusses and reviews how and if SLT achieves this.

Transformational Leadership seeks to change and transform people by engaging with individual psyche to influence cognitive change (Tourish and Pinnington, 2002). Charisma, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration being factors that helped to influence cognitive change (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

In general Transformational Leadership is suggested to empower followers through leaders modelling required behaviours and providing a vision to promote a sense of organisational identity. It is suggested that one of the strengths of Transformational Leadership Theory is its focus on process between the leader and follower, emphasizing follower needs, values and morals. Paradoxically, the potential for abuse by cognitive influence through replacing personal identity with organisational identity in demanding greater ties to the organisation can act to alienate followers from themselves (Tourish & Pinnington, 2002).

Transformational Leadership Theory is argued to show a 'heroic leadership' bias, (Yukl, 1999) as emphasis is placed on the leader to move followers to do extraordinary things. Such a focus ignores the influence that followers may also have on leaders or the influence of shared leadership (Northouse, 2007). SLT also seeks to change and transform people (Fry, 2003); Markow and Klenke, 2005) however the focus is less on demonstrating glamorized leader behaviours and more on providing a culture of altruistic love. However, both use motivational concepts through providing vision to influence change, with externalities anticipated to extend beyond one's work life to all aspects of one's personal wellbeing and happiness. Both SLT and Transformational Leadership assume leaders are aware of follower needs as to what drives the follower and can stimulate this drive, with "*effective leaders being those individuals who are able to understand and tap into the needs and motives of followers to simultaneously reach leader and follower goals*" (Fry, 2003 p.9). The second assumption is that leaders and followers have the same goals. Tourish and Pinnington (2002), suggest that alternative future leadership models need to give consideration to aspects of transactional leadership, acknowledge the power differentials, goal diversion, and effects on follower perceptions, and "*look again at democratic and stakeholder perspectives for organisational restructuring*" (p.167).

Authentic Leadership seeks to address some of the criticism of Transformational Leadership Theory by directing a focus to internal development before attempting to inspire and empower others. An understanding of personal values, though high self-awareness projects a more genuine, caring and more empathetic leader (Northouse, 2007). Authentic Leadership was found (Avolio and Gardner, 2005) to be sustained by practicing values, balancing extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, being surrounded by support structures, staying grounded and empowering others to lead. Some argue that Authentic Leadership remains positioned within an instrumental perspective, with the literature focusing on 'how to do Authentic

Leadership' as opposed to remaining true to its existential roots (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011). While Authentic Leadership does direct us towards the need for self-awareness and learning from our own personal life stories the "*emphasis on leaders being true to themselves so that they can influence others through displays of their values and beliefs is curiously one-sided. There are two sides to leadership because it resides as much in followers' reactions as leaders' actions*" (Eagly, 2005, p.460). The focus within much Authentic Leadership literature is towards the leader, "*..... on how the leader achieves authenticity and how she then assists the follower in becoming authentic*" (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011, p.3). The focus towards the leader does not necessarily address the possible reciprocal effect of the influence of followers on leaders in recognising their authentic selves. Similar to Authentic Leadership, SLT is strongly focussed towards the leader being influential in helping followers to recognise spiritual needs and in assisting to meet those needs. However lacks any reciprocal influence followers spirituality may have on leaders. The spiritual leader is portrayed as a highly moral leader creating meanings for others and who is sometimes "*outspoken and deliberately confrontational with alternative value systems*" (Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin and Kakabadse, 2002, p.172). Further research drawing from various religions (Kriger and Seng, 2005) focuses towards providing a foundation for a contingency theory of leadership based on inner values through consideration of a multiple-level ontological model for spiritual leadership development. The need for such an approach to the study of spiritual leadership is expressed throughout much of the SLT literature suggesting a nondual perspective to the study of spirituality (Fry and Kriger, 2009: Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002: Campbell, 2007). The religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, all espouse "*love for the other as oneself*" (p.801), this brings into question the relationship between leader and follower and provides opportunities for varying approaches to be considered within the research agenda.

Ethical Leadership may respond to shortcomings of Authentic Leadership by emphasising the moral dimensions of leadership with a focus on supporting followers as they internalise conflicting values driven by rapidly changing work and social environments (Northhouse, 2007). However, the same assumptions underpinning 'inner' leadership theories apply. This begs the question, in whose interest it is to be perceived, as being ethical. Leaders, who are termed as ethical, may have high moral standards, however environmental and structural influences may determine the degree to which a decision is deemed ethical (Alger and Lips-Wiersma, 2011) and hence how and who it is that defines a leader ethical. For example, a

leader may be required to make the decision between a business being bankrupt or having to reduce employees to avoid being bankrupt in an attempt to retain those employees it can. As to who decides what is considered ethical or not becomes very subjective. Fry (2003) claims that “*ethics is central to leadership because of the nature of the leadership process and the need to engage followers to accomplish mutual goals*” (p.16). However, Fry (2003) fails to suggest exactly how Spiritual Leadership extends upon Ethical Leadership theory, except to suggest that the values of humility, altruistic love and veracity, which are typically also claimed as spiritual values, are common to all ethics approaches to leadership. SLT accepts that the spiritual leader reflects the values of humility, altruistic love and veracity and therefore is an ethical leader on this basis, external to the fact that ethical decisions are often situational based and therefore less generalizable. The generalisation that the spiritual leader must also be an ethical leader is challengeable but also defensible if we, for instance look, at some of the great role models in leadership that are often held up in leadership courses such as Mother Teresa. Such spiritual qualities often manifest during challenging circumstances. An analysis of human rights leaders who “*pioneered social innovations through their non-violent, spiritual engagement with challenging circumstances*” (p.689) found 8 ego-transcendental processes faced by all leaders (Parameshwar, 2005). During these challenges leaders displayed high levels of compassion towards others and possessed the ability to rationalise and justify circumstances based on a deeper level of perspective. This level of perceptual sensitivity also allowed for leaders to be aware of “*thick nexuses among institutional structure*” (p.697) consequently inhibiting the human spirit. The leaders showed strength of character by challenging conventional norms through “*invoking transcendental epistemologies*” (p.699) influenced by a higher purpose perspective and also in assuming personal responsibility for their actions. In order to commit to their higher purpose, leaders transcended their ego and in doing so “*moved others to act in ego-transcendental ways*” (p.705). Simultaneously these leaders became inspired by ego-transcendental responses made by others.

Social Identity Theory explains leadership as a result of cognitive processes, where self-categorisation based on salient characteristics influences in-group favouritism (Ellemers, Haslam, Platow & Knippenberg, 2003). A Social Identity Theory approach to leadership combines two concepts. Firstly, “*Leadership is a relational property – leaders and followers are interdependent roles embedded within a social system*” and secondly, “*leadership is a process of influence*” (Hogg & Martin, 2003: p.145). There are two ways in which

employees can self-categorise with leaders. Firstly, they may see leaders as members of the entire organisation, as a team, providing a shared sense of 'us'. Secondly, they may believe that they can move towards high prototypical behaviour. In these situations, when leaders use persuasive communications individuals are likely to follow. Social Identity Theory helps to explain that individual's identify with those they aspire to be more like. Leaders can influence how such images are projected and as such followers are often in a vulnerable position due to a lack of conscious awareness of efforts by leaders to influence. A relational focus on leadership means that both leaders and followers possess the power to influence, thus power does not strictly exist within any one individual; instead it exists within the relationship. Reave's (2005) suggests that "*followers carefully examine consistency between a leaders values and behaviours to assess whether he is credible and worthy of trust*" (p.668) determining if leaders are authentic in their intentions. Many Social Identity Theory principles apply to SLT. The leader may use persuasive communications, imagery and stories to create a shared sense of 'us' (Driscoll and McKee, 2007). Within SLT leaders create a shared sense of us through creating and communicating a vision as a means to create a shared sense of identity. Leaders use imagery and various other artefacts to support the vision. Followers aspire to be like leaders through leader role modelling behaviours supporting organisational values. SLT assumes that followers strongly identify with leaders and also with other followers. However, SLT fails to consider the possible challenges and associated dissonance that followers may feel through the challenging of dominant identities between alliance to leaders and alliance to other followers.

Considering Fry's (2003) SLT in the context of other leadership theories highlights that SLT does not necessarily advance leadership theory however it draws similarities to other theories and utilises transformational concepts of motivation as a key concept in influencing followers. It does, however, contribute to leadership theories through a focus towards transcendence.

### ***2.3.2 Spiritual Leader Behaviours and Values***

The following section focuses on spiritual leader behaviours and values suggested to influence followers and the workplace. It firstly sets out the conceptual research followed by the empirical research with assumptions drawn from the literature.

A spiritually enlightened workplace is proposed to result as an influence of leaders' behaviours and the level of interconnectedness among workers (Marques, Dhiman and King, 2005). A number of suggestions for enhancing leader behaviours and interconnectedness require the leader to have high levels of communication ability, engage in positive role modelling, express care for others, support group interaction, encourage a climate of trust and "ensure that employees perceive each other as more than just elements in a production process" (p.89). Marques *et al.* (2005) develop an integral model of spirituality in the workplace based on leader behaviours, proposing that when leaders act on values of honesty, creativeness, proactivity, kindness, dependability, confidence and courage within an aesthetically motivational environment then enhanced team performance and harmony results through increased job satisfaction and self-esteem. They assume that any leader can create a spirituality enlightened workplace as long as they can possess and act upon the necessary values. This type of argument and others like this (Fawcett, Brau, Rhoads and Whitlark, 2008) fail to differentiate between a spiritual leader and any other type of leader or what types of spiritual leader behaviours contribute towards creating a spirituality enlightened workplace therefore does not offer any advancement of the leadership and spirituality theory.

Identifying with organisational values can provide for greater connection between the organisation and employees. Ferguson and Milliman (2008), propose that values programmes when articulated and communicated by leaders in an authentic manner can be effective in enhancing organizational effectiveness, employee attitudes and behaviours and support a spiritual leadership philosophy. They suggest that "*leadership based on spiritual principles is an important key to effective organisational values programs because a true philosophical commitment is needed to articulate meaningful values*" (p.445). Key aspects involve leaders articulating a higher purpose, empowering employees and being authentic. Ferguson and Milliman (2008) create a framework based on authenticity suggesting that all that is needed to be a spiritual leader is a level of authenticity in acting on ones values. Spiritual leaders help others to develop their "*judgement, beliefs, and skills including how to personally shape and implement organizational core values*" (p.449). Authenticity acts to differentiate the leader from the spiritual leader based on how spiritual values are enacted by leaders. However, Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2011), raise concerns of how authenticity in its relationship to leadership applies. Their research considers Authentic Leadership from an existential perspective suggesting that inauthenticity is inevitable, authenticity requires creating one's own meaning, authenticity does not imply goal and value congruence and that authenticity is

not intrinsically ethical. Given that authenticity is suggested by Ferguson and Milliman (2008) as being critical for the spiritual leader, Algra and Lips-Wiersma's (2011) concerns would also apply to the spiritual leader. This creates doubt towards spirituality and leadership literature which considers the concept of authenticity and doesn't fully consider the assumptions of Authentic Leadership or question whether SLT is based on the same or different assumptions.

Reave's review of leadership effectiveness established that a number of spiritual factors were related to leadership effectiveness. These were spiritual motivation, spiritual qualities and spiritual practices. Leaders who are able to help followers connect to spiritual values through creating awareness of spiritual needs of calling are supposedly able to "*awaken latent motivation*" (p.666) to increase follower satisfaction and productivity levels. Being able to help followers, spiritual leaders must possess and act with integrity in order to elicit follower trust and in being able to create ethical influence. Reave's (2005) suggests that spiritual leaders create an ethical environment. The challenge of spiritual leaders in managing ethical decisions based on external influences however is not fully considered (Algra and Lips-Wiersma, 2011). Rather, spiritual leaders are expected to not only make ethical decisions but influence followers to make ethical decisions. Reave's proposes the spiritual leader practices "*showing respect for others, demonstrating fair treatment, expressing care and concern, recognising the contributions of others and engaging in reflective practice*" (p.655). The spiritual practices described by Reave (2005) have the potential to be enacted by any leader therefore the question what distinguishes the spiritual leader from any other leader is raised. These proposed outcomes are argued to relate to leaders spiritual ideals however; a lack of clarity as to what differentiates these outcomes as being influenced by the spiritual leader as opposed to any other leader creates concern towards the underlying assumptions that exist within SLT.

A focus on transcendence does provide opportunity to conceptualise spirituality and leadership from a differing perspective and advance SLT. The focus towards self-transcendence by Pawar (2008) provides two possible approaches to the study of WPS. The first is an 'outside-in', top down approach requiring considerable control by leaders of organisations to make the connections between organisational values and organisational outcomes. The second approach is an 'inside-out', bottom up approach which provides for deeper levels of employee transformation through self-practice with less need for monitoring

and external reinforcement by leaders. Pawar (2009)<sup>1</sup> supports the argument of the need for the study of spirituality to be “grounded in established inquiry-based traditions” (p.247) through concepts, within the Organisational Behaviour (OB) research area. These concepts include, organisational citizenship behaviour, organizational support and procedural justice. The relationship between WPS and work attitudes of job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment are further explored at the individual, group and organisation level to develop a number of propositions based wholly on the assumption of positive relationships (Pawar, 2009). Pawar (2009) suggests future research needs to examine various leadership styles on WPS experiences by followers.

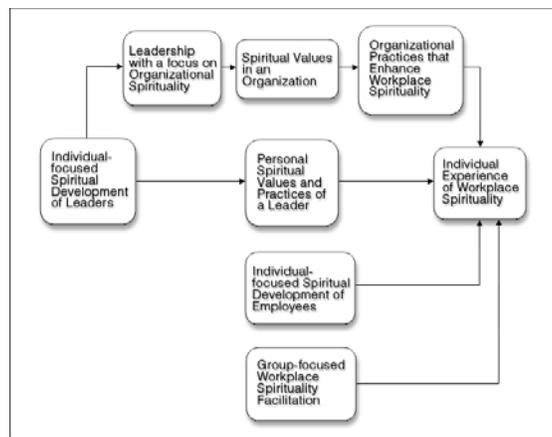


Figure 2.2: A Comprehensive model workplace spirituality facilitation (cited by Pawar, 2009).

The development of ‘A comprehensive model’ to facilitate WPS, figure 2.2, incorporates WPS facilitation through an individual, group and organisational level influenced by Pawar’s (2008) previous research. The model lends itself to future research to understand the individual experience of WPS “examining the linkages of ‘personal spiritual values and practices of the leader’ with ‘individual experiences of WPS’ (p.384). It also provides for the examination of ‘personal spiritual values and practices of leaders’ with ‘individual, group and organisational experiences of WPS by followers and leaders themselves’. Pawar (2008) focuses his conceptual model towards exploring the positive experiences of spirituality for leaders and followers as opposed to explicitly examining the positive experiences in relation to improved organisational performance based from a purely leader perspective. Such a focus does seek to extend SLT.

Pawar (2009) proposes that the spiritual values of leaders affect followers through creating an ethical environment drawing the connection between spirituality and ethics. A common theme within much of the spirituality and leadership literature is again highlighted in Pawar’s (2009) model with dangers of such a connection in assuming that the spiritual leader is a more ethical leader.

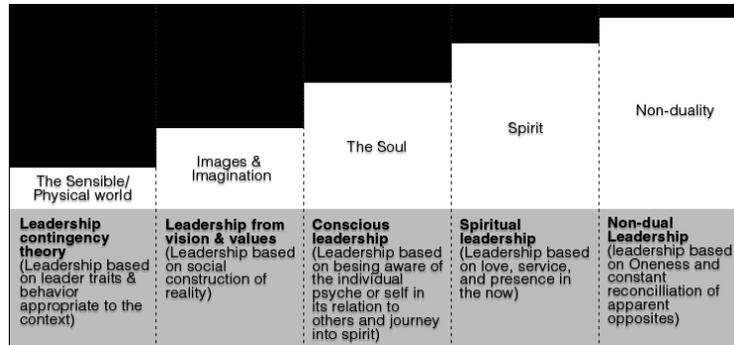


Figure 2.3: Multiple levels of being and leadership (cited by Fry and Kriger, 2009)

The focus towards ‘transcendence’ is continued by Fry and Kriger (2009), Figure 2.3, who argue that a review of six religious traditions support the same underlying five levels of ‘being’ which progress in relation to varying epistemological viewpoints. Level five focuses on the sensible visible observable world where the “*leader creates and transfers knowledge via an active engagement in worldly affairs*” (p.1673). This relates to trait and behavioural theories. The focus of this level is to adapt one’s leadership ability to ensure effective outcomes for followers. The fourth level is of images and imagination through mainly vision and values “*to create agreement on a socially constructed reality that motivates followers to achieve higher levels of commitment and performance*” (p.1675). The moral intention and legitimacy as to the leader’s vision are highlighted in this level. Level three is concerned with individual awareness as a guiding mechanism. Leadership theories which are aligned with this level are authentic, and ethical in nature, based on forms of positive leadership where emotions are a focus. Level two is focussed towards the ‘spirit’ as a “*possibility of self-transcendence and deepening connectedness with all things in the universe*” where leadership is played out through love and servitude towards others (p.1680). Level one is a form of leadership which is non-dual, it is the highest level of being, “*where leaders respond to each situation as it arises within a unique context and configuration for forces in the*

*moment*” (p.1683). Leaders have a highly developed spiritual perception, moral sensitivity and moral standards. A number of propositions are provided by Fry and Kriger (2009) exploring a possible ‘being-centred leadership’ where “*followership and leadership are simply labels that overly constrain the possible role sets of individuals*” (p.1686) where each person is in fact a leader depending on the particular context.

Fry and Kriger (2009) propose that the spiritual leader “*manifests the virtue of altruistic love in serving others to a significantly greater extent than leaders at Levels III, IV and V*” (p.1682) and that the spiritual leader “*experiences positive psychological and spiritual wellbeing and empowers and intrinsically motivates followers to a significantly greater extent than leaders at Levels III, IV and V*” (p.1682). The focus towards transcendence seeks to advance SLT through a focus towards a non-dual perspective, where the concept of ‘self’ is intertwined with ‘other’ and in doing so seeks to avoid issues of power differential between leader and follower. The non-dual leader is proposed to manifest unconditional regard for the other as oneself, intuit the needs of others more quickly and foster equality through making less of a distinction between the leader and follower relationship. Such leadership may not be possible in reality given the tensions between where the individual and organisation meet (Lips-Wiersma *et al.*, 2009) and based on assumptions held by leaders and followers as to how leaders and followers are expected to interact with each other within an organisational context.

Focussing on Fry’s (2005) constructs of personal meaning, calling and organisational commitment, Markow and Klenke (2005) find support for “*an individual’s sense of personal meaning to be related to his or her own sense of calling, which, in turn, mediates commitment to the organisation*” (p.19). They find that a sense of self-transcendence is necessary to feel a sense of calling and that, leaders may be able to encourage greater levels of calling and commitment from followers by appealing to their sense of self-transcendence. A work environment which has well established spiritual values may attract leaders who feel able to contribute in “*creating workplaces where followers find meaning in their activities and become more engaged, responsible and creative*” (p.21). However in doing so, leaders may create an environment in which, subconsciously, their own ego-centric needs are being satisfied through influencing meaning for others. (Markow and Klenke, 2005). This research extends upon Fry’s (2003) SLT through the empirical examination of the constructs of

personal meaning, calling and organisational commitment finding *“that an individual’s sense of personal meaning is related to his or her own sense of calling, which in turn, mediates commitment to the organisation”* (p.19) providing partial support for Fry’s (2003) SLT. The research suggests that an individual’s organisational commitment increases when individuals feel a calling associated with self-transcendence. Suggestions are made that leaders need to adapt vision to connect with followers’ sense of self-transcendence. How leaders achieve this in reality, given that meanings associated with self-transcendence are much individualised, challenges the realities of these suggestions.

Fry’s (2005) theory of spiritual leadership is tested by Fry, Vitucci and Cedillo (2005) through a military application. It is an extensive piece of research using longitudinal data from a mixed method approach to provide a *“baseline for future organizational development interventions”* (p.835). This research provides the first full application of the theory in practice with 200 participants surveyed and asked questions measuring the *“three dimensions of spiritual leadership, two dimensions of spiritual survival with organisational commitment and productivity measured also”* (p.841). A second survey was completed 5 months later focussing on the key concepts of spiritual survival and the leaders’ ability to engage followers through a shared vision increasing organisational commitment within an environment of altruistic love. Fry, Vitucci and Cedillo (2005) find support for the reliability and validity of SLT measures as a baseline for further research suggesting that Fry’s (2003) SLT constructs *“provide an action agenda for future research”* (p.851). The variances between initial and former survey results would suggest concerns towards the constructs for Fry’s (2003) SLT. Rather than see increases in agreement towards constructs, results in general showed growing disagreement as to altruistic love, organisational commitment and productivity constructs with survey comments indicating that issues of power and relational dynamics not being considerations for Fry’s SLT.

The common application of case studies to the WPS and SLT domain provides support to an exploratory research phase currently experienced within this domain and *“until the spirit at work field matures, case studies can be valuable in helping researchers to better understand the personal and subjective nature of the spiritual aspect of spiritual leadership”* (Milliman and Ferguson, 2008, p.37). Milliman and Ferguson (2008) apply Fry’s SLT dimensions of vision, altruistic love and hope and faith to the leadership values, attitudes and behaviours of Entrepreneur Steve Bigari. Under this context, they describe the spiritual leader as providing

the destination and the journey for followers while reflecting high ideals through established standards of excellence, encouraging hope and faith while having broad appeal to stakeholders. The spiritual leader was found to display courage, kindness, gratitude, compassion, humility and honesty whilst also establishing trust with followers. This is achieved through providing stretch goals and rewards to followers whilst also demonstrating perseverance and not conforming to restricted norms of action. The case study aimed to provide “a better understanding of one way that spiritual leadership can be manifested in practice as well as its impact on both employees and the organisation” (p.35). They assume that positive leader behaviours are associated to spiritual ideals; however, such an approach would suggest that all it takes are positive behaviours in order to be considered a spiritual leader. This approach is continued throughout much of the SLT literature, fitting positive leader behaviours to concepts of spirituality. Of concern, is the application of Fry’s (2003) SLT when the constructs and measures have not even been fully explored. This supports that researchers are concerned with fitting leader behaviours to ideals of spirituality rather than focussing on extending and addressing the shortcomings of SLT.

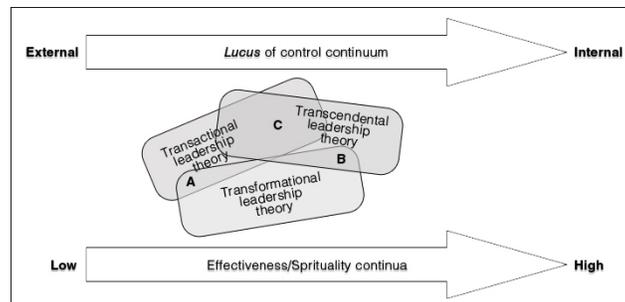


Figure 2.4: Integration of transcendental leadership theory (cited by Fernando, Beale and Geroy, 2009)

- (A) Relationship between transactional leadership and transformational leadership
- (B) Relationship between Transformational leadership and Transcendental Leadership
- (C) Relationship between Transactional and Transcendental leadership.

Exploratory research by Fernando, Beale and Geroy (2009) continues the focus towards single case studies by interviewing Merrill J. Fernando, founder of Dilmah Tea. Data collected by suggests an integration of transcendental theory with transactional and transformational leadership, illustrated in figure 2.4. They propose that:

*“As internal moral values and spirituality deepen they progress from transactional to transformational leadership. However must go one step further to become transcendental leaders, which involves not only communicating and adopting deep moral values, but also developing a concern for followers spiritual journey and divine awareness associated with the highest level of moral and spiritual development”.*

Fernando *et al.* (2009) suggest that the three leadership styles, transactional, transformational and transcendental are connected at three continua of being, locus of control, spirituality and effectiveness. The findings would suggest that a leader that identifies as a spiritual being has a high internal locus and a passion for caring about others. They are also able to effectively manage the transactional requirements of business decision making. This research provides the opportunity to advance SLT through a focus towards integrating transactional, transformational and transcendental theory. The study itself does not however go far enough in categorising actual leader qualities and fails to discuss how leader effectiveness should be measured. For example should leader effectiveness be measured on purely economic measures (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008) or from the perspective of the follower? Again the challenge is raised for future research to consider other stakeholders perspectives in addition to the leaders perspective and to give holistic consideration to the human being in its totality (Campbell, 2007).

Fawcett, Brau and Rhoads (2008), set out to answer the question “What practices cultivate a culture that can transform a company’s workforce into a key competitive advantage?” (p.5) They conduct empirical evaluation of employee attitudes and job satisfaction using values research methods. This research sought employee perspectives in order to then provide a basis to create an inspiring workplace climate driven by spiritual leadership. The “*four core values of accomplishment, community, life balance and self-esteem emerged from the analysis*” (p.12). The research found that leaders that provide positive affirmations connected to follower’s intrinsic needs, a sense of connection with work and co-workers, personal competency through feelings of fairness and autonomy providing empowerment may contribute to an inspiring culture of creativity and contribution. The association between spirituality and leadership is vague however and the research does not take account much of the spirituality and leadership literature. The research does attempt to focus on more than just the leaders’ influence, such as the work climate and the follower perspective. It addresses the

perceived benefits of an inspiring workplace climate but does not conversely consider the effects of perceived disadvantages. Whilst this research doesn't directly extend upon SLT, it does acknowledge that a work environment is determined by the perceptions of followers as well as leaders and may lend support to the extension of SLT through a focus towards the followers' perspective.

The conceptual literature proposes that the spiritual leader is guided by a strong set of spiritual values which when enacted and linked to spiritual practices, and perceived as authentic by followers, results in a spiritually enlightened, highly ethical environment and positive outcomes for leaders, followers and the organisation.

The empirical literature finds partial support for Fry's (2003) SLT however the results would indicate that the constructs themselves are not well supported and that leader behaviours are fitted to ideals of spirituality. This suggests that any leader that can demonstrate positive leader behaviours can also be considered a spiritual leader and conversely that a spiritual leader who demonstrates positive leader behaviours can fit ideals of spirituality to organisational practices.

There are many assumptions made within the literature. Firstly, the spiritual leader is also perceived as an ethical leader yet there is no evidence that this is in fact the case. Secondly, the conceptual literature focuses towards linking spirituality with positive outcomes, yet the follower perspective has not yet been fully considered nor have potential disadvantages. Thirdly, the literature assumes that leadership spirituality is able to be transferred from leaders to followers and is one directional.

A review of the spirituality and leadership literature does illustrate progress from focussing on the characteristics and behaviours of the leader towards understanding the influence of the leader's spirituality to the context as experienced by all organisational actors. However, the literature mainly assumes that leadership is not a reciprocal process; instead the research continues to assume that the leaders' spirituality influences followers and doesn't recognise that followers' spirituality may also influence leaders.

Whilst there is exciting conceptual theory building through large numbers of propositions being generated, these remain largely untested. A lack of empirical research continues to

limit this field from progressing. Given the move towards understanding the nature of spirituality as opposed to attempting to recreate spirituality for organisational gains, Fry's (2005) model of SLT may need to be reconsidered, especially in terms of its outcomes and motivational influence aspects by leaders towards followers and in terms of the leader/follower relationship. Whilst much of the literature makes suggestions for greater stakeholder perspective, very few researchers have actually considered the follower perspective as to the influence of spirituality or the influence of the leaders' spirituality or the influence of the followers' spirituality on leaders and the organisation.

A focus within the literature is the influence towards transcendence (Fernando *et al.*, 2009; Fry and Kriger, 2009). As a result the concept of being rather than doing or having is entering the spirituality and leadership domain. A model providing for varying perspective of spirituality, ranging from a focus on leader behaviours to a non-dual perspective of leadership provides opportunities for a contingency approach to spirituality and leadership research and may assist to address the issues of reciprocal influence between leaders and followers and assist to advance the study of spirituality and leadership.

Conceptual development proposed by Fry and Kriger (2009) suggests a focus towards the need for transcendence towards a duality where *“a leader living and behaving from a non-dual level would tend not to see a distinction between the ‘leader’ and the ‘led’. From the non-dual level of being, followership and leadership are simply labels that overly constrain the possible role sets of individuals”* (p.1686). Empirical evidence provided supports that the integration of transcendent qualities creates a collaborative partnership between leader and follower *“reflecting not only alignment but unity as well”*(p.534).

Given that a common theme within recent research is the highly moral nature of the spiritual leader (Driver, 2008) further consideration of both the moral intention of leadership and its possible sinister possibilities and inadvertent outcomes should be explored (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011).

## **2.4 Power and Control**

Spiritual Leadership Theory is suggested as being situated within positive leadership theories. As a consequence the positive outcomes of the integration and manifestation of spiritual ideals within an organisation are often discussed within the literature. This section will review the leadership and spirituality literature to determine if the focus towards positive outcomes is supported by the follower experience. Conceptual and empirical research will be reviewed to determine if follower outcomes are based on assumptions or empirical evidence.

Discussions as to less positive aspects such as power and control are often left unaddressed (Lips-Wiersma *et al.* 2009) therefore this section will also review the literature which provides a critical perspective to the leadership and spirituality literature in considering possibilities of hegemonic influence.

### **2.4.1 Follower outcomes of Leaders Spirituality**

This section will review leadership and spirituality literature to establish what the outcomes of spiritual integration by the leader are for followers to determine whether follower outcomes are based on mainly assumptions or on empirical evidence.

It is proposed (Krishmakumar and Neck, 2002) that followers should be allowed to practice their own spirituality within the workplace and associated benefits will result as an outcome. Such benefits include increased follower creativity and greater degrees of honesty and trust. Spirituality is suggested as “*expanding the frontiers of consciousness beyond normal boundaries, leading to increased intuition and creativity*” (p.157). Spirituality creates awareness which leads to greater degrees of personal fulfilment with spiritual enrichment claimed to lead to happiness for followers. Trust is considered to be of fundamental importance within spiritually based organisations with “*distrust leading to communication problems inside the organisation*” (p.157) and a reduction of goodwill between leaders and followers. Followers experience feelings of completeness which contributes to personal development and growth. Strengthening and deepening of organisational commitment by followers results based on perceptions of trust (Korac-Kalakabadse, Kouzmin and Kakabadse, 2002). Krishmakumar and Neck (2002) emphasize that acceptance of varying spiritualities may lead to the need for organisational restraint through “*a policy towards*

*spiritual freedom*” (p.162). The need to articulate how spirituality is enacted in the organisation would not be consistent with Krishmakumar and Neck’s (2002) proposal that followers be allowed to practice their own spirituality and instead raises questions as to how the proposed follower outcomes would be influenced through restraints on how spirituality is allowed to be enacted.

Fry’s (2005) SLT suggests that followers experience greater levels of intrinsic motivation when spiritual needs for calling and membership are addressed through the influence of leader values, attitudes and behaviours. Reave’s (2003) agrees that leaders can awaken “*a latent motivation in followers*” (p.666) contributing to employee wellbeing and increased levels of follower commitment. Reave’s (2005) review of 150 studies examines spiritual qualities relative to leader effectiveness. She suggests that measures of success should include follower satisfaction with the leader, follower retention, followership ethics and ethical behaviour and organisational citizenship behaviours. Whilst the study focuses on the group and leader perspectives of leader effectiveness the study fails to provide any summary of the follower perspective. The follower perspective is fully ignored and instead the study assumes positive outcomes for followers. Fry’s (2005) SLT proposes that “*employees who work for organizations they consider being spiritual are less fearful, more ethical, and more committed*” (p.703) and need to satisfy their spiritual selves through feeling a sense of belonging and in making a difference. Fry (2005) suggests that through teams, followers are able to integrate their own personal leadership and “*will also embody a vision for their own lives that has meaning, makes a difference, and also incorporates the values and attitudes of altruistic love in social interaction with others to do what it takes to get the job done*” (p.720). However, criticism of work practices that encourage employees to adopt new values and beliefs is growing, with the need for “*psychic integrity*” now being asked (Casey, 1999: p. 37). It is argued that leaders need to provide “*freedom from emotional manipulation*” (Cuilla, 1998, p.83) by allowing followers to create their own meaning (Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2009). Fry’s (2005) SLT assumes that leaders have a greater knowledge of followers needs than followers themselves do.

A strong focus towards improved relationships through social exchange processes is emphasized throughout the literature. For example, Marques (2005) discusses the significance of trust between followers and leaders and a sharing of responsibilities for reciprocal benefits. Within the relationship process, reciprocal support is increased (Pawar,

2008) and relationships appear more harmonious. Further to this agency is strengthened providing greater legitimacy and follower abilities to negotiate are increased (Frye, Kisselburgh and Butts, 2007). Another focus within the literature is a heightened sense of awareness proposed by Marques (2005) and raised self-consciousness for followers as an effect of spiritual integration. Greater introspective ability and ethical sensitivity is claimed to result from a deeper awareness of relational processes and through an increased focus towards morality and raised self-awareness “*allowing more self-control over anger and the ability to deal with frustrations*” (Pawar, 2008, p.555; Driscoll and McKee, 2007). The literature assumes that followers experience of a heightened sense of awareness is associated with positive outcomes, however, in many instances a heightened sense of awareness can direct followers towards being especially sensitive to any inconsistencies perceived and observed within the organisation and which may in fact create many negative instances for followers as they navigate through the sense making process. Greater ability to manage feelings of anger and deal with frustrations may inadvertently lead to followers suppressing feelings of internal dissonance and create a sense of alienation for followers (Tourish and Pinnington, 2005).

Followers are proposed to experience psychological and spiritual wellbeing as a result of workplace spirituality (de Klerk, 2005). Followers experience a meaningfulness to their work and this spills over to all aspects of their lives, a higher level of inner personal integration assists to provide “*more consistency between inner values and outer behaviour*” (Reave, 2005, p.668). Followers may more readily, engage in a state of flow provided from feelings of life satisfaction, happiness, improved self-esteem, hope and optimum and having meaning in life (Reave, 2005). Personal lives become interwoven with work lives where followers are more prepared to compromise and negotiate in both their work and home interactions (Frye *et al.* 2005). The literature assumes that compromise and negotiation by followers is a positive outcome of spirituality however it may also be considered a means of normative control. Followers may compromise and negotiate as a means of ‘facework’ (Goffman, 1959) in wanting to fit with others perceptions of them and to continue to generate feelings of wellbeing for themselves and others but at the expense of their individual identity. Instead a focus towards understanding ‘follower meanings’ provides opportunities for future research, exploring how “*organisational culture, organisational context and leadership styles, influence followers sense of meaning*” (de Klerk, 2005, p.84).

The conceptual literature as to follower outcomes based on the leaders' spirituality is limited. Literature providing empirical evidence as to follower outcomes was extracted from research focussed more exclusively towards leader outcomes. This does provide some idea of what the follower experience may be, however, there are also a number of limitations associated.

Fry's (2005) SLT is tested by Fry *et al.* (2005). This empirical research found initial support for SLT in that "*those followers who have hope/faith in a transcendent vision within a context of the values of altruistic love have a higher sense of calling and membership, are more committed to their organisation and describe their work units as more productive*" (p.858). However, not all followers agreed. Instead, concerns were expressed as to the relationships between altruistic love and membership based on follower perceptions, which were attributed to certain leadership participant's lack of consideration, lack of people skills and lack of communication. Morale was lowered and suggested as being a factor in low responses to organisational commitment. Fry *et al.* (2005) suggest that whilst much emphasis has been put on vision the emphasis should be on membership given that "*membership is a primary driver of organisational commitment*" (p.858). This research highlights the complexities of organisational realities and the results would suggest that issues of leadership were always going to be a concern if multiple perspectives and varying power differentials are to be considered.

Extending on Fry's (2005) SLT, Markow and Klenke (2005) empirically test the effects of personal meaning and calling on organisational commitment. They find a significant positive relationship between self-transcendent personal meanings, calling and organisational commitment. These results support that a follower's sense of personal meaning mediates commitment to the organisation as "*personal meaning in itself was not a significant predictor of organisational commitment, but turned out to be significant when mediated by calling*" (p.19). Those followers that perceived their work as a calling as opposed to a job were more likely to feel stronger levels of commitment to the organisation when mediated by self-transcendent values. This research does provide some support to Fry's (2005) SLT, and does contribute to our knowledge through confirming the relationships between personal meanings, calling and organisational commitment. Of interest, is that "*not all sources of personal meaning are predictive of calling*" (p.8). Religious values as a source of personal meaning did not have the greatest influence on a sense of calling "*but rather the commitment*

*to ideals and purposes outside of themselves religion or others”* (p.20) did. Unfortunately, this isn't explored further.

Empirical research that seeks to understand the follower experience directly is limited, however Rego, Oliveria and Maslow (2008) examine follower behaviours to leaders reactions. Maslows (1965) principles of 'Enlighted Management' and Lerner's (2000) elements of 'Emancipatory Spirituality' are utilised in developing eupsychian and anti-eupsychian frameworks, focused on self-actualisation leaders behaviours to examine follower reactions. The results find that when the leader engages in behaviours that are related to self-actualisation such as respecting the inner lives of followers, promoting personal development and a sense of community then followers experience reactions of wellbeing, commitment and calling, positive behaviours and attitudes towards management, and a sense of self-worth. On the other hand, when the leader engages in behaviours that are not related to self-actualisation such as abuse of power, disrespect of inner lives of followers and being ruthless, cruel or unkind, then followers experience reactions of negative emotions and feelings, neglect, silence, retaliation or disobedience, decreasing role performance, relationship problems, and lowering team performance.

Naturally Anti-eupsychian Leadership behaviours resulted in Anti-eupsychian follower reactions. However the effect of Eupsychian leader behaviours that resulted in Anti-eupsychian reactions or Anti-eupsychian behaviours that resulted in Eupsychian follower reactions was not explored, although suggested future research is encouraged towards exploring a 'negative' deviant which "*induces organizational members to recall and be more sensitive to the negative side of organizational functioning*" (p.188). Therefore if a negative deviant could exist then so too could a 'positive deviant', where "*people expect to be well treated, where negative events become more salient in their minds because they threaten their search for well-being and meaning at work and their needs for safety, belonging and personal development*" (p.188). Similarly, Roberts (2007) suggest that workers make salient their spiritual identity and meaning in their work due to difficulties in managing stressors within the work environment leading to disengagement. The research looks specifically at the personal attributes of leaders and not the type of organisational culture they create. Also it doesn't question the power differences that might influence how attributes are accorded leaders by followers. The research uses a critical incident technique to obtain leader and

follower perceptions but fails to ask leaders and followers directly what the effects of the leaders' behaviour and follower reactions are for the organisation. The results indicate that the leader's spirituality does have positive effects for followers. Rego *et al.* (2007) shows that where leaders promoted personal development, and displayed behaviours of confidence, courage, open mindedness, loyalty, compassion and respect then follower's psychological well-being, commitment, self-worth and positive attitudes towards their superiors were increased. Admiration for the leader also increased.

A review of the spirituality and leadership literature relative to obtaining the follower experience illustrates a lack of empirical research and conceptual development. Instead a number of assumptions exist within the leadership and spirituality literature. Firstly, the literature assumes that leaders have a greater knowledge of followers needs than followers themselves do. Secondly, the literature focuses towards a positive perspective and in doing so ignores discussion of less negative aspects. The literature automatically assumes that greater self-awareness, heightened moral sensitivity and improved conflict resolution ability are positive outcomes. However, in many instances these qualities can also result in less than positive outcomes for followers, however these are not explored. Lastly, the literature assumes that multiple perspectives miraculously align to a common viewpoint, in doing so, systematically ignoring the importance of varying perspectives and power differentials that influence the leader follower relationship.

There is partial support that some followers do experience a sense of calling and membership when followers have hope and faith in a vision within a context of altruistic love (Fry *et al.*, 2005; Markow and Klenke, 2005), although on closer inspection the empirical research raises concerns of organisational realities that influence individual spirituality and that a context of altruistic love is not one that can always be naturally achieved by just any leader.

#### ***2.4.2 Critical Perspective of Spiritual Leadership Theory***

This section will review literature which addresses the discourse within the spiritual leadership domain in order to provide a critical perspective in supporting a holistic and balanced approach to the study of leadership and spirituality.

Concerns as to the influence of spirituality are first raised by Tourish and Pinnington (2002) who question the relationship between Transformational Leadership and corporate cultism as being an unholy trinity in the workplace. A vision with spiritual undertones is argued to provide a means in which to mobilize the psyches of followers towards greater acceptance of organisational activities such as down-sizing in an attempt to “*re-engineer the thought processes of employees*” (p.165). Tourish and Pinnington (2002) suggest that “*promoting spirituality in the workplace is to declare that those who dissent from the ideology no longer belong*. They argue that “*universally held values suggests minimal non-existent dissent*” (p.148) and that due to a ‘common culture’ the lack of challenge to decision making will ultimately limit the organisations growth and survival. Whilst this research does direct concern towards organisational motive and towards the legitimacy of organisations to influence individual psyche, it also fails to provide exactly how followers interpret these organisational actions, and even if followers are aware or even care of these intentions. This research assumes that followers lack the capability of awareness as to organisational motives. Given the lack of research on the follower experience it is not possible to confirm or deny the effect of the leaders’ spirituality for followers.

Polley, Vora and Subbanarasimha (2005) suggest that spirituality has costs. Whilst these costs relate more specifically to the instrumental argument, at an individual level followers may feel affected by the increased stress and burnout of leaders attempting to fill the spiritual void for followers. Leaders may feel more responsible and “*impose their will on others*” (p.54). There are a number of divergences created by spirituality that create disunity and lead to organisational dysfunctionality. Firstly, both leaders and followers “*differ on where they are in their spiritual journey*” (p.56) creating a variation as to how spirituality can be considered within various contexts and within team and organisational levels. Secondly, the concept of spirituality and religion creates problems in that defining or not defining acceptable spiritual and religious practices may create issues of discrimination and unfairness for followers. Thirdly, the question as to whether work is the place for spirituality to be enacted continues to escalate the instrumental imperative argument. Fourthly, concern as to whether spirituality fuels associated feelings of ‘knowing better’ and therefore contributing to individuals not accepting another point of view may create a competitive adversary between leaders and followers. Lastly, the disadvantages of a cohesive team and organisational environment is raised creating issues of an insular internal community with self-regulated norms resulting and which may result in ineffective decision making. The research then

makes a number of suggestions for managing key spiritual paradoxes and dilemmas. These include, focussing towards providing skills to all employees in “*areas of diversity and appreciate listening*” (p.61), providing spiritual training that is consistent across all entire work teams, fairness is how spirituality is rewarded and acknowledged, mitigate risks associated with groupthink, recognise that spirituality will not be without conflict and prepare spaces for those not wanting to bring spirituality to the work environment. This research does acknowledge the paradoxes and dilemmas which exist when considering spirituality within an organisational context, however, many of the suggestions that are made appear more simplistic than in reality they are to implement.

Frye, *et al.* (2007), suggest varying perspectives in considering “*the problematic dualisms between leaders and followers and secularity and spirituality*” (p.243). Concerns as to disempowering dualisms that exist within organisational realities are argued to require a discursive approach. Spiritual followership is defined conceptually as:

*“a relational process discursively constituted in our organizational lives that aims to construct, to coordinate, to challenge and to transform self and others in order to renew meanings, purpose, connectedness and integration”* (p.246).

Frye *et al.* (2007) suggest an interpretive, functional and critical lens, be applied in exploring the follower experience. An interpretive lens considers what the meaning of spiritual followership is and how spiritual followers manage paradoxical identities. On-going dialogue between leaders and followers is suggested as “*assisting leaders and followers in removing some mystery about managing tensions arising from commitments to personal and work lives, and coherent and fragmented selves*” (p.248). The functional lens considers the re-negotiation between leaders and followers as to relationships and identities in influencing organisational practices. Followers need to assume responsibility for their own spiritual selves through questioning “*the meaning of outcomes, the relationships of self to others in spiritual development, and the forces that mitigate against spiritual life and connections*” (p.249). Followers are suggested as requiring courage in order to address tensions and paradoxes that exist within the leader and follower relationship and must be aware of how their behaviours influence those with differing belief systems. Finally the critical lens “*addresses individual freedom (s) and uncovers dominant ideologies to emancipate people from ideological control*” (p.250). Exploring cultural, organisational and secular hegemony

may provide answers as to how control influences and prevents freedom of individual spirituality. It is proposed that followers must “*be willing to engage in discourse about how spirituality might act as an instrument of dominant ideologies in their own work lives*” (p.252) and “*must constantly question follower-leader bonds and their own complicity in enacting unproductive bonds*” (p.252). Whilst this research does support the need for greater understanding of the follower experience, there are a number of limitations which are also suggested. These limitations stem from follower fear, in that followers may not feel able to engage in such discussions on spirituality when they think their career aspirations will be stymied as a result. They may not engage in discussions on spirituality when they are suspicious of policy implementation given that policy does not necessarily change attitudes and behaviours. Until, empirical evidence is provided which can explore and confirm these limitations and any further paradoxes and tensions which might occur within the leader and follower relationship advancement of this research area is unlikely.

Spirituality is suggested as addressing a crisis in meaning (Driver, 2009) in that followers seek meaning in their lives, especially when facing organisational realities such as “*technology, global competition, downsizing, and reengineering*” (p.61). However, often followers experience meaninglessness where “*meaning is prescribed or made for individuals in organisations and to the extent that it reflects a discourse that cannot be questioned as to its underlying assumptions and negative consequences*” (p.69). The argument is made as to the importance of obtaining the lived experience of the follower in order to determine how meaning making occurs and how possible spaces for existential meaning making can occur. This research assumes that spaces for existential meaning making are possible within an organisational context, but whether this in reality is possible is unknown.

Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) explore the dark side of workplace spirituality proposing that “*spirituality used as a control mechanism for getting followers to work harder in their paid jobs often at the expense of other avenues towards meaningful and fulfilled lives*” (p.297). Followers may feel a disconnection, cynicism, depersonalisation and alienation through suppressed feelings (Lips-Wiersma, Dean and Fornaciari). Whilst the majority of critical literature focuses on WPS, connections to leadership and spirituality can be drawn as illustrated in figure 2.4.

		Instrumentality	
		Low	High
Control	Low	seduction	manipulation
	High	evangelization	subjugation

Figure 2.4: A model of Critical Workplace Spirituality Effects (cited by Lips-Wiersma, Dean and Fornaciari, 2009)

Organisations that practice having low control and low instrumentality avoid measures of controlling followers and avoid viewing followers as a means to an ends allowing followers to have control over their work routines. As a result followers are provided the opportunity to “*select in or out of WPS activities*” (p.293) with the possibility of cultural fragmentation occurring. Individuals are engaged in the organisation through satisfying their own needs and therefore aren’t concerned with issues of instrumentality. Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) suggest that “*the potential negative effects for these employees and the firm are the risks of disconnection and cynicism resulting from a “What’s in it for me? orientation...”*” (p.293). Organisations that practice high control and low instrumentality are considered as practicing ‘evangelization’. Spirituality is not considered a tool but how WPS is integrated into the organisation is highly controlled. Leaders attempt to persuade followers to their beliefs feeling that these are superior to other beliefs. Organisations that display a high instrumental focus and low control are said to practice manipulation. The focus is on connecting WPS to organisational performance leaving followers to decide how they wish to connect, as the assumption that any level of connection will help to manipulate behaviour towards achieving organisational objectives. Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) suggest that “*difficult questions about organisational practices, for example, may arise for employees; they may feel conflicted or disloyal to the organisation that supports their beliefs by posing such questions and demanding responses*” (p.295). Organisations that show high instrumentality and high control are said to practice “subjugation”. WPS is seen as a tool and the connection is made for followers who are being asked to think and feel in a certain way. Sense breaking and sense making are created in order to create a void in which the organisation will fill. This research draws attention to the darker side of WPS and associated leader-follower dynamics

suggesting the need to listen to all individual voices in order to gain a deeper understanding of possible underlying damaging consequences of spirituality in the context of organisations. This research also highlights the tensions which exist between individual spirituality and organisational realities, however doesn't suggest how these can be overcome and even if they can. Application of this model will provide for confirmation of these described tensions and may also provide for how these tensions can in reality be managed.

Research considering the discourse within the leadership and spirituality literature which provides empirical evidence is limited, however, Goodier and Eisenberg (2006) and Zaidman and Gidoni (2011) attempt to explore the organisational realities associated with spiritual concepts. Goodier and Eisenberg (2006) "*examine whether spirituality is used to create a system of unobtrusive control used to exploit and manipulate organisational members*" (p.47) and Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011) explore "*what really happens when spirituality enters profit organisations*" (p.630).

Goodier and Eisenberg (2006) conduct a 10 month ethnographic case study of a US health care system in their transition towards "*a spiritual approach to organizing*" (p.47). They found support that spirituality was perceived as being broader than religion, and was defined incorporating concepts of love, wholeness, purpose and "*being guided by values of honesty, sacred community, fairness, excellence and celebration*" (p.52). They also found that participants monitored their language choices, when these were inconsistent with a spiritual approach and those stories with spiritual values, that inspired others and that created cohesion through narratives of differentiation "*promoted employee bonding and identification*" (p.56). Examining whether spirituality was used to exploit or control or manipulate, Goodier and Eisenberg (2006) found that the motivates of the senior leadership team were associated with re-wakening past values associated with organisational identity, addressing issues of psychic pain, and the desire to break away from current command and control models. They sought to discover if spirituality was just another means of controlling and exploiting workers and concluded that they "*retained a degree of skepticism with regard to the authenticity of the approach*" (p.62). However, they also felt that workers were aware of potential dangers and were "*active agents in constructing and negotiating the meaning of spirituality and the methods through which it was created and sustained*" (p.60). This research positions the individual as an engaged participant and as seeking meanings and being provided the opportunity to question organisational motives. It also positions the individual as being

provided spaces for meaning making. The research consisted of senior leader participants only. It seems highly likely that leaders would feel more able to engage in questioning organisational motives and in carving out spaces for sense making than would followers. The research illustrated that leaders felt more able to question organisational motives; however, followers may not feel the same degree of emotional safety in being able to do so. Followers also may not be in positions to influence opportunities for sense making whereby leaders may have more ability to influence such opportunities. Leaders engaged freely during the integration of spiritual values, however, their motives for supporting the integration may be based on opportunities to extend their influence in controlling followers. An interesting point is raised by Goodier and Eisengberg (2006) that “*individuals in organisations always vary in their degree of understanding and commitment to organisational values and practices, and we would expect this approach to be no different*” (p.63).

Field study analysis is conducted by Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011), who explore “*what happens when spirituality enters profit organisations*” (p.630). Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011) question managers and consultants and find that in order for spirituality to exist within organisations, the translation of spirituality is focussed towards economic terms in order for acceptance, however, in private, managers and consultants “*communicate differently; they make the use of the language and discourse of the New Age*” (p.639). They also find that manager’s associated improved awareness, communication and the reduction of stress with spirituality. Improved awareness occurred through engaging in a reflexive process resulting in greater empathy and understanding. Communication was improved based on thinking differently and in being more careful when making decisions. Participating in spiritual workshops helped to reduce tension and as a result reduced levels of stress for managers. Findings showed “*that managers perceive spirituality as both individual and organisational wisdom*” (p.641). Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011) suggest that resistance to spirituality occurs due to underlying assumptions associated with profit organisations. Assumptions included, the goal orientated nature of organisations, the need for the organisation to achieve its goals within specific timeframes and the nature of the relationships among the organisation. A number of tensions were identified. These included the “*conflict between an organizational system that prefers short-term intervention and spirituality, which is taken to be a long-term process that needs maintenance*” (p.643) and the tension between needs for social order in terms of what is “*proper organisational conduct*” (p.644). Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni (2011) suggest a tension exists “*between the way*

*spirituality is acted in the private and public domains, in that managers who are involved in spiritual practices in the organisations public domain may suffer negative emotions such as shame and resistance”* (p.647). They argue that spirituality is a discarded form of organisational wisdom and the central assumptions underlying organisations may not permit spirituality to be accepted, resulting in individuals resisting the notion of ‘removing the masks’ and instead being concerned with projecting the right images to fit. This research does attempt to explore the tensions that exist in considering spiritual ideals however, again focuses on the senior managers as opposed to the follower experience. The follower experience may provide for additional tensions yet explored based on concepts of power and may assist to extend upon this study by focussing towards follower assumptions as to organisational realities.

## **2.5 Purpose beyond Profit**

This section will review the spirituality and leadership literature in addressing the instrumental argument to establish if there are alternative approaches that could and should be taken when considering spirituality within an organisational context. Attempts to progress the field of leadership and spirituality have often focused on the relationship between spirituality and leadership, often, not questioning the very nature of leadership itself. This section reviews the literature exploring to what purpose spiritual leadership should take place. Instrumentality is described by Lips Wiersma *et al.* (2009) as “*the extent to which employees are treated as a means toward a goal*” and given the moral implications as to the use of employees towards increasing profitability, concerns as to the purpose of spiritual leadership are warranted.

Fry’s (2003) SLT is a causal theory using intrinsic motivational concepts through creating a shared vision as a means to foster increased organisational commitment and productivity. The proposed causal theory links to the study of organisational development through its focus towards increasing follower commitment as a means of improving organisational performance resulting in greater profitability and progression towards being termed a learning organisation. The learning organisation is one “*in which expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured and collective aspiration is set free*” (p.694). Fry (2003) calls for the integration of the humanistic and spiritual domains rather than considering these as separate domains, suggesting that spiritual leadership provides a basis in which to build theory and

test propositions “*concerning purposeful humanistic systems and their effectiveness*” (p.722). Fry (2003) illustrates the integration of spiritual ideals utilising the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) 12 step program as a real world example. However, the example provided is based on a not for profit organisation, focussed towards wellbeing and self-awareness, as opposed to increased organisational performance leading to increased profitability. AA claims it does not “*control its members or furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover*” ([www.alcoholicsanonymous.co.nz](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.co.nz)), however Fry’s (2003) SLT focuses exclusively on motivation as a form of influence. This fundamental difference is what creates concern as to what purpose spiritual leadership serves. Fry (2003) attempts to justify the study of spirituality within an organisational context from a technical imperative as a possible means to find acceptability for the study of spirituality within organisational theory. This focus is noted by Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) who suggests that the literature assumes that a profit orientation and spirituality are compatible. Fry’s (2003) SLT forms the foundation for further research, attempting to operationalize OD concepts in order to associate relationships between spiritual ideals leading to greater organisational commitment and increased organisational performance and profitability (Markow and Klenke, 2005). Much of this research focuses towards the benefits for organisations (Marques, Dhiman and King, 2005; Marques, 2007; Fry and, 2009) with spiritual wellbeing a secondary priority (de Klerk, 2005).

Polly *et al.* (2005) suggest that spirituality may be an instrument for exploitation in that “*workers often volunteer or take lower wages for work in causes they believe in*” (p.56) and that “*organisations come to expect more efforts and commitments from workers without offering equitable rewards*” (p.56). Followers must trust organisational intentions of avoiding exploiting increased performance and commitment and that “*spiritual expressions will not be misused*” (p.56). Monetary and non-monetary rewards must be shared equitably if this is to be achieved. Unfortunately, organisational practices encourage reward systems that reward individual performance and normally reward those most senior whilst expecting those in lower levels to accept less. This research questions whether the workplace is the right place to consider spirituality and that there are associated costs that result from spiritual integration however the research doesn’t provide suggestions for where and how spirituality might be positioned within an organisation sense, given that the spirit is an animating force within all living beings and therefore must present in everyday life including organisational life.

The instrumentality dilemma is considered by Sheep (2006) who highlights the issues of associating economic justifications to the study of spirituality. They encourage the need to explore *“how business can be a part of spirituality instead of how spirituality can be a profitable tool for business”* (p.368). The tension exists between the responsibilities of the organisation to serve societies and to also ensure cost efficient production. Sheep (2006) suggests that a multiparadigm approach to mitigate the instrumentality dilemma is necessary and that *“differing epistemological and ontological assumptions are at the root of that division”* (p.370). Utilising transcendence may assist to breach the instrumental dilemma however, it appears more likely that exploring underlying assumptions and how these influence perceptions of spiritual integration may not only assist to breach the instrumental dilemma but also provide for greater knowledge and theory development.

An existentialist perspective provides opportunities to explore spirituality. Driscoll and Wiebe (2007), suggest that *“organisational performance to a certain extent is driving the literature on spirituality and leadership”* (p.336) and that in order to prevent against a technical/instrumental imperative moving to a deeper level of thinking to considering a more authentic spirituality the *“workplace needs to have human welfare as a primary end”* (p.341). Being explicit in the end goals of the organisation as to how spiritual ideals contribute is one method in which Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) propose may assist in lifting *“the façade of those practices being spiritual in the context of the work organisation”* (p.341). Another is in challenging economic models of business that govern forms of organising. Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) suggest that only until spiritual development becomes an end in itself, as a goal along with financial profitability, will spiritual integration fit within a profit driven organisation. Again the argument is made for approaching the study of spirituality in organisations from a non-instrumental sense through greater use of *“interpretive, empathetic and introspective methods such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, and mindful inquiry”* (p.343). Driver (2007) also approaches her discussion of spirituality within organisational studies from an existentialist perspective. She suggests that spirituality research should consider *“a variety of perspectives from critical management theories to discourse studies to protect existential meaning making as a lived and socially constructed experience”* (p.56).

Examining the concept of spirituality through an intrinsic-origin view, religious view and an existentialist perspective, Krishnakumar and Neck (2002), move towards appreciating the phenomena of spirituality and away from strict definitions. They summarise different

perspectives of spirituality and suggest leaders should “*attempt to understand differing spiritual views and also encourage all views within an organisation*” (p.156) in order to increase organisational performance. An individual-based ‘spiritual freedom’ model for incorporating and encouraging spirituality is developed in an attempt to “*encourage employees to follow their own spiritual path and to relate this path to the goals of the organisation*” (p.162). This research encourages the link between organisational goals and individuals spiritual path however in doing so, highlights the technical imperative which runs through much of the literature.

Gotsis and Kortezi (2007) consider the instrumental argument through the types of approaches taken by researchers. The first approach is the exploratory approach which focuses on contextual approaches to spirituality. These include religion and secular specific contexts, a philosophical based perspective, and a self-actualisation perspective. Such approaches are proposed to limit the study of spirituality in that the concept of spirituality is a universal concept rather than a context specific concept. They argue that “*when spirituality discourse is carried out within the context of a specific framework it fails to capture the complexity and the conceptual richness of such a multi-faceted term*” (p.582) leading to a fragmented discussion as only a specific membership is engaged with such discussions. This leads to a less than exclusive approach. The second approach is the consequential approach. This focuses on the need for scientific evidence in order to establish positive outcomes associated with concepts of spirituality. This approach is limited by the assumptions which associate the organisation as being a place of rationality, logical, tangible and measureable. Therefore spirituality is naturally associated as an instrumental imperative leading to questions as to what purpose within organisations, spirituality provides. Gotsis and Kortezi (2007) introduce ‘respectful pluralism’ as an alternative approach to the study of spirituality within organisational settings, by instead focussing on treating the “*construct of spirit in the workplace as an end in itself that results from an inner need of human nature and not as a means to an organisational end, most often organisational profitability*” (p.585). Three limiting norms to respectful pluralism include nondegradation, noncoercion and nonestablishment. Through preventing employees degrading and disrespecting others, preventing employees using power or imposing their will on others, and avoiding endorsing any particular worldview over another, instrumental demands within organisations can be avoided. A philosophical framework which considers a virtue-ethics approach to spiritual values “*may offer new directives in the current discourse of WPS, as it seems to encompass*

*character and well-being, two core elements that allow for a non-instrumentalist conception of the term, as well as of its appropriateness to and performance in organisational settings”* (p.595).

Whilst earlier research focuses on the differing instrumental and existential approaches to the study of spirituality, recent research is strangely quiet as to this dilemma and instead looks towards a more balanced approach. Fry and Kriger (2009) focus towards a theory of being-centred leadership acknowledging various contexts in which leadership occurs and in an attempt to extend current theory through “*incorporating the emerging areas of authentic, ethical, servant, and spiritual leadership*” (p.1669). There is merit in such an approach and the propositions developed by Fry and Kriger (2009) who encourage researchers to test if leaders operating at the various 5 levels extend upon each leadership context in order to advance the study of spirituality and leadership. The instrumental focus is considered through much of the spirituality and leadership literature; however, in recognizing the perils of such a focus current conceptual research is instead pointing the way towards considering leadership away from the technical imperative.

Fernado *et al.* (2009) consider the spiritual dimension in leadership through a case study. They consider the limitations of transformational leadership and transactional leadership and suggest recognising transcendental leadership as a means to address the instrumental dilemma. They find that leaders’ utilised elements from all leadership styles and that leaders went “*beyond efforts targeted at merely transcending followers to organisational goals*” (p.534). This research does highlight the individual nature of spirituality and how the spiritual self can exist within an organisational setting, however, it also poses questions. Such as to whether a spiritual orientation is possible within organisations where one has not existed. It also poses questions as to whether organisational members bring with them organisational assumptions that prevent new forms of thinking and organising from occurring.

In summary, Fry’s (2003) SLT introduces the instrumental argument into organisational studies through associating spiritual concepts with increased organisational performance and increased profitability. Whilst much of the spirituality and leadership literature supports this association, calls are made to consider spirituality away from the instrumental imperative through considering contextual approaches (Fry and Kriger, 2009), existential reasoning

(Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2011) and utilising differing epistemological and ontological perspectives in positioning spirituality within organisational theory.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The literature review finds three central themes emerging, these being 'Spirituality of the Leader as Person', 'Power and Control', and 'Purpose beyond Profit'. This section will summarise the literature review, discussing conceptual development and empirical evidence to explore underlying assumptions in order to extend our knowledge of this field.

### **2.6.1 Spirituality of the Leader as Person**

Fry's (2003) SLT introduces the concept of spiritual ideals, leadership and organisational performance. The conceptual literature argues that the spiritual leader is guided by a strong set of spiritual values. When enacted and linked to spiritual practices provide an enlightened workplace with positive outcomes resulting for followers, leaders and the organisation. However, the empirical research is limited and finds only partial support for Fry's (2003) SLT constructs. Rather the empirical research highlights that the constructs themselves are not well supported and which undermines any attempts to operationalize a theory of spiritual leadership. As a result of the lack of empirical research, a great number of assumptions are made. Firstly, the empirical leader is also assumed an ethical leader, secondly, the research assumes that only positive outcomes result from the leaders spirituality ignoring the influence of possible disadvantages, and lastly, the literature assumes that leaders who don't possess spiritual qualities can easily acquire these and that SL is one directional. It is argued that empirical evidence examining the outcomes of the leaders' spirituality as perceived by all organisational members is required in order to consider the assumptions made within the literature.

### **2.6.2 Power and Control**

The literature examining the follower experience is limited to mainly conceptual propositions associating positive outcomes of the leaders' spirituality. These positive outcomes include meeting follower needs for spiritual survival, through calling and membership, in providing a sense of belonging, and a sense of purpose. These also include more harmonious

relationships, spiritual wellbeing, and greater meaningfulness to work. Empirical evidence supports that positive outcomes do exist for some followers however, not for all followers. The empirical evidence also finds support for the relationships between self-transcendent personal meanings, calling and organisational commitment, however, as to why religious values weren't significant as a source of personal meaning were left unexplored. The only empirical evidence that explores the follower experience is research exploring Antieupychian and Eupychian leader behaviours and follower reactions. Unfortunately, Eupychian leader behaviours that resulted in Antieupychian reactions and Antieupychian behaviours that resulted in Eupychian follower reactions were not explored. The concept of a negative and positive deviant was proposed however not further explored. As a result of the limited empirical evidence, much of the literature is based on assumptions. Firstly, the literature assumes that leaders have a greater knowledge of follower needs than do followers. Secondly, the literature assumes a positive perspective and in doing so ignores discussions of less negative aspects. Lastly, the literature assumes that multiple perspectives align to a common viewpoint, ignoring varying perspectives and power differentials that influence the leader follower relationship. The literature exploring the discourse within the literature finds that a number of underlying assumptions influence both leader and follower's sense of social order provided by organisations and which is challenged through the concept of spirituality within the organisational context. It is suggested that further research should examine the tensions which exist when individual spirituality meets organisational realities.

### ***2.6.3 Purpose beyond Profit***

The question as to what purpose spiritual leadership takes is addressed through the instrumental argument which runs through much of the leadership and spirituality literature. Research attempts to justify the study of spirituality within organisations based on utilising spirituality as a tool towards increased profitability is a strong theme throughout the literature. Those that question the instrumental imperative would suggest that an existential approach is necessary which is more aligned to the subject of spirituality. This is dependent on varying ontological and methodological approaches be taken as opposed to those that attempt to measure spiritual effectiveness. Considering contextual aspects is also suggested as providing a means in which to address the instrumental imperative. More recently, the silence as to the instrumental argument within the leadership and spirituality leadership would

suggest that assumptions as to acceptance of the possibilities of instrumental abuse of spirituality will always exist. Rather, research that focuses towards appreciating spaces for spirituality within organisational realities and how these intercept is being recognised by researchers as a means extending our knowledge (Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011).

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding as to the effects of the leader's spirituality within the organisation as perceived by both leaders and followers. It is argued (Lips-Wiersma *et al.* 2009) that the spirituality and leadership literature is overly concerned with the leaders' perspective and therefore assumptions are made that followers experience positive outcomes in relation to the effects of the leaders' spirituality within the organisation. It is also argued (Gotsis and Kortezi, 2007) that the study of spirituality and leadership has been limited due to epistemological differences as the instrumental imperative has been strongly aligned with forms of quantitative research.

In this chapter, the research methodology is chosen through analysis of the literature review which supports a case study approach for exploratory research. The research questions and rationale is discussed in this section. This chapter also discusses the selection of participants, the interview process and the data analysis process. The data collection and analysis methods are discussed and justification is provided for to the chosen approach. This research is based on in-depth semi-structured interviews and insider 'emic' observations assist to provide context.

Finally, ethical considerations are provided.

#### **3.2 Research Methods**

There is evidence of epistemological difference in approaching research methods for the study of spirituality in organisations. The instrumental imperative is strongly aligned with forms of quantitative research (Gotsis and Kortezi, 2007), focussed towards outcomes of increased performance, profitability directed by organisational development constructs such as organisational commitment, satisfaction and creativity. Heaton, Schmidt-Wilk and Travis (2004) focus towards a positivist approach, as does Ashmos and Duchon (2000), de Klerk (2005), and Fry *et al.* (2005). Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) encourage quantitative

studies, however Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) and Driver (2008) encourage the use of case studies, ethnographies and first person accounts in order to move past the instrumental influence throughout much of the spirituality and leadership literature. Benefiel, (2005) suggests that distinguishing between authentic and inauthentic subjectivity allows for differing approaches to the study of spirituality to complement one another. What limited empirical research exists is largely quantitative in nature. Markow and Klenke (2005) suggest that “*the role of qualitative methodologies in building theory of spiritual leadership remains largely unexplored*” (p.22). They further suggest methods such as case studies, grounded theory and appreciative inquiry as methods that “*lend themselves to qualitative theory building and testing*” (p. 22). These approaches seek to understand the lived experience through capturing rich contextual data and gaining a greater understanding of the spiritual human being.

Driver argues that the study of spirituality is concerned with exploring the process of meaning making and that legitimacy can only be accorded if the personal experience is captured through constructivist approaches distinguishing existential meaning making. Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) suggest interpretive and introspective methodologies promote a non-instrumental perspective of spirituality. However, as seen in chapter 2, currently the focus within the literature is towards being able to operationalize variables in order to test theories and provide greater credibility for the study of spirituality and leadership (Fry *et al.* 2005).

Taking into consideration the literature, a qualitative methodology will be used for this study exploring spirituality beyond the technical, instrumental imperative. This research aims to explore the effects of the leaders’ spirituality on the organisation, by establishing the dissimilarities and similarities in perceptions of leaders and followers.

### **3.3 Initial Research Concepts**

A review of spirituality and leadership literature draws attention to three initial concepts. These were ‘relational authenticity’ between leaders and followers, ‘Instrumental spirituality’ and ‘power and control’. Given the lack of follower perspective and the associated assumption that positive outcomes result from the leader’s spirituality, for both followers and the organisation, the three main concepts were drawn from the literature to guide the

interview questions. Discussed below are the summaries and how they relate to the central themes of the literature review.

### ***3.31 Leaders and followers.***

The literature on leadership and spirituality focuses towards the spiritual leader providing vision, hope and faith, and altruistic love to satisfy follower needs for spiritual survival of calling and membership. Fry (2003) integrates motivational theory by recognising the potential for intrinsic motivation to be connected to an individual's sense of meaning in their work. Through a shared vision with shared values it is anticipated that positive outcomes result. Spiritual Leadership Theory is embedded within a positive approach to leadership. Authenticity is central to a positive approach to leadership theories. Relational authenticity relates to perceptions of authenticity perceived by both leaders and followers. Relational authenticity is described as "*involving valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in one's close relationships.....and the development of mutual intimacy and trust*" (Goldman and Bernis, 2002, p. 19). High levels of unconditional trust between leaders and followers are suggested as an outcome of creating higher levels of follower confidence in their values (Spitzmuller and Ilies, 2010). It is also suggested that higher levels of follower confidence in leader values, leads to higher levels of identification with followers. Spitzmuller and Ilies (2010) argue that the most critical followers "*are especially sensitive to inconsistencies in leader behaviours*" (p.308) and that they will be more influenced by the transformational properties of a leader who is authentic in their actions. Currently the literature fails to consider more fully the follower perspective. For this research, leaders and followers were asked to share their perceptions of the benefits and disadvantages of the leader's values and qualities as a means to distinguish differing value systems and the influence of this on their relationships with one another.

### ***3.32 Power and Control***

The leadership and spirituality literature is mostly silent on discussions of power and control, however concerns are voiced (Lips-Wiersma *et al.* 2009; Tourish and Pinnington, 2002). Whilst the literature doesn't directly discuss power, it does indirectly consider power through a structural influence within the organisation thereby indirectly influencing the relationship between leaders and followers. Frye *et al.* 2005) discuss the influence of dominant ideologies

and encourage followers to engage in discourse that disrupts the dominant ideology by questioning meanings that might inadvertently support hegemonic systems. They suggest this can be achieved through “*challenging the dominant voice and its articulation of constructed organisational knowledge and values*” (p.252). There are concerns of the charismatic leadership influence (Tourish and Pinnington, 2002) and the effects of quelling dissent of followers through managing emotions, feelings and meanings.

In this research, organisational participants were asked what the benefits and disadvantages of their working relationships were and also the advantages and disadvantages in being able to express their feelings within the organisation. It was felt these questions were relevant given the close proximity between leaders and followers and in light of the very flat structured organisational structure. These questions were asked to explore possible hegemonic systems acting to inadvertently suppress follower voice. Participants were also asked what the advantages and disadvantages of personal identification with the organisation were. Tourish and Pinnington (2002) liken personal identification to corporate cultism and given the messianic undertones of managerial leadership this question seemed relevant.

### **3.33 Instrumental Spirituality**

A strong focus within the literature is the technical imperative which focuses on those areas that have greater influence on increasing organisational performance and profitability as opposed to a focus that is from an existentialist perspective and that may not necessary result in an improvement in the bottom line. Such a focus has directed researchers towards understanding the peripheral aspects of the effects of spirituality, such as Marques, Dhiman and King’s (2005) attempt to distinguish what conditions are necessary for a spiritual workplace through assessing; internal factors, such as leadership and worker perspectives; external factors, such as environmental aspects, and integrated factors, being both environment and people factors. Providing a ‘how to do’ spiritual leadership as opposed to respecting the need to better understand the actual phenomena that is spirituality and what the effects are without attempting to replicate. Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) base their research on Jacques Ellul’s philosophical perspective of technique and “*according to Ellul, technique refers to the dominating technical processes that are created to serve a limited form of economic rationality*” (p.333). They posit that “*part of the workplace spirituality movement*

*views spirituality in the workplace as a technique to be used for instrumental, financial-centred ends rather than seeing spirituality as the central organizing principle in the workplace” (p334). Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) focus towards authentic spirituality and having organisations move to a higher state of consciousness through questioning “accepted models of economic growth” (p.342) and thinking more holistically “making the world a better place and not just one’s workplace a better place to work, and definitely not just soothing workers’ psyches” (p.342).*

Given the difficulty to distinguish between authentic spirituality and superficial (instrumental) spirituality, in this research, questions were asked to both follower and leader participants to determine their perspectives as to how they perceived spirituality to be integrated within the organisation and any possible organisational influence as to the integration of spirituality within the organisation. Firstly, participants were asked what beneficial and potential negative outcomes they felt resulted from the integration of spirituality within the organisation. They were also asked whether they perceived the integration of spirituality within the organisation in the first instance. These questions were asked to gain an understanding as to if participants felt any undue influence through an integration of leaders spirituality.

### **3.4 ‘Emic’ Subjectivity**

‘Emic’ refers to the insider perspective in providing an insider’s point of view to the research and subjectivity relates to the socially constructed nature of the insider perspective and lived experience. Such positioning can provide for greater insights to be gained, but also introduces greater subjectivity when interpreting data and observations. *“Subjective assumptions, however, argue that humans construct understandings of reality through their perceptual and human interpretation” (Rossman and Rallis, 2003)* as social processes are created through human interpretation. One means of providing reliability and validity for such an approach to research is to disclose any possible bias.

In order to provide perspective to the reader, in the section I make reference to my role as researcher which has led to the assumptions underpinning my research.

Assumptions influence research about the social world. The interpretive paradigm tries to capture and understand the social world as it is from the perspective of the individual experience using mainly a humanistic approach to gain the deeper insights that can only be generated through the lived experience (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). The concept of spirituality is highly subjective and therefore lends itself to the interpretive paradigm. In sharing my own assumptions it is hoped that the reader is able to position this research accordingly.

This research was conducted within the research organisation four months after my commencement as an employee. Having been somewhat sceptical of effects of working for a profit alone, and previously having worked for not for profits, made I had some hesitations about my new organisation. However, my initial perceptions of the research organisation were positive and word of mouth that the organisation was perceived as being different, that the leaders had identified they drew on spirituality and that the organisation was known for being especially sensitive to its employees made this an interesting research site. I felt a personal connection to the organisation from the onset, and went into the organisation focussed on conducting research within the area of spirituality, having completed previous studies in this area. During the course of the data gathering it was difficult not to participate in the sense making during interviews with participants, however, I did specifically attempt to 'wear my researcher hat' and focus on the participant experience rather than internalising my own feelings relative to the participant experience. Having a prior connection to the research participants assisted with them being able to feel open and honest in their perceptions however, this closeness meant that I was especially sensitive to their feelings and sometimes felt overwhelmed by their stories. During the data gathering process, I became aware of the influence of my own personal preference towards optimism in at times wanting to hear what I wanted to hear, although the data analysis process ensured that this was not the case in interpreting and making sense of the data.

Acknowledging my own ideology has allowed me to accept and recognise the influence this has had on my choice of research perspective. A critical approach to this research has provided a few personal dilemmas. Firstly, it had made me concerned that I would be branded an 'outsider', by wanting to explore discussions of conflict, tension and power, strangely silent within the organisation at that time. Secondly, in order to remain feeling as an 'insider' somehow connected, I had difficulty 'looking awry' (Western, 2008, p. 18) at the

research. This initially prevented me from analysing the data in terms of structural power relations and the exercise of power more deeply. While these may have limited the objectivity of the analysis Mewtcalfe (1996) suggests that “*Any researcher is expected to be biased, so the only way to stop his or her bias from becoming fact is to expose it to the scientific community*” (p. 15).

There were also advantages to having an ‘emic’ position. One of these was being able to put context more easily around what research participants were communicating and thereby more easily determine relationships between variables. A second advantage was in gaining the trust more fluidly of co-workers to have them then share more openly and confidently their perceptions. This did however prove difficult at times, with co-workers looking for legitimacy for their opinions which sometimes differed from mine and in which I had to manage through times of internal dissonance.

During the data analysis process I was faced with many challenges. The first was the difficulty I had separating my ‘researcher hat’ with my ‘follower hat’. I felt a connection to the organisation as a follower and could provide context to participant comments having also experienced the ‘lived experience’. I attempted to focus on providing context that was relative to the participant experience, so as to not introduce my own personal experiences and instead focussing on more contextual elements. Secondly, a dramatic re-engineering of the organisation during the data analysis process meant difficulty in sometimes keeping focussed on the data as opposed to considering the changing face of the organisation. The organisational re-engineering, in so many ways changed the perceptions and beliefs held by followers which I was a party to, yet had to remain outside the scope of the research. The data was collected prior to the organisational re-engineering and the decision not to include the changing perceptions of leaders and followers was due to not having ethical approval to have collected such data as they fell outside of the initial research focus. It proved very challenging in trying to ignore the effects of the change and I struggled with focussing on the data. This also resulted in re-analysing the data over five times and then being so close to the data that I struggled in interpreting and making connections of the data. I chose to have a break from the data and the research in order to approach the data from afresh which did prove successful.

### 3.5 Interview Approach

A total of 29 in-depth interviews were conducted, eight interviews with leadership participants and 21 interviews with follower participants. Both leader and follower participants were asked the same questions to determine the similarities and dissimilarities as to the effects of the leader's spirituality on the organisation. Rich data providing interpretations of leader and follower meaning making were required, therefore semi-structured interviews were chosen that allowed for exploration of meaning (Driver, 2008). Spirituality is considered a highly subjective and personal phenomena, therefore interaction between researcher and participant, when discussing spirituality, is necessary to get beneath the superficial level of response (Milliman and Ferguson, 2008). Interviews provide rich descriptions which can “*yield both descriptive and exploratory data and is also appropriate where little is known in the field*” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p. 120; Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran, 2001).

The study sample of 29 participants was chosen through a purposive sampling technique (Marshall, 1996). The sample represented followers and leaders within the organisation. Follower participants were selected from within the areas of operations, marketing, accounts, franchising and information technology (IT). Similarly, leadership participants were selected from within the areas of marketing, operations, franchising, and finance/IT. Two leadership participants were selected from the director level. Unfortunately there were no females at the leadership level.

**Table 3.1: Sample Selection Criteria**

Category	Participant No.	Female	Male	Tenure >3yrs	Tenure <3yrs
<b>Leaders</b>	8	-	8	2	6
<b>Followers</b>	21	9	12	10	11

An interview protocol was designed to capture the effects of the leaders' spirituality. This focused specifically on relational authenticity, power dynamics and organisational practices (appendix A). Information on the research was displayed within the research organisation through an internal intranet, which provided participants with the opportunity to participate.

Additionally participants were personally approached by the researcher who provided more detail of the research, the Human Ethics Committee approval sheet (see appendix B) and the organisational consent sheet. A date and location for conducting the interview was established with each participant at this time. Participants were given the interview protocol a week before conducting the interview, to allow them a period of reflection to engage with the material (Reave, 2005). This provided an opportunity for participants to explore their own meaning making process and to consider how their leaders' spirituality affects them through the organisational structure and work practices. Research participants were asked to complete a signed consent form (see appendix C).

### **3.6 Interview Process**

Interviews were initially conducted between the 11 August 2008 to 29 August 2008, and further interviews were conducted in June 2009. Interviews were scheduled to allow for a period of reflection by the researcher before, between and after interviews. This provided the opportunity for me to disengage from work duties and to more fully engage in the researcher role (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Justification for such an approach was realised after having to rush to an interview without being totally focussed and feeling unable to fully engage with the interview process. As a result I had less focus for the first 15 minutes of the interview with the possibility that rich data from the participant responses were not more fully explored. A second interview was organised and conducted in June 2009.

The interview protocol was pre-tested which resulted in queries highlighting confusion of what was meant by leaders' spirituality. After much thought it was decided that to more specifically define this would prevent participants engaging in sense making of what the effect of the leaders' spirituality had on the organisation. Instead it was decided to provide support to participants by communicating prior to interviewing that their perspective of how this manifests may be described in more concrete terms or more enlightened terms, but of importance was their unique interpretation of how they understood the effects of leaders' spirituality. The interview protocol therefore was able to provide the link between the concrete elements and the more spiritual elements. The one week period of reflection allowed participants to engage with the interview protocol, make notes within the interview protocol, and engage in conversation with others about spirituality, and in one case to seek greater clarity through Wikipedia in order to be provided a context to the research questions.

Given the level of inquiry by participants the sequencing and composition of questions during interviews were rearranged so as to filter responses that were 'text book' or more programmed, to prevent participants providing responses they thought were aligned to what the research sought. A relaxed conversational approach during the interviews focused towards the research questions but also allowed for underlying perspectives to be communicated more honestly and openly. Interviews ranged in length from 58 to 90 minutes. The majority of interviews were conducted in an environment away from the participant's working station. This proved beneficial, as it allowed participant's to have 'thinking space' away from their normal work commitments. At the commencement of interviews the researcher read out the definitions of leadership, followers, workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership. This allowed participants to put the research questions into context. Participants were also provided with consent sheets to read and sign, and were asked permission to audio record the interviews. At the conclusion of the interview participants were offered a copy of the interview transcript, but all participants refused the offer. I did not question this decision by participants based on the fact that they were all especially open and trusting during their interviews and may not have felt that need to distrust my interpretation and analysis of their perspectives.

The interview process at times proved challenging, particularly given the 'emic' status of the researcher. This resulted in intimate knowledge gained of the interplay between organisational members and in some instances this contradicted personal meanings and opinions held by the researcher. The ability to identify as researcher and make salient other identities helped me to overcome this challenge. Participants were especially open and trusting during the exchange and feelings of connection to participants and the organisation were felt after the interviews were completed. One participant commented that they "*would really like to talk more about this again*" demonstrating an exploration of their own meaning making process.

### **3.7 Analysis of Interviews**

The analysis approach was guided by Coffey and Atkinson (1996) approach to linking concepts and data using coding and data categories and rather than reducing data, a focus towards "*expanding, transforming and reconceptualising data*" (p.29) was taken.

The interviews were digitally audio recorded and the audio recordings were then provided to external transcribers' under a condition of confidentiality to ensure that the Human Ethic Committee requirements were met and that the confidentiality of research subjects and the research organisation was protected. The transcriptions were 20-25 pages for each interview.

The transcripts were then re-read as a means of checking for any areas that weren't aligned with the audio recordings and to provide a refresher as to the content. There were a few issues with misspellings and uncertainty with various accents, possibly due to the quality of the recording received, however all interviews were successfully transcribed. The transcribing occurred over a three month period. This proved to be most beneficial in that the temporal influence provided for greater consideration from a 'emic' positioning within the organisation.

To prepare for data analysis, all the transcriptions were re-read. The interview protocol formed the direction for the research with interviews conducted, data transcribed and then analysed using QSR International - NVivo8. NVivo8 is a software tool to assist making sense of unstructured data. It assists to classify, sort and arrange information, allowing the researcher to analyse materials, identify themes and develop meaningful conclusions.

Using NVivo8, free nodes were developed in an attempt to categorise data from each question into leader perceptions and follower perceptions. Further hierarchical nodes were developed in which to further categorise data into positive and negative outcomes. From here, tree nodes were developed and assigned to meanings and assumptions derived from the transcripts. Once all interview transcripts had been coded thematically, themes emerged. At this point all transcripts were then re-read in order to confirm the themes. On analysis of the themes it became more apparent that further sub-themes appeared throughout all the themes. These were developed as categories and the data from each theme was then categorised further according to these.

### **3.8 *Holistic Approach to the data analysis***

During the data analysis process it became evident that the data collected from each interview question often shared components from each of the initial research concepts. For example,

interview questions related to the concept of power and control might bring in data relating to more technical aspects from the concept of 'spiritual integration'. Whilst participants attempted to answer specific interview questions their responses introduced meanings relative to the bigger research question. Rather than attempt to match direct responses to each interview question, the data analysis attempted to also consider the data more holistically. Whilst the initial literature review and subsequent concepts helped to direct the main research question, the data was not strictly analysed based on the three further research questions but in consideration of the main research question due to the need to focus more specifically on differences in perceptions between leaders and followers as to the effects of the leaders spirituality. The LST literature to date did not fully explain what I found and hence the result findings are not exclusively organised around the three initial concepts but instead became data driven and organised around the central themes and categories that emerged from the data itself taking a holistic approach to the data analysis process. Subthemes emerged from the data which was categorised into the four categories within each central theme.

### **3.9 *Ethical Considerations***

Ethical considerations were integral to this qualitative inquiry. Human Ethics Committee (HEC) approval was received on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 (Appendix B). Ethics consent for the data collection was approved after particular scrutiny of the methodology approach. All measures were taken to ensure confidentiality of individuals was protected including disguising identifying data but not altering meaning-in-context. All measures were undertaken to ensure data was not able to be accessed by anyone other than the researcher. This required electronic password protection of data and storage of printed material in a locked filing cabinet. Informed consent forms were signed by all research participants.

As a staff member within the research organisation consideration to my own personal ethics and how to apply these to the research and data process was necessary. Rossman and Rallis (2005) position the researcher as learner, in understanding how one's personal epistemology influences the construction of knowledge. This required having to re-consider the very relationships I held within the work environment and did create feelings of isolation which were sometimes difficult to manage, as were the feelings associated with research participant emotions. It was difficult not to want to provide justifications for follower and leader behaviours to each in trying to help facilitate greater understanding, however, this was

avoided, although my ability to provide greater support to staff through greater understanding did result in improved relationships, be them detached for the period of the research process. My role as Human Resources Advisor did provide challenges in that I was provided insider information as to the personal and organisational dynamics however, was also required to main a balance between helping staff and not being involved above what was legitimately expected in the role. As there was a period of time between data collection and data analysis and also in the length of my employment the opportunity to create deeper meanings in the relationships I held did hinder the analysis of results to a degree, however focussing on the data at the time and attempting on that period did help to narrow the scope in which the interpretations were made.

## CHAPTER 4

### Findings

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this research is to establish the perceptions of both leaders and followers as to the effects of the leader's spirituality on the organisation in order to compare perceptions. In summary, the literature review appeared overly concerned by the leader's perspective, assumed positive outcomes for followers and work that had been conducted from a more critical perspective was anecdotal, conceptual and lacking empirical testing. This research aims to address those shortcomings by focusing on both follower and leader perspectives. It also considers both positive and negative outcomes of the leaders' spirituality utilising a case study approach capturing empirical qualitative data.

#### **4.2 Results**

The research findings in this chapter are structured around 4 key categories that emerged from the analysis. These key categories are:

- 1. Culture of Freedom.**
- 2. Navigation through ambiguity.**
- 3. Stimulating whole brain thinking.**
- 4. Connection to a higher purpose.**

Three themes described below emerged across all 4 categories to describe these positive and negative outcomes for leaders and followers. These 3 themes are defined as:

- 1. Emotional Safety:** *“Feelings generated by the need to belong”.*
- 2. Value Alignment:** *“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on agreed values”.*
- 3. Blurred Boundaries:** *“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another”.*

Spirituality is considered a holistic concept that is argued to “*focus on connections, and interdependencies, suggesting a full understanding of phenomena requires systemic exploration*” (Campbell, 2007, p.138). Driscoll and Wiebe (2007) suggest that the study of spirituality from a non-instrumental perspective requires the use of “*interpretive, empathetic and introspective methods such as phenomenology, hermeneutics and mindful inquiry*” (p.343) in order to explore the lived experience. Given that any data analysis seeks to establish themes, in order to retain the wholeness. Also in consideration as to the holistic aspects that define spirituality, a summary overview for each leader and perspective in terms of each category is provided. The summary overview will provide the connection between subthemes and themes. The conclusion of the results section will connect each theme to the central category in an attempt to retain the wholeness.

### ***4.2.1 Culture of Freedom***

Leaders and followers both described the ‘Culture of Freedom’ they experienced within the organisation. This section will firstly, present the evidence as to the central category of ‘Culture of Freedom’. Then the key themes of ‘Emotional Safety’, Value Alignment’ and ‘Blurred Boundaries’ are discussed relative to the further subthemes.

#### **4.2.1.1 Leader and Follower interpretations.**

Leaders within the organisation described a culture of freedom which was demonstrated through leaders intentionally making the choice to avoid articulating how followers were expected to interact with the organisation. Both leaders and followers felt a culture of freedom was demonstrated through their ability to voice opinions and take a position in business decisions:

#### **Leader Quotes:**

**People find their own relationship to it** [the organisation], which is meaningful and therefore it has a special place in their hearts, but we haven’t told them what it is and there is many a time – and this is actually an important point – there is many a time we have had to say, or I have had to say, that’s your personal trip and why I respect it, why do you want to bring this into the business mix”, it is not helpful for us to do so because we want to not define who – **not define to say who we are**, we want people to form their own opinions of who we are and what we are all about through our actions.

Some people will find that our values, our defined values and our mission and our vision are a doorway to getting in contact with the spirituality of the organisation. Others don’t need that; therefore those aren’t forced on people. **They are allowed to manifest** however they must not become overwhelming or the only thing or too defining. It’s just another way that people can connect with the true essence of the company, but they don’t have – it’s just one doorway.

So here it is about position taking. It is about embracing the vision and adding value in lots and lots of different levels. **I think position taking is the start of it.** It’s the hub.

### **Follower Quotes:**

Well if the leaders didn't respect the followers, then we wouldn't feel as though we could, you know **take time off for certain things** and at lunchtimes go off and take a bit longer. They sort of respect that you will get your job done and that it is up to you to sort of have the work life balance and that is fine to do that.

Here everyone is just like right, **tell us off the top of your head** what do you think about that?

There were 3 themes which emerged, from the 4 central categories. Interpretations of the three themes differed between leaders and followers. Having analysed the differing interpretations a number of subthemes were further identified. These differing interpretations will be discussed in the following section.

#### 4.2.1.1.1 Emotional Safety

**Table 4.1: Emotional Safety (Culture of Freedom)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Emotional Safety:  <i>“Feelings generated by the need to belong”</i>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b> A culture of trust and respect. Space for personal growth. Strong connections.</p> <p><b><u>Negative</u></b> Lack of direction</p>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b> Respect. Flexibility. Self-worth.</p> <p><b><u>Negative</u></b> Little direction and guidance. Earning respect</p>

#### **Followers’ perspective – Respect and Flexibility:**

Followers described feeling respected by leaders. Respect was demonstrated by leaders in providing ownership and flexibility to followers over how they worked. However, followers also described having to earn respect and as not always being respected as a person but rather being respected based on the position.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

It comes back to **respect**. Everyone’s ideas and you know thoughts on different things are respected and everyone’s opinion is taken into account. People are allowed to say what they think and people do respect that.

You have to earn your stripes and prove yourself which can sometimes be a negative thing especially when you expect that level of trust and **respect** as a given.

I think that there is **respect** for people that do their jobs, and there’s respect that people know what they are doing and they’re allowed to do it. Sometimes it’s not quite a **respect** for the actual person maybe. It’s hard to explain.

#### **Followers’ perspective – Self-Worth:**

Followers described feelings of self-worth that resulted from being allowed to be involved in discussion with leaders in regards to business direction and also in being able to express their voice through participation.

### **Follower Quotes:**

I know that I create real value, I was in a meeting last week with \*\*\*\* and I felt a bit awkward as I felt outside my comfort zone, however at the end of the meeting I felt great, as I felt that I had some influence, even if I didn't have total ownership over the project, **I felt listened to.**

I feel the company listens to me, well at least that's how it feels to me. **It feels good** to feel part of everything.

### **Follower perspective – Little Direction and Guidance:**

Followers felt that at times there was little direction and guidance from leaders and as a result described their work performance as suffering leading to personal frustration.

### **Follower Quotes:**

At times things get a little loose and I end up **wasting time** trying to figure things out myself, when with more **direction** I would have moved on quicker.

It's like working constantly in chaos, with no-one leading it can be real **frustrating.**

### **Leaders' perspective – A culture of trust and respect:**

Leaders all described a culture of **trust and respect** where a reciprocal trust and respect relationship existed between leaders and followers. Leaders felt that they provided a safe environment in which both leaders and followers were able to connect.

### **Leader Quote:**

There is total and absolute **respect** for the individual which obviously when you respect an individual and you trust an individual, that again opens up the pathways for meaning to occur between the individual and the other individuals, it's a safe place.

### **Leaders' perspective – Spaces for personal growth:**

Leaders felt they created spaces for personal growth for themselves and followers and were also provided opportunities for personal growth by other leaders.

### **Leader Quote:**

It's unlike any company I have worked for before. I've always had opportunities for personal development, but here you need to make decisions without any policy guiding you, it takes a bit to get used to, but the rewards are **greater personal growth**. I try to ensure that I provide the same opportunities to my staff.

In summary, followers felt a sense of respect shown to them by leaders in being able to manage their own work and being provided flexibility in how they worked. However, followers also felt they were required to earn this respect, rather than it being a given. Leaders differed in this perspective, and instead felt that the strong culture of trust and respect was an integral component of the culture. Followers sometimes saw the need to earn trust as a negative aspect contradictory to organisational values and described positional respect as opposed to individual respect.

#### 4.2.1.1.2 Value Alignment

**Table 4.2: Value Alignment (Culture of Freedom)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Value Alignment:  <i>“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on agreed values”.</i>	<b>Positive:</b> High Transparency. Strong relationships. Failing quickly is good.	<b>Positive:</b> Strong relationships  <b>Negative:</b> Abuse of goodwill. Lack of Authenticity. Silence. Rapid Change

#### **Followers’ perspective – Strong Relationships**

Followers were aligned in their values as to the strong relationships held with leaders. Followers generated feelings of belonging with strong relationships.

#### **Follower Quote:**

I have a good relationship with my manager, and there is trust and respect, well I believe there is anyway. It makes coming to work worthwhile when you can relate to other workers and also the senior leaders, as feel you somehow belong.

#### **Follower perspective – Abuse of goodwill**

Followers were aligned with leaders in describing feelings of freedom associated with work flexibility, resulting from the leaders’ spirituality. However, some followers felt their goodwill was abused and they were taken advantage of by leaders due to their level of organisational commitment and the importance they themselves placed in their work. Followers described being available to help others without any expectation of anything in return, however, paradoxically, did also query why they expected nothing in return.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

We are a team, so we do all need to just work together to get things done, however I sometimes feel my goodwill is being **abused** when I see senior managers too busy to help. It feels as if it’s the same people having to clean up the company’s mess every time.

And in my work actually I always end up doing lots of things that probably aren't my responsibility but I don't mind **helping**, it's what we do here.

### **Follower perspective – Lack of Authenticity**

Leaders and followers were aligned in valuing a sense of belonging and in the showing of gratitude, however followers queried the authenticity of leader behaviours through replacing extrinsic rewards with feelings of belonging, and through feelings of a façade of niceness and silence by leaders which followers described as creating scepticism.

### **Follower Quotes:**

The inspirational quotes, gifts and all that stuff are all lovely and are all handy dandy and all that stuff, that's great, that's part of the culture of what the leadership wants to portray but I do sometimes wonder whether its **authentic**, whether it's a bit too la de da de. I'm more of the philosophy of, although I don't mind what they are doing, I think it's quite swanky, but I would rather get passed things like bonuses and rewarded in that sense.

You know, silence isn't always good. Because here there could be times silence gives the perception of **secrecy** and hiding things. In my time here, when there are perhaps losses or errors or issues, it can be more of a **secretive** sort of thing.

Sometimes it just doesn't feel right here, there is so much **niceness**, that it doesn't feel real. Like people are hiding their real thoughts in fear of not being liked by the owners.

### **Follower perspective - Silence**

Leaders and followers were aligned in their values in regards to feeling provided the opportunity to take a position within the business, in providing transparency for open debate. However some follower participants differed from leaders in that they felt they couldn't always be as open as they would like in their opinions regarding business decisions, especially if these contradicted more senior leaders. Followers also felt the more dominating personalities took lead within areas of debate with the less dominating personalities remaining silent.

### **Follower Quotes:**

The important thing in my mind is that everyone has the **opportunity to say something** and they should say something. The collective decision then is a different scenario. To me there are decision points and discussion points and then there's going down the right path. The right path will be right over time and it might be the wrong one now but it will be the right one later on. But I'm comfortable as long as we've had the opportunity, I would get frustrated if someone didn't say something.

New employees can perhaps struggle. A lot of new staff take a while to feel comfortable putting positions forward because it takes a **bit of guts to put yourself out there** and say "Hey I'm going to do this initiative and move it forward and then know your ideas can get shot down.

I think some people feel more **confident taking a position**. I've seen people talk very openly in meetings but in a kind of derogatory way, which I thought was inappropriate.

I think on a basic level you are encouraged to have an opinion then that makes you feel more valuable because you are encouraged to have an opinion and get asked about it. So straight off the bat you feel more valuable but then you've got to have enough **strength of character** to be able to put your opinion out there and then take everything that comes with it.

### **Followers' perspective: Rapid Change**

Followers and leaders both valued innovation however; followers experienced the rapid changes as often wasteful attempts associated with short-term objectives.

### **Follower Quote:**

**We move forward so fast**, a new buzz word, a new idea and then – yep, there has been lots of little, probably quite big projects that probably quite costly ones from a financial point of view, and for that outlay, not quite sure that they have probably seen all the results that they should have, or we all have understood the true impact of that.

### **Leaders' perspective – High Transparency**

Leaders felt that they provided transparency in their actions for followers to observe through the use of an intranet system, providing access to open discussion through various online conferences.

### **Leader Quote:**

I think the use of the **intranet** is a prime example whereby those that might feel threatened by others adding, critiquing I suppose or adding value to initial proposal position will struggle with that. So you need to be comfortable with the self-evaluation or self-assessment or opening yourself up more than you would do in other businesses to feedback and the opportunity to improve for the greater, for the benefit of the greater good of the business.

### **Leaders' perspective – Strong Relationships**

Leaders and followers were both aligned in their values in that strong relationships existed between leaders and followers. Leaders associated relationships with levels of trust and respect.

### **Leader Quote:**

I am close to my staff; we have strong relationships and have strong trust and respect for one another.

### **Leader perspective: Failing quickly**

Leaders recognised the need to fail quickly and move on with new business ideas, when one opportunity taken did not produce the desired outcomes. Leaders described the strong relationships they held with followers as providing the mechanism with which they are able to be so reactive to opportunities.

### **Leader Quote:**

One of the things that I really enjoy, is the ability to **respond** to market opportunities really quickly, we don't have the bureaucracy other businesses have, stopping our people from making things happen.

In summary, followers and leaders were in alignment with their values in regards to the strong relationships they held with one another, in recognising the need for innovation and change, however, they did differ in some of their interpretations. Leaders described failing quickly as being good, whilst followers felt the rapid change was frustrating. Followers described feelings of scepticism at leaders' intentions, querying the authenticity of leaders, feeling their goodwill at times was taken advantage of and abused and that leaders sometimes appeared unreal. Leaders encouraged followers to take a position and felt they provided transparency, however defined the difference between involvement in business discussion points and business decision points, thus controlling the issues on which they did not desire

input. Followers felt valued through the encouragement of leaders to be involved in taking a position and having an opinion however were aware of the need for a strong strength of character to take the feedback given on ones ideas and opinions. Followers felt the more dominating personalities often had their positions and opinions taken into consideration over others that felt intimidated and less comfortable with expressing a position in a shared forum therefore would often remain silent.

### 4.2.1.1.3 Blurred Boundaries

**Table 4.3: Blurred Boundary (Culture of Freedom)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Blurred Boundaries: <i>“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another”.</i>	<b>Positive:</b> Closeness of relationships. Comfortable with ambiguity.	<b>Positive:</b> Strong connections.  <b>Negative:</b> Disengagement.

#### **Follower perspective – Strong Connections**

Followers also felt the strong connections between leaders and followers however, followers described having difficulty in differentiating between social boundaries, especially after social events.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

Ever since then I have been aware that just because there **isn’t a boundary** you still have to have a lot of respect for leadership, even if they are abit “matey, matey”. It still exists but it can be difficult figuring out where it is. Then it is complicated by the fact that in our first conference all the managers came along and they all got really pissed to the point that they were vomiting and stuff and like that and I’m like “well where do you put that boundary?”

#### **Follower perspective - Disengagement**

Some followers described feeling especially sensitive to leaders reprimanding of them in situations regarding performance issues or performance feedback discussions. Some followers described feeling especially sensitive to any constructive criticism. Followers described feeling hurt and as a result described disengaging by creating distance in their relationships.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

The feedback I got in my last annual performance review as not constructive feedback, it was just negative. As a result I **stopped doing the extra’s** I would have normally done, especially for people that want last minute stuff done.

I felt really hurt when I was spoken to about my behaviour in an out of work situation. I didn’t feel it was anyone’s business to criticise me when it is okay for leaders to engage in the same behaviours. This hurt affected me for 2 years and **I created distance** from senior leaders and just focussed on my work.

### Leader perspective – Closeness of relationships

Both leaders and followers described the close relationships they had among their respective groups and at an intergroup level. However leaders described being able to make the differentiation between social boundaries in a social sense a lot easier than followers.

### Leader Quotes:

I am very discreet, I am very upfront and I don't divulge information, even if I am **personal friends** with some of the other leaders here. There are some things that I need to keep close to my chest because it's of a sensitive nature. I know where that defined line is in terms of what to say and what not to say regardless of the closeness I have with other leaders and other staff here.

I guess one thing that I have always been quite proud of is the fact that I can tune in when I want to tune in and there is a line in the sand between work and friendship. I am always very cautious when I employ a friend in a business because it has let me down. I have done it once before in the past and they let me down and I always said to myself that I wouldn't do it. But there are certain friends that I would consider doing it because our **relationship is stronger than the sum of all parts**.

You need to come back into the office and you've got to settle into "You're the boss and I'm not". So it's kind of an interesting one just **to figure out where you personally want to put that boundary**. I think everyone has put it in a different place too, so as a new person it's quite difficult to navigate through.

### Leader perspective – Comfortable with ambiguity

Leaders described struggling with having to reprimand followers because of the closeness they felt in their relationships and often chose alternative approaches to disciplinary measures.

### Leader Quotes:

Sometimes it can be difficult putting on your **boss hat** and saying "pull up your socks, you are not working hard enough, you are not doing the job right". You know having to **crack the whip** and get people to jump when at the same time you have built up a relationship with them that is that of a friend and a work colleague. And so yes, certainly disciplining staff when they are also your mates is a

difficult thing to do. It takes a bit of effort and deft management style to get that distinction in balance. **Having a chat** is sometimes all that is needed, especially if you have that respect in the relationship.

In summary, leaders and followers both described close relationships and strong connections. Leaders felt comfortable in differentiating social boundary's whilst followers had greater difficulty. Followers felt a double standard existed whereby it was more acceptable that leaders could engage in certain behaviours but yet followers couldn't, or if they did, were reprimanded for it. Followers described feeling hurt and were especially sensitive to feedback from leaders which could influence followers to disengage themselves from the relationships they held with leaders and also influenced follower's levels of self-esteem. Leaders described the struggles in managing performance and disciplinary issues given the close relationships they held with followers.

#### *4.2.2 Navigation through Ambiguity*

Leaders and followers both described the ambiguity they experienced in the organisation and the necessary navigation through this perceived ambiguity. This section will firstly, present the similarities and differences in interpretation between leaders and followers as to the key central category of 'Navigation through ambiguity'. Secondly, data is categorised into three themes of 'Emotional Safety, Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries'. Further sub-themes from the transcripts emerged describing the effects of these differences between leader and follower perceptions.

##### **4.4.2.1 Leader and Follower interpretations**

Leaders and followers described entrepreneurial creative thinking that existed within the organisation and which influenced the organisational culture. Leaders described as a consequence of this approach, many mainstream business practices were not adopted by the organisation. Instead leaders described being able to choose the path less conventional rather than following other businesses and following current business trends. Followers described the high levels of creativity and passion within the organisation which they felt resulted from the leaders influence on the organisations culture through the leader's levels of energy and passion.

##### **Leader Quotes:**

There is a certain historical legacy in the business, which comes from small beginnings. These are things that seem to be perpetuated by the various people that move through the organisation, so you've got an attitude of achievement on limited resources. We have a view of the world that is driven by previous employees who had lack of breadth of in the management experience and quite a **culture of testing boundaries**.

It has got an **entrepreneurial spirit** and it's a real can do attitude. Quite different to your typical corporate approach which is very much more process driven rather than results driven and that's something I really enjoy being a part of and contributing to.

The other side of an **entrepreneurial approach is that it is a high risk approach**. If you're managing on that basis outside of very strict policy guidelines then you are inherently taking on more risk but the rewards are greater. I think you get greater productivity out of the team that works with you and by having that investment approach rather than treating people as cogs in a machine which you get with a corporate approach, because people would just tend to put in what they expect to get out.

### **Follower Quotes:**

I have worked here for many years and there are many stories to share that support our **entrepreneurial values**, you just need to look at all the crazy product ideas from the early days, and we are still encouraged to share our ideas today.

There is a lot of passion, there seems to be – the management has a lot of passion for the product and for the company, which I have done a lot of temping and stuff and you don't always see that. Like it's a lot harder to get excited about electricity, than it is to get about \*\*\*\*\* and stuff. That seems quite instilled in everyone that they are quite **passionate about what they do**.

There's a lot of positive energy and there is a lot of making things happen. There have been some crazy things in light of that whole opportunity in a crisis belief. I think everyone here **is actually really creative**.

There were 3 themes which emerged, from the 4 central categories. Interpretations of the three themes differed between leaders and followers. Having analysed the differing interpretations a number of subthemes were further identified. These differing interpretations will be discussed in the following section.

#### 4.2.2.1.1 Emotional Safety

**Table 4.4: Emotional Safety (Navigation through Ambiguity)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Emotional Safety:  <i>“Feelings generated by the need to belong”</i>	<b>Positive:</b> Space for personal growth. Vulnerability Humour and Fun	<b>Positive:</b> Humour and Fun  <b>Negative:</b> Confusion Lack of role clarity. Lack of direction.

#### **Follower perspective – Humour and Fun**

Followers described working in a fun environment and many stories betrayed this fun.

#### **Follower Quote:**

I remember once the fire alarm sounded and everyone headed to the muster station. The senior managers decided to take the opportunity to grab a make shift piece of wood and find a tennis ball to have a game of cricket, whilst we all awaited the fire service to arrive.

#### **Followers’ perspective – Lack of role clarity and direction leading to confusion**

Followers described a level of confusion that resulted from a lack of policy and from a lack of role clarity. They also felt there was very little direction at times.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

While people all have their core work they also **do lots of other things** within their jobs that make it **confusing** when you need to talk to someone about something you need to get done in your role.

I don’t actually know what half the people here do, their job titles change depending on how they feel and because **no one really cares about job titles** you never get your head around what people actually do.

#### **Leaders’ perspective – Space for personal growth**

Leaders described the lack of policy and control over process as creating opportunities for personal growth through allowing both leaders and followers to control the process.

### **Leader Quotes:**

People who become very policy focussed, very bureaucratic focussed become very you do this; I'll do this and always looking to line it up. That's where I find the biggest conflict with the entrepreneurial approach is that the big thing about it is in terms of the company culture is just, be very generous in your giving without the expectation of anything coming back but in the knowledge that for the company to function it does give back. But that's a very natural thing rather than a **policy thing**.

### **Leaders' perspective - Vulnerability**

Leaders described the importance of vulnerability as a means of opening one's self up to personal growth.

### **Leader Quote:**

The more **vulnerable** we can be, the more connected we will be to whatever it is that we are relating to and so transparency is just an organisational word that actually to me means willingness to be vulnerable, which is a very powerful value or approach to relating and respect and trust go hand in hand.

### **Leaders' perspective – Humour and Fun**

Leaders described the importance of being able to laugh in the face of diversity and not take themselves or mistakes too seriously.

### **Leader Quote:**

At the end of the day, you just have to laugh; sometimes you even have to laugh at things that you might want to cry about.

We make \*\*\*\*\*, it's a fun product and we make our consumers happy, you can't help but get into the fun of it all. We have a laugh every day, in fact one of the first things I really noticed here when I started, was the amount of fun everyone appeared to be having. Obviously, its not the sort of fun that prevents you from doing your job, but the sort of fun that make the job enjoyable.

In summary, leaders described the importance of providing opportunities for personal growth through controlling the amount of policy and associated support structures. However, followers felt the lack of direction and lack of role clarity created confusion.

Leaders described the need for openness through being vulnerable as one means of achieving personal growth. Both leaders and followers agreed that the organisation was one of fun, given the product it produced and the fun that resulted. Leaders described the importance of a sense of humour and being able to laugh at one's self especially in challenging times.

#### 4.2.2.1.2 Value Alignment

Table 4.5: Value Alignment (Navigation through Ambiguity)

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
<p><b>Value Alignment:</b></p> <p><i>“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on agreed values”.</i></p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Entrepreneurism</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> Organisation opens to abuse through work flexibility.</p>	<p><b>Negative:</b> Resource allocation. Lowering Expectations. Organisational Authenticity.</p>

#### **Followers’ perspective – Resource Allocation and lowering Expectations.**

Followers and leaders both valued the need to be sustainable in the use of resources. However, followers and leaders differed in their interpretations and practices. Followers described having a long term focus relative to resource allocation. Leaders and followers both valued excellence however followers felt they were required to lower their expectations in order to manage feelings of disappointment created through leaders not agreeing to resource allocation needs.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

Yeah it’s quite difficult, I can see lots of things that I want to do here and without being too specific, it hasn’t had a lot done on it, **money spent on it** and it’s getting to a point where I think it’s affecting production and stuff and I can see better ways of doing it but it will cost.

Others realise what they are up against and so work around it, however I know they feel disappointed at having to do this and then they **lower their expectations** when it comes to other jobs that need doing. Perhaps not even bothering to put as much effort in the next project.

#### **Followers’ perspective – Organisational Authenticity**

Leaders and followers valued the ‘feel good’ feelings which were generated from involvement with charitable activities associated with the organisation; however they differed in their views with leaders believing involvement in charitable activities was by freewill and followers feeling more like involvement was forced upon them.

### **Follower Quotes:**

It feels totally like a **personal agenda**, we were all kind of involved and nobody was behind it, we were like oh god, it was rushed and nobody really wanted it, not from this side anyway, So it was an owner thing not a company thing”. I guess we get a good feel from involvement and this sort a helps to make up for the chaos.

I am a big volunteer out of work, so it’s okay to be part of helping our charitable arm of the business, although there is a feeling from the owners that we have **no choice** but to help even if we didn’t want to and even if it is outside of our actual work responsibilities. It does help to feeling more in tune with the company and it can be fun when others come in and help. We always have a laugh at the same time.

### **Leaders’ perspective – Entrepreneurism**

Leaders saw the consideration of resource allocation in the context of entrepreneurship, and felt this was an integral part of the organisations culture. They focussed towards values of entrepreneurship that encouraged a ‘number eight wire mentality’.

### **Leader Quote:**

No need to be wasteful, we have always tried to be thrifty, it stems back to the entrepreneurial roots that the owners instilled in the business.

### **Leaders perspective – Organisation open to abuse through work flexibility**

Leaders and followers both valued high trust and respect and both agreed of the possibility of abuse, given the type of high trust and respect environment. However both agreed to not abusing the flexibility provided. Leaders and followers did not describe breaching this trust however both did indicate the potential for abuse.

### **Leader Quotes:**

When I started working here the business was trading well but the team was taking advantage of the good that the business was offering them. Basically, taking the piss out of the business and coming in at 9.30am and leaving at 4pm, long lunches. It was just too fluffy and they got themselves into a rhythm

where they were **bigger than the business** and they weren't actually adding any constructive value because they just thought that the business would crumble without them being there.

So interestingly enough, birds of a feather flock together. When a group of troublemakers came into the business, I put pressure on so they knew the pressure was on and the business was changing direction, the expectations were getting higher, so they hung out together and socialised together, have lunch together. So it became a **negative self-fulfilling prophecy** for those people.

The fact is there is there is potential. In my experience it **does not get abused**. Because of the high trust there is high respect, so respect goes both ways between employees and the leaders. It does not get abused. So the potential is there, but I do not think it actually happens. Well, I am hoping not, I am thinking not.

In summary, leaders and followers both valued the need to be sustainable with the use of resources, in their feelings associated with charitable activities and the high trust and respect work environment. However, they differed in that leaders felt sustainability was governed by ideals of entrepreneurship whilst followers felt sustainability was achieved through adequate resource allocation. Followers lowered their expectations as a result of inadequate resource allocation and instead focussed towards positive aspects of their roles. Followers described concern at the organisational authenticity involving charitable activities and felt their goodwill was taken advantage of. Leaders emphasized the possibility of abuse of the work flexibility they provide to followers however; felt they had control over this.

### 4.2.2.1.3 Blurred Boundaries

**Table 4.6: Blurred Boundary (Navigation through Ambiguity)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Blurred Boundaries: <i>“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another”.</i>	<b>Positive</b> Higher expectations. Shared responsibilities.	<b>Positive</b> Close bonds among followers Collective culture. Sharing information.  <b>Negative</b> Perceived double standard

#### **Follower perspective – Close bonds among followers**

Followers described the strong bonds they felt with other followers as being due to a lack of support by leaders. They discussed with each other the lack of role clarity as creating a divide among leaders and followers but that provided for closer relationships with other followers whom supported each other and were able to express them to

#### **Follower Quotes:**

It can sometimes be quite tricky trying to work through the chaos and not know where you are heading, although I can always pop over to see \*\*\*\* and **have a chat**, she has been here for a while and always makes me laugh my frustrations away.

At times I feel as if I get no support at all, left totally alone, and whilst that can have its good points and can also be incredibly difficult. I work with some great people who have become **very important friends**. I just love \*\*\*\*, she is a good friend of mine, she taught me in a very basic simple way and me moving above her was never an issue.

#### **Follower perspective – Collective culture**

Followers were less focussed towards organisational objectives and more towards feelings of belonging within their work groups and within the organisation. They described a collective culture that existed among followers.

#### **Follower Quote:**

I’m not actually sure how I contribute to our team objectives, as these are not shared with us. It doesn’t worry me I have been doing similar work here for \*\*\* years and things are always changing so I don’t

mind just being left alone. I think we all feel like that in the \*\*\*\* team, we are a **solid team** and have many close friends that we have worked alongside for quite a while.

### **Followers' perspective – Sharing information**

Followers described through the close bonds with other followers able to obtain information that helped to provide the direction they required in their work and in terms of their connection to the organisation.

#### **Follower Quote:**

Because I haven't been here that long, there was so much that I didn't know and nothing at all was documented or written down. Everyone just holds all this amazing information in their heads. I started to get really worried that I wouldn't be able to work here, without more direction and that wasn't even forthcoming from my manager. I felt thrown in the deep end totally. Lucky, the team were just amazing and **shared with me all they knew**; needless to say I documented this as didn't want any other new person having to feel the way I did when I started, it's quite a roller coaster ride for new staff.

### **Follower perspective – Perceived double standard**

Followers sometimes described scepticism at a perceived double standard at supposedly sharing in the responsibility for decisions made however not necessary having their concerns or opinions considered.

#### **Follower Quote:**

It can feel like you are **being paid lip service** at times, or a token gesture to be involved yet sometimes you don't get a good feel that what you are saying is going to make any difference to the outcome.

### **Leader perspective – higher expectations**

Close relationships were described by leaders as contributing to higher expectations of followers and leaders expecting that followers were as committed to organisational objectives as themselves.

### **Leader Quote:**

The **expectations are very high** here and getting higher all the time, we punch above our weight and as a result everyone feels committed to the organisations vision and our goals.

### **Leader perspective – Shared responsibilities**

Leaders felt a shared responsibility with followers in achieving organisational objectives through providing opportunities for followers to involve themselves in business discussions.

### **Leader Quote:**

We are a team here that is how we function. Every one of **my team gets to have a say** in how we move forward.

In summary, followers felt a close bond among other followers and a collective culture which was created through feelings of follower ambiguity arising from a lack of direction and role clarity by leaders. Followers sought out support from other followers and shared information freely with other followers. Leader perceived strong relationships with followers and as a result leaders felt higher expectations and believed that both leaders and followers were committed to the same organisational goals. Followers were sceptical of having to share in organisational responsibilities when they were not always involved in the process or in having their concerns considered this resulted in followers feeling a perceived double standard existed. Followers questioned why they should be held responsible when leaders were the ultimate decision makers.

### 4.2.3 Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking

Leaders and followers both described the influence of the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI) in stimulating whole brain thinking. This section will firstly, explain the adoption of the instrument in the organisation and next I will present the similarities and differences in interpretation between leaders and followers as to the key central category of 'Stimulating whole brain thinking'. Secondly, the three themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' is explored and further sub-themes from the transcripts which emerged describing the effects of these differences between leader and follower perceptions is described.

#### 4.2.3.1 Leader and Follower interpretations

Both leaders and followers discussed the influence of the HBDI through the language they used to describe themselves and others. The HBDI is a tool the organisation chose in 2006 to assist in cultural transformation so that individuals could understand where they were heading and how they could play a part. The aim of the HBDI was to introduce 'Whole Brain thinking' through bringing everyone together as one and helping people to understand why everyone did what they did. It is a tool which is based on understanding the 4 quadrants of the brain and the thinking preferences of individuals in order to provide understanding and context of individual behaviour. Leaders controlled what organisational tools were allowed to be used within the organisation and controlled how they were to be used.

#### **Leader Quote:**

Organisational tools are not what spirituality is about, but they are helpful for some people to connect at a spiritual level, therefore they've **been allowed to unfold-been allowed to persist** as long as they were not too left field, were safe and straightforward. Empowering tools can act as a bridge to arrive at a place of equilibrium. The most powerful places do not need any of that, and simply effect change through insight, you know, beyond goals, beyond motivation and self-discipline.

**Follower Quote:**

It would be good to bring some more 'redness' into the factory and we know that the people who are, and the people who aren't. There is a lack of 'red' in the factory.

There were 3 themes which emerged, from the 4 central categories. Interpretations of the three themes differed between leaders and followers. Having analysed the differing interpretations a number of subthemes were further identified. These differing interpretations will be discussed in the following section.

#### 4.4.2.3.1.1 Emotional Safety

**Table 4.7: Emotional Safety (Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Emotional Safety: <i>“Feelings generated by the need to belong”</i>	<b>Positive</b> Self-reflection. Right people.	<b>Negative</b> Lack of role fit.

#### **Follower perspective – Lack of role fit**

As indicated above by leaders they described a mismatch of employees with roles after the HBDI was introduced. Followers described this mismatch within teams; however they used this to their advantage by partnering up their strengths, or combining their strengths,

#### **Follower Quotes:**

I am blue/green and \*\*\*\* is red/yellow and that **should balance out** but it means we have a bit of friction on how we work together, like we just see things totally differently.

Everyone is like red and yellow and there are **not many blue green people** which is the planning/organisation people. So everyone is kind of creative, emotional, spiritual and not the other way. If you have got the balance, it’s great.

#### **Leaders’ perspective – Self Reflection**

Leaders integrated comments influenced by the HBDI into their conversations when engaged in self-reflection.

#### **Leader Quote:**

I’m very much a blue analytical approach person; **I describe myself** as quite rational and pragmatic. So sometimes relating to that side of the business, some of the biggest lessons I’ve learnt in the last 5 years is, when I took on a leadership role, put myself forward for it, was to actually understand and deal with the emotional side a little bit more and understand how that can be a motivator and de-motivator, and really just get a better sense of empathy for everyone.

### **Leader perspective – Right People**

Leader participants described the use of the HBDI in selecting the right people for the organisation.

#### **Leader Quote:**

**I use the HBDI to select team members.** The planning and operational side of things, you want someone who is strong in that, not strong in creativity, or they will sit around all day thinking of ideas and not getting anything done. It can be difficult to find the right people, we have inherited what we have, having done the HBDI last year, so it's been a steep learning curve. I don't know what the numbers would be if you looked at it, it might only be half the people that we have in positions here that actually suit what we're doing.

In summary, leaders often used the HBDI as a means of self-reflection to better understand their thinking preferences both in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. Leaders also discussed the tool as being used for the selection of the right people into the organisation, in consideration of the required roles for organisational needs. Interestingly, both leaders and followers described a lack of role fit based on the HBDI tool, and whilst leaders attempted to control this by future selection methods, followers attempted to find ways in which to best interact with their peers based on their differences.

### 4.2.3.1.2 Value Alignment

**Table 4.8: Value Alignment (Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Value Alignment: <i>“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on agreed values”.</i>	<u>Negative</u> Artificial. Whole brain thinking not sustainable.	<u>Negative</u> Protection of own value system. Whole brain thinking not sustainable.

#### **Follower perspective – Protection of own value system**

Followers described not needing to have the organisational values defined for them due to having their own value systems; however they did support the process if some people needed it.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

First of all, I have some of my **own personal values** which I adhere to when it comes to a work ethic. If you asked me what the organisational values are, I wouldn't know, but I can tell you what I believe is important and which governs my personal work ethic.

“We have desk cubes with the company values, vision and guiding principles, but to be honest I've never read the cube, it's nice to have on the desk but I won't pick it up and read it. It's seems important to the business to have values but **I have strong values anyway** and not to say my values are inconsistent with the organisations, I'm sure they're not, so I don't really mind having them there if someone people need them”.

#### **Follower perspective – Whole Brain Thinking not sustainable**

Followers felt that the organisation did not sustain the HBDI, which created feelings of disbelief in organisational leaders' actions to follow through on initiatives leading to some scepticism and feelings of being let down.

#### **Follower Quote:**

Anyway, that seemed to be the beginning, and then from that we went into that to see our strengths and weaknesses and then each of our team leaders they go the profile of their teams and all of that. Great, great, we are going good, we are going good. And we were always going to be coming back to a rearranging. Let's do it, let's run through it, let's set our values, let's set our goals, our objectives, our

cube things for each area as well as you know, the big picture. **And we have never come back.** I would have loved to have come back to it and I had been certainly most definitely disappointed and let down.

### **Leaders perspective - Artificial**

In 2006 the organisation implemented the HBDI whilst also articulating an organisational vision, values and guiding principles. Interesting the majority of leaders, whilst supportive of the organisation in its need to define its direction did not feel connected to the process, describing the value gained from the HBDI as a tool for understanding themselves and others. Leaders described the process of feeling artificial.

### **Leader Quotes:**

I think the reason it felt **a little bit unnatural** is because we are quite organic and there is that very much spiritual approach which is the vision and values are whatever the vision and values are arising out of the culture that we have, and when you actually sit down with pen and paper and try to analyse them and put them in a box it can feel very artificial.

It's always worthwhile articulating these things, but in my experience and having been through that process a couple of times with various organisations is that there might be one or two things that change but the set is pretty similar for an organisation. **It's about what people would like to think they do.** Some people their inclination is to follow that, but other people have what they articulate and the way they behave can be different.

### **Leader perspective – Whole Brain Thinking not sustainable**

Leaders felt the HBDI was not well sustained and therefore did not become more greatly utilised as a means of increased awareness, empathy and understanding.

### **Leader Quotes:**

I wasn't convinced it was the right thing to do and I probably, being a blue, green guy I deal with details. Not be choice the bits that connect people which to me are the more yellow and more red. So I was involved in the process and I am happy with the outcome but I wouldn't have naturally gone through the process. But I see the benefit of it and I think the way that the HBDI is connected with the vision and values and the goals both at a business level and at a department level is good. I think the

outcome is there. **I don't know if we subsequently spend as much time on ensuring that it's all a piece of the business as we should.**

**I don't necessary need it** because I believe I've already got it up here with some of the key elements of it, but I guess it can provide some focus and purpose for those that might require it.

In summary, both leaders and followers described the HBDI process in terms of articulating the organisational vision, values and guiding principles as being accepted on the basis that they were able to help those that felt they needed the direction from them. However, both leaders and followers then described that they personally did not connect with the values, instead feeling they did not need them in protection of their own value system in directing their behaviour. Leaders felt the process was not a natural process and was instead artificial and therefore weren't especially supportive in ensuring its sustainability, which both leaders and follower felt was not sustained within the organisation.

### 4.2.3.1.3

### Blurred Boundaries

**Table 4.9: Blurred Boundary (Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Blurred Boundaries: <i>“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another”.</i>	<b>Positive</b> Managing Conflict. Interpersonal understanding.	<b>Positive</b> Interpersonal understanding.

#### **Follower perspective – Interpersonal understanding**

Followers described a strong degree of interpersonal understanding through utilising the HBDI and in being able to justify behaviours on that basis.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

I thought it was a good thing, when I started, that I could go into someone’s office and the first time I met them pick up the little cube and go “**Right, now I know that they are less of a planner** and organiser and more of a creative” and that affects how our relationship could be.

Like it’s really good that I know that when \*\*\*\* stresses out she goes way off the chart in yellow. So we are coming up to a stressful time and **I know where she’s going to go** and so I quite like – like that’s a nice touch for the company to have in terms of the relationships that people have because at any point you can just pick up that cube in their office and go “Right are they stressed or where are they going?”

#### **Leader perspective – Managing conflict**

Leaders described the use of the HBDI to manage conflict situations through having greater understanding of others and therefore being able to empathize to a greater level and during conflict of interests in relation to business decisions, however some leaders described frustration also at the mismatch as discussed in an earlier section.

#### **Leader Quotes:**

It’s frustrating, we have \*\*\*\* who is the \*\*\*\* Manager, who gets labelled as the \*\*\*\* Manager, but he’s a creative person. He’s yellow and red. He can’t be green and blue; it’s not in his nature. He’s not strong in the green and blue, and you need that to be able to have the full. A proper \*\*\*\* Manager is

**quite a well-balanced person** who can think around the peripheral and develop plans. That's one little grey area in the business.

You need to have that balance. I don't want to suppress my red area, but rather allow it to stay strong but develop the green and blue areas. Whereas with the other area is underdeveloped, then you have only got the red area to play with which can be a murky area. And actually, I was just thinking of an example of conflict, one of the other senior managers is also strongly red, and so probably, the most uncomfortable and only times where I have had stressful conflict in the company, have been with other passionate people in the company. Whereas with the left brain analytical people, it is not there at all because you are just dealing with stuff at a level that **can be worked through and you move on**.

I allow others to fill the gap or weaknesses that I've got. I'm not sure if it is just me or I'm not sure what part of the business is using the likes of the HBDI and other elements to assist in understanding people. I'm not certain whether that's been a key element of it but I'm certainly keener to look at the HBDI and **try to understand things** then other businesses which have tended to go down a traditional skill based profiling.

### **Leader perspective – Interpersonal understanding**

Leaders felt they were able to work more effectively as a team through having greater interpersonal understanding between themselves and other leaders and followers.

### **Leader Quote:**

Myself and another manager in my team have had a discussion about your blue and green and I'm red and yellow so how will that look for us and how will be deal with that. We have kind of gone there...we make a good team.

In summary, both leaders and followers described a greater level of interpersonal understanding as a result of the HBDI. Leaders felt that they were able to resolve conflict and encourage others to resolve conflict through using the HBDI through understanding others better and felt this contributed to a more cohesive team, however followers described justifying others behaviours through using the HBDI often at the expense of their own feelings.

#### **4.2.4 Connection to a higher purpose**

Leaders and followers both described the connection to a higher purpose they experienced through their connections to the organisation. This section will firstly, present the similarities and differences in interpretation between leaders and followers as to the key central category of ‘Connection to a higher purpose’. Secondly, the themes of ‘Emotional Safety’, ‘Value Alignment’ and ‘Blurred Boundaries’ are discussed. Further sub-themes from the transcripts emerged describing the effects of these differences between leader and follower perceptions.

##### **4.2.4.1 Leader and Follower interpretations**

Both leaders and followers described feelings of connection to a higher purpose through their connection to the organisation and its charitable activities. The organisation has been active in its 28 years giving back to society through its charitable trust focussing on children. This has become entrenched within the culture and fabric of the organisation and described by leaders and followers as providing a strong sense of personal fulfilment. Leaders describe the connection as being there for leaders and followers to engage with as they need and how they want. Both leaders and followers described feeling a sense of connection with the organisation pre-employment, based on the reputation of the organisation which was associated with positive perceptions and through the pre-employment activities which include ‘welcoming new staff’ to the organisation.

##### **Leaders Quotes:**

Yes and it’s like that very purposefully. So people will often say “Oh, there’s just something about this organisation which I’d love to relate to”. “And I, of course, go ‘Yep, that’s right’”. That is there both by design, but not ‘design’ really, not – it’s there as a reflection of how it started and a little bit of guidance we’ve given it. I wouldn’t say it’s so, you know, but how do you define it, I don’t know how to define it, I don’t know quite what it is, I just like it. Okay, well it talks to me or I like its energy or what have you, and that to me is the best feedback possible because that is a **truly spiritual organisation** delivering something that allows other people to engage with it in a manner which is a little bit unknown, a little bit uncertain just in that they bring their own reflection to it. So it’s like a mirror.

There is an **opportunity to relate in a profound way** because of the safety of that. We come together and do these very simple things that everyone can relate to, right, but because it's in an environment that doesn't have politics and the drama and abuse, and it trusts you and respects you and it sees you as a responsible individual and there's encouragement to be transparent and open about what you're doing, you're actually touching the very essence of what it is to be alive in a very safe place, and so your true potential can come out.

It is all inter-related and a reflection also of how I see the lack of conflict between the organisation, human endeavour, spirituality. I do not see – I see them all as one, and which comes back to my opening comments of “**Yes the organisation is profoundly spiritual**, it is anyway, it is just a question of how much is recognised. I recognise it absolutely, therefore, I am comfortable connecting the dots between an organisation and not for profit and my own personal journey and vulnerability/ and preparedness to express things which are personal to me in a public domain.

I felt a **connection with the business** as soon as I started and whether you believe in fate or not. The way it worked was my wife saw it was in The Press, looked in Saturday, it wasn't there on the Saturday. She went back and found it, all these things you could end up deciding not to do these elements, and by the time it came to the recruitment process the CEO said when your CV came we didn't look at anyone else's.

### **Follower Quotes**

I think it's fantastic. I think it actually shows that **the organisation has a heart**. A lot of companies you feel they have this charity because it sounds good and I don't think that's the case here. We are really generous and I can see how passionate some of the senior leaders are which is inspiring.

It's almost as if the **connection is at a level beyond individual capability, skills, personalities, beliefs**, I suppose I could use that in a broad sense, and even in terms of , if sporting aspirations or involvement is part of that, that's separate that's not part of the connection either”.

I was made to feel really welcome when I started here, they sent flowers and \*\*\*\*\* and then had a welcome morning tea. I felt an **instant connection** with the other staff and with the organisation.

There were 3 themes which emerged, from the 4 central categories. Interpretations of the three themes differed between leaders and followers. Having analysed the differing interpretations a number of subthemes were further identified. These differing interpretations will be discussed in the following section.

#### 4.2.4.1.1 Emotional Safety

**Table 4.10: Emotional Safety (Connection to a higher purpose)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Emotional Safety: <i>“Feelings generated by the need to belong”</i>	<b>Positive</b> Whole self. Right attitude. Emotional connection.	<b>Positive</b> Feel good feelings. Connection among followers  <b>Negative</b> Control of goodwill.

#### **Followers’ perspective – Feel good feelings**

Followers described the ‘feel good’ feelings associated with their employment within the organisation which were derived from the charitable activities the company was involved with

#### **Follower Quotes:**

**I love knowing that I am involved** with helping others through our charitable activities. It makes me feel that I have a purpose and that the company has a purpose by involvement with our charitable trust. I think it has opened up a whole different side of the business to others who can see that we are doing some good.

**I think it is nice**, a lot of other companies you feel they have this charity because it sounds good and I don’t think that is the case here. We are quite generous and we don’t have to be.

#### **Follower perspective – Connection among followers**

Followers described obtaining feelings of togetherness and closeness in having to sometimes join together to work on charitable activities such as information mail outs and other associated tasks.

#### **Follower Quotes**

**I enjoyed working with others** that I don’t normally get a chance to work with, during the moments of chaos when we have been needed to help with the charitable work send outs.

I really enjoy the connections I make when I help out with the charitable work when we get the call. I get to spend time with other staff in the business that I might not otherwise.

### **Follower perspective – Control of goodwill**

Followers indicated they repressed feelings of dissonance associated with the personal tensions between wanting to do the right thing, and being expected to do the right thing in regards to their assistance with charitable activities.

### **Follower Quotes**

It is a really, really good feel good thing and you feel you have something to be proud of. You know it is like “Yay, we can do this, and we can go and volunteer for them. Which we did last year, we stuffed millions of envelopes on Saturdays, if you wanted to, and I did, because we needed as many volunteers, and I was quite happy to do it. However, the **other side of that is that you get the feeling that senior leaders feel more like, do it and do it now.** There has been a huge amount of time and effort taken from the focus of our actual paid job, and the company we are working for. But you see, because it is so intertwined.

### **Leaders’ perspective – Emotional Connection**

Leaders described feelings associated with their involvement in assisting with the charitable activities of the organisation, as providing an emotional connection to the organisation.

### **Leader Quotes:**

The **emotional connection** to the company for me comes from knowing we contribute back to society through our charitable activities.

There is an **emotional connection.** I guess spirituality is the best way to put it because it’s not just about the facts and figures, it’s about having that, the way the company presents itself and the way it acts is that there is always a deeper meaning to it and that people matter and that the business is being run for the purpose of making money but also such that it can provide a fulfilling environment for people to work within.

### **Leader perspective – Right Attitude**

Leaders described the importance of having the right attitude and described this as being one of the most important criteria's for a fit within the organisation.

### **Leader Quotes:**

You have to have the **right attitude**. I think that is incredibly important. You have got to have a willingness to succeed and be quite steadily focussed on where you want to be and the vision is going to help you get there. Everything else is going across the bridges to get there. You know when someone has the right attitude when they want to get across the line, they have to have a strong desire, an internal desire to succeed, to get the results and have the common good of the company because we are all in this bus together.

In the context of my own spirituality and attitude and focus and holistic viewpoint if you like, I think everyone has got their own personal journey that they want to go on and they have that made up to get them there. They have got their own self-belief and they have got their own vision of where they want to take their own life and their business and the work or whatever and they will either get there or they won't and **it starts with attitude**. In terms of spirituality, I think attitude has got to be at the top of the list.

### **Leaders perspective – Whole self**

Leaders shared in their feelings that coming to work they brought their 'whole self' as opposed to separate identities.

### **Leader Quote:**

It is important for me to work in an environment where I can demonstrate who I am in that way. I **wouldn't like to feel that I had to leave myself at home and then come to work as a separate person**, as a robot who just does work. So if I can demonstrate in my interactions with my staff, my colleagues, who I am at the heart level. Also the culture – the heart of the company. It's important for me that working in an environment where we have happy staff and caring staff. So collectively we bring a bit of that each to the workplace and then we'll be working in a happy environment, it's got to be a good thing. So it makes you want to go to work, it makes work more interesting to be yourself.

In summary, followers described 'feel good' feelings they obtained through connections they felt to the organisations charitable activities and in their involvement through the

team spirit and connection among followers and leaders in volunteering to assist in charitable activities. However followers also described repressing some feelings of dissonance through focussing on the positive feelings they obtained from the experience and focusing less on the areas of creating the dissonance in the first place which was feeling their goodwill was being controlled by leaders. Leader participants also experienced the 'feelgood' feelings and described this as creating an emotional connection for them with the organisation. Leader participants also described the ability and importance of bringing their whole selves to work as opposed to just their work identities.

#### 4.2.4.1.2 Value Alignment

**Table 4.11: Value Alignment (Connection to a higher purpose)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Value Alignment: <i>“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on agreed values”.</i>	<b>Positives</b> Motivating through spirituality. Duality between spirituality and organisational practices.	<b>Negative</b> Authenticity of spirituality. Changing expectations.

#### **Follower perspective – Authenticity of spirituality**

Followers described their values not being in alignment with leaders in describing how they felt a level of scepticism towards leaders’ views on spirituality.

#### **Follower Quotes**

**They have occasional outbursts of – well, what I take as spirituality**, as what I think that you are meaning here, they have occasional bursts of all togetherness, you know, a safe environment for everyone to , you know, express themselves and have their ideas heard, and be listened to and be offered a good answer, in a whole team environment. They have that want, that we are all one. Where you know, we are the cube, we are the whole thing, we are the complete process. What I have found is that they just never really ever complete one cycle and stuck to it. We just get something started and then we never go back to it and finish it.

I don’t think this is an organisation that is spiritual. I think **it likes to give the impression that it does**, but I didn’t think it had relative spirituality about it. I think everybody likes to think its got that impression particularly the people at the top, the owners think of it as quite spiritual, but I don’t particularly feel that it is.

#### **Followers’ perspective – Changing Expectations**

Followers described a difference in values through their appreciation of gifts from leaders. Followers described their gratitude for gifts given and for those extra social functions and events that the organisation supported; they also described the growing expectations and also feelings of discontentment at times by the company’s show of gratitude.

### **Follower Quotes:**

It's terrible isn't it because I've worked in organisations and you get nothing and its funny how little you get used to, and **then you come here where you do get a lot more things but it's almost a little bit empty sometimes**. But you shouldn't say that should you, looking a gift horse in the mouth.

It's amazing because you do get more here. Like you get Christmas presents which I haven't got in my last job. I got a ham one year. In my last job its funny we got nothing. The company was always on a shoestring budget and never making any money and it was struggle, struggle, struggle and nobody every complained that they didn't get anything, and yet here you get so much more and there's a lot more complaining about it. Isn't it funny? It's the way it's given. Because here you get stuff and its fantastic but it's given differently and then you don't kind of feel appreciated. You don't appreciate it. I'm sure if I left here and worked for another company I'd be like I used to get so much stuff at my last company. **It's kind of like your expectations change.**

### **Leader perspective – Motivating through spirituality**

Leaders all felt a strong level of spirituality existed within the organisation and which influenced their leadership decisions and leadership style in motivating followers.

### **Leader Quotes:**

So with the spiritual approach it does mean you've got to really take into account in terms of motivating people. **I guess the spiritual approach is all about motivating people**. You want them to deliver results but you can't just do it by saying I'm paying you to do a job, you've got to do it this way. There's always a certain element of that, but you've also got to provide a deeper meaning so that subconsciously people also want to do it right on those expectations.

**I think the organisation is strongly spiritual**. I think this has been created by the owners. During my years with the business, it's one of those things that I think in an attraction to the business is there is that level of, an elevated level or a different level than a normal traditional business, as to a connection and a purpose and direction, even though it's not necessary and that's beyond the traditional business goals. So it's not just a case of our target for this year is X million dollars sales wise. It's beyond that.

### **Leader perspective – Duality between spirituality and organisational practices.**

Leaders felt that a spiritual approach within organisational realities were possible as long as there was a level of equilibrium.

#### **Leader Quote:**

Well, yes and no. Yes, it does, it is guided by that because it is kind of spirituality – **we live in a world of duality**, so we have the spiritual element but it must co-exist in perfect equilibrium with the realities of whatever it is. If it is the human journey we are a body. If it is an organisation we are running a business. And so they have come together and sit comfortably together. I do not have a problem with redundancy for example, no problem at all, providing the individuals are – that process is respectful, that the process honours the responsibilities of ourselves as an organisation, the individuals that are taking that action and the levels of the people who are at the effect of that. And respect and trust and responsibility and transparency are not absolutes, so long as they are actually conscious of those things and applying them in a meaningful way then I would honour the individual's process of applying them.

In summary, leaders felt strongly that the organisational was influenced through spiritual ideals however; followers challenged the authenticity of the leaders need for the organisation to be perceived as spiritual. Some leaders aligned the spiritual approach with motivating followers whilst others felt comfortable integrating spiritual ideas with business based on the co-existence of dualities. Followers described gratitude towards leader's generosity however, they also described feeling that the method of giving created some unease and they also described changing expectations as influencing their reciprocal gratitude showed in return.

### 4.2.4.1.3 Blurred Boundaries

**Table 4.12: Blurred Boundaries (Connection to a higher purpose)**

Categories	Leaders Perspective	Followers perspective
Blurred Boundaries: <i>“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people should interact with one another”.</i>	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Avoidance of Conflict. Environment of Caring.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Connection to leaders.  <b><u>Negative</u></b> Lack of Organisational Authenticity

#### **Follower Perspective – Connection to leaders**

Followers described a connection to leaders through working alongside them in a volunteer capacity to assist with charitable work. Although the expectation was that if staff had some time free to assist they could, some followers also felt disappointed at not being able to help out and in not perhaps having the opportunity to connect with leaders.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

**I never get to help out** with any charitable work, although I would like to as it sounds like fun. I heard that the last time they did that big mail out, they had beers and snacks whilst they actually worked. I didn't and just had to carry on working through to meet a work deadline.

**I always give a hand when the call goes out**, it sort of bonds us closer together, it does seem to always be the same people though.

#### **Follower perspective – Lack of Organisational Authenticity**

Some followers felt that the involvement with the organisations central cause of which the charitable trust assisted to fund was a personal agenda for the owners and felt there were other very deserving causes around as well that should be helped.

#### **Follower Quotes:**

I find the charitable side of the business quite hard for me at times, whilst I think it is important to give back, I find it hard to get enthused about the whole thing. It's like as a company we have to like get

right behind the \*\*\*\*\* Foundation and it's like why, it doesn't seem like a very good charity, **it feels forced.**

**It is totally a personal agenda**, totally, totally, and then we were all kind of involved and nobody was behind it, we were like oh god, it was rushed and nobody really wanted it, not from this side anyway. So it was an owner thing, it's not a company thing. We were just told this was happening, it wasn't like saying hey we need to be more responsible to the community.

### **Leaders perspective – Avoidance of Conflict**

Leaders described the acceptance of organisational tensions which would naturally occur however also described the types of conflict and the types of personalities that they prevented from occurring.

### **Leader Quotes:**

Organisations should spit them out quick, okay. It should become so obvious that decisions are made ideally by that person because their drama cannot be played out. I mean, what we are trying to do is create an environment that does not promote people bringing their personal dramas to the situation. When I say drama's I am not talking about idiosyncrasies and personalities, I'm talking about **neurotic dramas that are destructive** and require other parties to be involved in order for your subconscious agendas to play out.

Oh, I like – **tension is good, nothing wrong with tension**, no negativity there. Tension is an opportunity – you need tension, growth needs tension, no question about it. Without it there is not going to be any growth. The greatest growth happens at the point when you just break through the tension into a new reality.

### **Leader perspective – Environment of Caring**

Leaders described an environment of caring as creating a connection among followers and leaders.

### **Leader Quotes:**

**People feel connected**, everyone knows who the owners are and it certainly helps to do right by them, so that's important to be able to connect on that level because if you're not connected by the business

then you just come to work nine to five and bugger off and don't care about that. There is an element of connection and caring and thoughtfulness. How we've got there I don't know.

Spirituality is not so much something you can see, but something that you can feel when there is a clear connection between staff who clearly do care about each other, and so I don't, I have not been in too many other work environments – I have actually, but in many other work environments it just feels like a job. You go there, you do your job, you earn your money and you go home. Whereas here, I think there is something; a big of a stronger relationship between the staff **which comes about through caring for each other** and I think that caring for each other comes about through the environment that we have created here, that people feel comfortable being people, not just employees.

In summary, followers described feeling strong connections to leaders through being able to volunteer together on charitable activity opportunities provided by the organisation. However some followers that were not able to volunteer felt more distant in their relationships to leaders. Some followers felt the type of cause chosen by the organisation to support was a personal agenda of leaders forced on followers and therefore creating the perception of a lack of organisational authenticity. Leaders described an environment of caring that providing feelings of connection for followers and also described the acceptance of tensions within the organisation as synonymous with growth opportunities. Leaders felt that conflict such as neurotic dramas and political play needed to be very quickly stopped and was inconsistent with the environment however tension was accepted necessary in order for growth.

### 4.3 Conclusion

Three central themes were established from the data. These were 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' illustrated in table 4.13. Each theme is now summarized in the following sections.

**Table 4.13: Overview of Research Themes and Subthemes**

Main themes	Leaders Perspective Subthemes	Followers perspective Subthemes
Emotional Safety:  <i>“Feelings generated by the need to belong”</i>	<p><b>Positive</b> A culture of trust and respect. Space for personal growth. Vulnerability Self-reflection. Right people. Whole self. Humour and Fun. Right attitude. Emotional connection.</p> <p><b>Negative</b> Lack of direction</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> Respect. Flexibility. Self-worth. Humour and Fun. Feel good feelings. Connection among followers</p> <p><b>Negative</b> Little direction and guidance. Earning respect Confusion Lack of role clarity. Lack of direction. Lack of role fit. Control of goodwill</p>
Value Alignment:  <i>“The reasoning and perceptions of actions based on organisational values”.</i>	<p><b>Positive</b> High Transparency. Failing quickly is good Strong relationships. Entrepreneurism Motivating through spirituality. Duality between spirituality and organisational practices.</p> <p><b>Negative</b> Organisation open to abuse through work flexibility. Perceptions of personal agenda. Artificial. Sustainability of whole brain thinking.</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> Strong relationships</p> <p><b>Negative</b> Abuse of goodwill. Rapid Change. Lack of Authenticity. Silence. Resource allocation. Lowering expectations Protective of own value system. Not sustainable. Authenticity of spirituality. Changing expectations.</p>
Blurred Boundaries:  <i>“Uncertainty of social boundaries defining how people interact with one another”.</i>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Closeness in relationships Comfortable with ambiguity Higher Expectations Shared responsibilities Managing conflict Interpersonal understanding Avoidance of Conflict Environment of Caring.</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> Strong connections Close bonds among followers Collective Culture Sharing Information Interpersonal understanding</p> <p><b>Negative</b> Disengagement Perceived double standards Lack of organisational authenticity.</p>

### ***4.3.1 Emotional Safety***

The theme emotional safety relates to feelings generated by the need to belong. These feelings determined how emotionally safe the leaders and followers perceived their environment in satisfying needs to belong. Followers felt a level of freedom which was demonstrated through leaders in providing flexibility through work practices. Feelings of self-worth and 'feel good' feelings were generated through followers' connections with other followers and the closeness they felt with leaders. Both leaders and followers felt they worked in a fun environment and felt they each had a good sense of humour in order to manage challenging circumstances. Unfortunately, followers also experienced feelings of confusion through a lack of role clarity, lack of direction by leaders and through differing expectations from leaders. Followers felt that their goodwill was taken advantage of at times and that individuals within the organisation tended to fit with organisational ideals over that of role requirements. Leaders described creating a mainly positive and safe environment for followers. They felt they created a culture of trust and respect through avoiding articulating how followers were supposed to connect to the organisation. The lack of policy was said to contribute to opportunities for personal growth through leaders and followers having to make decisions based on their own ethics. Leaders encouraged followers to be vulnerable in order to be open to personal growth experiences and through the HBDI encouraged followers to increase self-awareness so as to better understand the behaviours of others and to reduce potential conflict, however also accepted organisational tensions as an opportunity for growth. To conclude, followers experienced a sense of belonging through the strong connections they established with other followers and which was supported by closeness to leaders and through a mainly positive environment were followers felt a sense of freedom. Less positive aspects, such as a lack of role clarity, direction role fit which created confusion were made salient by followers focussing towards positive feelings of connection felt with other followers.

### ***4.3.2 Value Alignment***

The theme 'Value Alignment' relates to how aligned leaders and followers are in their interpretations of assumed behavioural expectations based on perceived organisational values. Followers and leaders were in agreement that the most attractive aspect of being

employed within the organisation was the people. They felt they had strong relationships with each other and within their own groups. However, there were a number of differences where the perceptions of both leaders and followers did not align based on perceived organisational values. Firstly, leaders felt they provided opportunities for followers to express their opinions and participate in business discussions, as a means of providing transparency and encouraging individuals to be vulnerable as a means of being more spiritual, however, followers often felt threatened in taking a position and therefore as a result would remain silent. Secondly, followers and leaders agreed that innovation was necessary, however, leaders adopted the mantra of 'failing quickly' as a means of looking for new opportunities instead of focussing on opportunities missed. Followers felt a level of frustration from rapid change and found this more difficult to manage than did leaders. Thirdly, leaders and followers both agreed to the need to focus towards business sustainability, however, leaders were more willing to adopt a 'number eight wire mentality' than invest in adequate resource allocation. In doing so, creating frustration for followers. Fourthly, leaders and followers both agreed of a high trust and respect climate within the organisation, however, whilst leaders' spoke of the possibility of this being abused they felt it wasn't. However, at the same time they did monitor followers and felt this was a means of controlling any possibility of abuse of work flexibility they provided to followers. Lastly, followers were sceptical of the leaders' authenticity in regards to their promotion of spiritual ideals. They indicated that possibly, leaders wanted to project images of spirituality, however, how authentic leaders were in their adherence to spiritual ideals was challenged by followers.

#### ***4.3.3 Blurred Boundaries***

The theme blurred boundaries relates to the uncertainty that leaders and followers may experience due to social boundaries defining how people interact with one another. Both leaders and follower described strong relationships they held with each other. This closeness was experienced positively by leaders and followers; however, they both also struggled with managing the social boundaries. Firstly, followers felt a level of closeness with leaders that led to them feeling able to express themselves more openly in the workplace. As a result followers felt less of a power differential between themselves and leaders and as a result often struggled to identify where social boundaries where. When followers breached the social boundaries defined by leaders, followers often felt hurt

equating to high levels of sensitivity to leaders' feedback. As a result followers would disengage from their relationships with leaders and focus more towards the positive aspects of their relationships with other followers. Followers held strong and close relationships with other followers as a means of sharing feelings of hurt or dissonance created through an environment of ambiguity. Secondly, the HBDI provided a means in which leaders felt could encourage a shared language within the organisation, to assist with greater levels of interpersonal understanding and in managing conflict. Followers felt the HBDI also provided a means of greater interpersonal understanding however used their whole brain thinking towards justifying others behaviours sometimes at the expense of their own feelings. Thirdly, followers positioned themselves for opportunities to be close to leaders in order to maintain a fit with organisational ideals. This was achieved through projecting positive images. Leaders felt they created a caring and open environment and encouraged tension as an opportunity to learn.

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

#### 5.1 Introduction

Four key categories were used to describe the effects of the leaders' spirituality. These were 'Culture of Freedom', 'Navigation through Ambiguity', 'Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking' and 'Connection to a Higher Purpose'. In all four categories three themes emerged: 'Emotional Safety', 'Value alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries'.

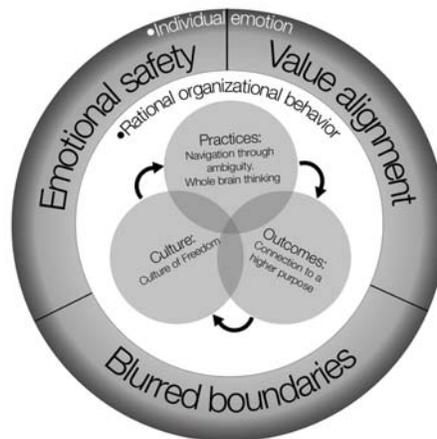


Figure 5.1: Relationship between categories and themes.

Figure 5.1 represents the relationships between the categories and the themes. The categories relate to rational organisational behaviours, and include organisational culture, organisational practices and organisational outcomes. Rational organisational behaviours are influenced by perceptions based on individual emotions. These individual emotions were derived from the themes, 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries'.

This section will firstly outline the assumptions made within the literature review sections of 'Spirituality of the leader as person', 'Power and Control' and 'Purpose beyond profit'.

These research findings will then be used to confirm or disconfirm the assumptions derived from the sections of the literature review. This will be achieved through applying the themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries'. Secondly, this research will explore the on-going tensions that are experienced between rational organisational behaviours and individual emotions and what is required by leaders and followers as a means to addressing, resolving or managing these tensions. Finally, conclusions and implications of this study are discussed along with limitations and areas for future research.

## ***5.2 Spirituality of the leader as person***

A review of the spirituality and leadership literature finds three central assumptions that underlie this domain. The first assumption within the literature is that the spiritual leader is also an ethical leader. The second assumption links spiritual leadership to positive outcomes. The third assumption is that spiritual qualities can be acquired by any leader and the final assumption is that leadership spirituality can be transferred from the leader to the follower and is one directional. The following sections will apply the themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' in addressing the assumptions made within the literature.

### ***5.21 Assumption One: Spiritual leader as Ethical Leader***

The leadership and spirituality literature assumes that the spiritual leader is also an ethical leader. Whilst this research is not specifically focussed towards the ethics of spiritual leadership theory, this research did explore value alignment between leaders and followers perceptions.

The results highlight that followers do carefully monitor and are affected by the intentions of leaders even though they themselves might feel strong connections to the organisation, leaders and other followers. Inconsistencies in leader behaviours with organisational and personal values held by followers supported feelings as to a lack of leader authenticity.

Followers described initial concerns of varying expectations between leaders and followers as a starting point. Often followers would then communicate to other followers these inconsistencies influencing others in directing them to look for inconsistencies. Followers appeared to expect greater moral standards from leaders whom espoused spiritual qualities however leaders appeared unable to meet these standards that followers expected. For example, followers expected leaders to treat followers with fairness, however, leaders preferred to treat followers on an individual basis which they perceived as fairness relative to circumstances of the individual, rather than with consideration to the perceived unfairness by others.

The purposeful avoidance of organisational articulated policy and process for leaders, often, resulted in high levels of leader discretion in decision making. Followers felt this resulted in discrimination with decisions made by leaders perceived by followers as being based on whom you were, how strong your connections to the organisation were, and how spiritually attuned you were.

This research suggests a tension exists between the requirement by followers for consistency of moral standards and the practice of discretion necessary for leader decision making in allowing spaces for existential sense making free of prescribed meanings (Driver, 2006). Followers sought inconsistencies between leader intentions and leader behaviours. This research would suggest that these will always exist when a leader is able to express their spirituality free from organisationally prescribed meanings. Prescribed meanings created through a bureaucratic environment may provide consistency and fairness however, might also limit personal development and inadvertently support follower alienation because for meaning to be meaningful it needs to be created by the individual. It is inevitable that leaders who are able to express their spirituality within organisations may not be able to meet follower expectations when organisational realities meet concepts of spirituality (Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011; Lips Wiersma *et al.* 2009).

## *5.22 Assumption Two: Positive Outcomes of the Leaders Spirituality*

The literature assumes that positive outcomes result as an effect of the leaders' spirituality. Fry's (2003) theory of SLT assumes that positive outcomes of organisational commitment and increased productivity result as an influence of the leaders' spirituality. The literature also assumes that outcomes of spirituality include greater personal wellbeing, happiness, higher self-awareness, communication, reduced stress (Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011), reduced work hours, stronger sense of connection, and greater creativity (Marques, 2008).

This research finds support that positive outcomes result as an outcome of the leaders' spirituality. Leaders and followers felt a strong sense of belonging within the organisation which resulted in positive perceptions of the organisation. Followers and leaders felt reciprocal trust and respect and as a result followers felt a sense of self-worth. Leaders experienced personal growth and higher self-awareness. Both leaders and followers described a greater level of empathy and understanding through the stimulation of whole brain thinking.

However, there were also less than positive outcomes which resulted as an outcome of the leaders' spirituality. Firstly, followers felt the need to heavily monitor their interactions with leaders through managing their emotions and avoiding being perceived as a 'trouble maker'. One of the means in which followers managed this was to distance themselves from leaders and focus towards positive feelings associated with their connection to the organisation. They also focused on restoring positive perceptions of the organisation in order to generate feelings of belonging. Followers expressed frustration at not being provided the necessary direction and support they expected leaders to provide. This frustration was internalised by followers who then sought the direction and support from other followers. As a result creating close relationships among followers.

Whilst these results support that positive outcomes result as an effect of the leaders' spirituality, this research advances the current literature, by considering the less positive influences of the leaders' spirituality. It is proposed that the leadership and spirituality literature systematically ignores the less positive outcomes which occur. Greater awareness, insight and understanding can develop as a means of addressing personal challenges, and

these challenges present in a workplace on a daily basis. Future research needs to focus on uncovering these tensions given that “*individuals tend to resist the notion of “removing the masks” and instead recognise the importance of projecting the right image at work*” (Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011 p.647).

### ***5.23 Assumption Three: Entrenchment of spiritual Qualities***

The spirituality and leadership literature assumes that any leader can acquire spiritual qualities suggesting spirituality as a technique easily accessible and enabling managers the ability to lead with spiritual ideals.

This research found that the influence of spiritual qualities of leaders is most influential in the forming and creation of an organisation. The decisions made at this stage of organisational development by leaders and the continued consistency of an approach informed through spiritual qualities becomes entrenched into organisational practices and within the organisational culture. The research organisation was created 29 years ago by two owners who still today maintain control as directors. Their influence remains strongly engrained within the culture of the organisation. Leaders brought into the organisation have been chosen based on having similar spiritual ideals and therefore also are more explicit of their spiritual qualities. When leader research participants were asked if they felt the organisation was considered to be spiritual, all leader participants felt it was. Leader participants were more comfortable talking overtly of spirituality than follower participants were. When follower participants were asked the same question they all explained that they struggled with the concept and didn't quite know how this related to the workplace. However, follower participants then described spiritual qualities they valued, such as a sense of belonging, making a difference and strong connections.

Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, (2011), suggest that re-considering the concept of spirituality as organisational wisdom may help to position this area within organisational theory. They suggest that spirituality is a discarded form of organisational wisdom, and that “*spirituality*

*suggests alternative ways to the central assumptions of the organisation...suggesting alternative ways of thought and behaviour” (p.647).* However, they also suggest that associated perceptions create a threat and are therefore rejected and marginalised. Leaders feel a tension between how spirituality is enacted in the private and public domains. This research would suggest that leaders that are employed based on their spiritual qualities in the first instance create a shared sense of spirituality with other leaders. This resulted in leaders being able to fill the gap between enacting their spirituality in the private and public domains. However, follower participants did struggle to manage the tension between spirituality within the private and public domains. Followers experienced a disconnect between their basic assumptions of the organisation and their expectations of leader behaviours with actual leader assumptions and associated leader behaviours. This resulted in followers experiencing scepticism, uncertainty, and confusion at leader and organisational intentions.

#### ***5.24 Assumption Four: One directional leadership***

The leadership and spirituality literature assumes that leaders spirituality is transferrable to followers and the organisation and that it is one directional. For example, Fry's (2005) SLT proposes that leaders' values, attitudes and behaviours act to satisfy followers' needs for spiritual survival within organisations. However, fails to consider how followers needs for spiritual survival influences leader behaviours or how followers' spirituality may influence the organisation and leaders. Recent research (Fry and Kriger, 2009) does highlight the need to consider the reciprocal effects of spirituality on relationships unfortunately to date this has not been achieved.

This research examined the differing perceptions of leaders and followers and found that the influence of the leaders' spirituality was more explicit due to greater opportunities for leaders to integrate spiritual ideals within organisational practices. Followers were accepting of spiritual ideals due to the closeness they felt in relationships with leaders. Followers were provided the opportunity to express their spiritual ideals within the organisation. They chose not to, in protection of their feelings, in case they unknowingly breached accepted social boundaries, given that this boundary was permeable and forever changing. Followers often

perceived the social boundary, with leaders, incorrectly. Followers challenged the leaders' authenticity in regards to espoused spiritual ideals, feeling that leaders wanted to project images of spirituality.

Tensions exist for followers due to having to accept projected images of the leaders' spirituality when they challenged the authenticity of such projections. Followers felt the need to manage social boundaries through accepting spiritual ideals, at the expense of being especially critical in the monitoring of leader behaviours.

### **5.3 *Power and Control***

A review of the spirituality and leadership literature finds three central assumptions that underlie this domain. The first assumption within the literature is that the spiritual leader has greater knowledge of followers needs than do followers. The second assumption is that power differentials do not affect follower outcomes. Lastly, the literature assumes that followers are aligned with leaders in their values. The following sections will apply the themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' in addressing the assumptions made within the literature.

#### **5.31 *Assumption One: Leader has greater knowledge of follower needs***

The majority of the spirituality and leadership literature assumes that the leader has greater knowledge of follower needs than followers do. Fry's (2005) SLT assumes that followers needs of spiritual survival require the follower to satisfy the need for membership and the need for calling. Leaders have been assumed to satisfy these needs through influencing their own desires. Leaders have been perceived as being able to satisfy all follower needs and in being responsible for "*clarifying the followers' moral identity*" (Korac-Kakabadse *et al.*, 2002, p.173) through altruistic love (Fry, 2005) through and creating meanings for followers. The use of organisational vision as a means of normative control is brought to our attention

by Tourish and Pinington (2002) who question the place of leaders in influencing followers' sense making process.

This research found that followers attempted to identify with leaders through their relationships and did initially aspire to project similar attributes. However, once inconsistencies between leader behaviours and perceived organisational values were experienced, followers would instead chose to identify more strongly with other followers rather than leaders as a means of creating a shared sense of meaning of leaders behaviours. Given that organisational values were articulated but not widely accepted or required to be accepted by followers, values were highly subjective and based on individual's own value system. Therefore breaches in consistency between leader values and leader behaviours were likely to be easily misread by followers. On an individual level, followers felt difficulty in expressing themselves to leaders once moral breaches had been observed. Instead followers chose to suppress their concerns and manage through the difficulties of blurred social boundaries with leaders. As a means of avoiding conflict followers chose to internalise their feelings of disappointment. Leaders felt they maintained close and strong relationships with followers and were mostly oblivious to any perceptions of inconsistencies between leader behaviours and values observed by followers. Leaders were especially concerned with the perceptions of spiritual qualities that they projected to other leaders and management of followers was considered by leaders as an opportunity to demonstrate their spirituality. Leaders within the organisation attempted to reflect the spiritual qualities of the owners and in doing so, created a silo effect, which may account for the lack of awareness of follower perceptions as to moral breaches. Leaders engaged in impression management behaviours as a means to influence perceptions of how spiritually attuned they were. Opportunities for impression management behaviours mostly occurred through relationships with followers and which may also account for the perception of inconsistencies between leader behaviours and leader values. This research suggests that a tension exists between how leaders and followers construct and express power. Leaders engage in impression management behaviours as a means to influence perceptions of how spirituality attuned they are, whilst followers engage in impression management behaviours through internalising and making salient inconsistencies that challenge their sense of meaning created with other followers. Leaders are therefore able to be more explicit of their spiritual qualities, whilst followers feel unable to.

This research finds support for Lips-Wiersma *et al.* (2009) model of Critical Workplace Spirituality Effects. The research organisation demonstrated low control and low instrumentality and as a result practicing seduction. Leaders and followers were attracted to the organisation through the positive perceptions created through its branding, however often during interviewing participants they would share stories relating to feelings of calling that led them to further pursue employment opportunities. All participants explained they felt a comfortable fit with the organisation in wanting to avoid a corporate mentality and experience personal growth opportunities which they perceived the organisation offering. With no prescribed and articulated boundaries normative boundaries between leaders and followers were created. As opposed to cultural normative boundaries, individualised boundaries formed the basis of self-control.

### ***5.32 Assumption Two: Ignorance of power differentials***

The critical spirituality and leadership literature challenges the current leadership discourse through highlighting leadership models as attempting to discourage dissent and suppress follower voice (Tourish and Pinnington, 147). They suggest that a culture that promotes strong cohesion can also inadvertently quell dissent. In doing so, decision making suffers as fewer voices and alternative perspectives are provided, however, those with a strong voice are able to have greater influence.

This research found that leaders perceived themselves to be providing opportunities to followers to express their opinions through open and healthy debate and dialogue. They encouraged followers to actively engage in organisational decisions through transparent mechanisms. Followers did agree that they were provided the opportunity to express their opinions, however, felt less able to. Followers engaged in impression management behaviours to internalise the suppression of their opinions. There were various reasons for followers feeling unable to participate. Firstly, some followers were uncomfortable with having to be explicit in their opinions and preferred to keep these private, whilst others were

concerned that their opinions would illicit negative impressions. Some followers felt their character was being challenged and preferred to suppress their voice as a means of self-protection. It was explained to followers during recruitment processes that they needed to have the strength of character to have an opinion however it was observed over time, that followers either stopped communicating their opinions or provided an opinion which was aligned with those of leaders. This would indicate that initial impressions of the organisation were not what the follower experienced in reality. Instead this would indicate that followers felt unheard and chose to withdraw and isolate themselves from negative feelings associated with making salient internal dissonance.

### ***5.33 Assumption Three: Alignment of Values and Goals***

The literature assumes that leaders and followers have value and goal alignment. The literature assumes that leaders and followers share similar values and work towards similar goals. However, this research identified a number of areas where values were misaligned.

Followers perceived a positive environment, however still did not perceive a safe environment in being able to expose themselves and their vulnerabilities fully. Therefore followers felt less able to participate and express opinions even when encouraged by leaders. Leaders felt that followers agreed as to the need for transparency in order to expose any narcissistic power plays. However, followers appeared less concerned with the need for transparency and more concerned with protecting their character and feelings through avoiding being critiqued when opinions were made. It is possible that followers felt less of a need for transparency due to the close relationships they held with leaders and the degree of information sharing that occurred between followers. Followers and leaders held differing expectations of each other based on their assumptions of the leader and follower relationship. Leaders expected followers to be prepared for rapid change whereby followers expected leaders to maintain stability and consistency. Followers expected leaders to think long term, however, found that leaders often thought in the short-term.

This research highlights the tension that exists between integrating personal values into the organisation and articulating organisational values. As articulating organisational values creates issues of prescribed meaning and possibilities of normative control, yet, integrating personal values results in varying expectations and perceived inconsistencies between behaviours and assumed values.

#### **5.4 *Spirituality and instrumentality***

The various approaches to the study of leadership and literature highlight the ontological differences that influence how leadership and spirituality is considered. Whilst the central assumption within the majority of the literature is that increased organisational performance must be connected with spirituality to legitimise the study of spirituality within the context of organisations, more recent research would suggest that this assumption is somewhat out dated and generally not supported when considering the phenomena of spirituality. Fry (2009) takes a more considered approach by moving towards a theory of being-centred leadership incorporating spiritual concepts as a means of advancing leadership theory, considering the concept of spirituality as a continuum of transcendence rather than as with SLT a means to an ends (Fry and Kriger, 2009). Whilst organisation outcomes are considered so too are non-dual approaches to leadership (Fry and Kriger, 2011). Instrumentality refers to the use of techniques as tools to achieving increased organisational performance and hence profitability (Driscoll and McKee, 2005). The following section will apply the themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' in addressing the assumptions made within the literature.

This research would suggest that whilst not all organisations consider spirituality a tool for organisational gain, followers are especially critical towards organisational intentions due to the perceived inconsistencies resulting from the integration of the leaders' spirituality within the organisation. As a result followers sometimes perceived a lack of leader authenticity, organisational authenticity and felt their goodwill taken advantage of by leaders. Leaders did not feel they were non authentic in their intentions and behaviours and felt they were aligned in their values with followers as to focussing towards the 'greater good' by their actions.

Leaders were hesitant to prescribe organisational values, instead felt that attempts to articulate organisational values were artificial, however, they were accepting if others saw and experienced value from the process. Interestingly, no other leader or follower participant felt this process resulted in any added value for the organisation. The encouragement of transparency by leaders appeared to only serve the interests of leaders, however followers did recognise the ability to participate if they desired. Leaders felt they provided opportunities for followers to engage with the charitable activities of the business, however, not all followers felt they were provided that opportunity. Followers either felt expected to help or felt unable to help due to other work pressures preventing them from helping. As a result followers either felt their goodwill was taken advantage of or felt isolated in not being provided the opportunity to create closeness with leaders and other followers.

### ***5.5 The Context of Social Processes within Organisational Realities***

In reviewing the assumptions within the spirituality and leadership literature, the influence of social processes and concepts of individual spirituality within organisational realities becomes a common theme. The leadership and spirituality literature assumes that spiritual leadership exists outside of social and organisational realities. Much of the literature lacks any context and is conceptual therefore does not fully address the actual reality of enacting spirituality and how this influences the workplace. Recent research and conceptual literature (Fry and Kriger, 2009; Lips-Wiersma *et al.* 2009; Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011) does attempt to address this concern. This research also set out to consider contextual elements through a case study exploring the social and organisational realities facing leaders and followers.

This research finds that followers needs for social order compete with needs for belonging. In order for followers to make sense of the nexus where individual spirituality meets organisational reality, followers often make salient those aspects which compromise feelings of belonging. However, in doing so expose themselves to breaches of social order. Leaders within the organisation, being spirituality aligned with the organisational routines created by the directors and owners of the organisation, struggled less with the tensions between needs

for social order and needs of belonging. This would suggest that followers weren't necessary employed based on their spiritual alignment with the organisation however leaders more often were. The question as to whether followers should be employed based on their spiritual alignment to the organisation does pose challenges and concerns raised by Tourish and Pinnington (2002). Rather the question should be as to how followers can manage these tensions and what happens when tensions become unmanageable.

This research found that followers sought support from other followers when their needs for social order and belonging were conflicted. Followers were able to create a shared sense of meaning through having to manage through such tensions. Insight into the relationships within the organisation suggests that equilibrium is reached over time by followers who adapt expectations and underlying assumptions of social order in order to adopt new ways in which to 'think' however the journey towards the adoption of new ways of thinking is not always achieved. Followers may choose how their spirituality is enacted within the organisation and enter in and out of WPS (Lips-Wiersma *et al.* 2009). Cultural fragmentation can occur resulting in negative sub-cultures inadvertently suppressing opportunities for adopting new ways of 'thinking'. Greater knowledge of the nexus between individual spirituality and organisational spirituality realities through empirical research will advance this field, as will considering re-positioning how spirituality is considered within organisations (Zaidman and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2011).

### ***5.6 Tensions between individual spirituality and organisational realities***

A number of tensions were exposed through this empirical research. The tensions were exposed through individual accounts of follower experiences of the leaders' spirituality in the context of organisational realities, as described:

- a) Followers experienced a tension between their need for consistency in moral standard and practices of leader discretion in decision making and a space for existential sense making free from prescribed meanings.

- b) Followers experienced a tension between inconsistencies in perceived leader values and leader behaviours with actual leader values and leader behaviours based on a lack of prescribed values.
- c) Followers experienced tensions between concepts of individual spirituality and assumptions as to organisational purpose.
- d) Followers experienced tension between their needs for social order and needs for belonging.

These tensions all suggest that followers have difficulty conceptualising spirituality outside of pre-conditioned assumptions of organisational purpose and associated routines. The acceptance of spiritual concepts in an organisational context for leaders was largely accepted, supported and encouraged. Leaders were more accepting of alternative approaches to organisational functioning than were followers. Followers experienced scepticism, doubt and uncertainty when alternative approaches challenged the meanings they had given to organisational purpose.

### ***5.7 Implications for Leadership and Spirituality Literature***

This section will consider each tension identified and look to address how and if the tension can be managed.

- a) *Followers experienced a tension between their need for consistency in moral standard and practices of leader discretion in decision making and spaces for existential sense making free from prescribed meanings.*

Leaders used discretion in their decision making related to followers. Followers felt this created instances of discrimination where they perceived differences in treatment between themselves and others. Leaders felt that utilising leader discretion rather than being policy driven provided opportunities for existential sense making through decision-making rather than being prescribed meanings. This resulted in followers making salient their feelings in

order to maintain their needs for belonging, whilst often at the same time, creating some distance between themselves and leaders. This tension is manageable, and requires that leaders develop a shared sense of moral standards on which to base their decision making on, however, in reality, this seems unachievable given that moral standards are based on a range of various perspectives, such as relativism, utilitarianism, moral rights, and moral justice. The effect of perceived unfairness for followers creates the possibility of cultural fragmentation through sub-cultures developing.

b) *Followers experienced a tension between inconsistencies in perceived leader values and leader behaviours with actual leader values and leader behaviours based on a lack of prescribed values.*

With a lack of heavily articulated organisational values, followers established their own set of values with which to determine consistencies in leaders' behaviours. The alignment between assumed follower values and expected leader behaviours was also an individual creation. This means that followers were always going to experience inconsistencies between assumed organisational values and actual leader behaviours with differences also between followers. Addressing this issue through articulating a set of organisational values, only seeks to create another tension, in that followers and leaders would be restricted in their freedom to make sense based on their own value systems which doesn't seem compatible with notions of spirituality.

c) *Followers experienced tensions between concepts of individual spirituality and assumptions as to organisational purpose.*

Followers felt less included to discuss concepts of spirituality within the organisation, whereas leaders felt more comfortable in being explicit as to their spirituality. Algera and Lips-Wierma (2011) suggest that a common set of goals could be a means in which to allow individual freedoms, rather than focussing on shared values, assumptions and beliefs. They further suggest that continual renegotiation as to the agreed goals was necessary in order for the goals to remain meaningful. This suggestion could also be applied to this tension, with a focus on organisational goals determining organisational direction rather than assuming

knowledge of follower needs in order to fulfil needs of belonging and calling. Instead followers are able to determine their own needs and seek these out at will.

d) *Followers experienced tension between their needs for social order and needs for belonging.*

Followers based their assumptions of organisational practices on concepts of organisational rationality, however, leaders were seeking alternative means in which to organise. As a result followers required consistency between their assumptions of how they expected organisations to function which leaders challenged through their use of spiritual values in which to influence alternate approaches to organisational functioning. Followers felt a strong connection to the organisation resulting in strong feelings of belonging. However, their need for consistency between assumed organisation functioning and actual organisational functioning challenged their sense of belonging. Followers managed this tension through making salient alternative approaches to organisational functioning. As a result followers felt internal dissonance and attempted to manage this. In reality, the management of such dissonance could result in the possibility of subversive subcultures developing as followers attempt to relate to other followers through sharing their dislike of alternative attempts of organisational functioning.

## **5.8 Limitations**

This section discusses the limitations associated with this research. Firstly, limitations relative to the data collection process is determined, next the limitations as to the data analysis process are discussed and lastly limitations as to the possible implications are discussed.

The relationship between researcher and participant enabled a relaxed conversational interaction, but the knowledge of organisational dynamics possessed by the researcher as an employee of the organisation may have influenced participants to be slightly more guarded in their responses. This was only evident in one particular interview which was discarded from the sample. An additional interview was conducted to overcome this. One of the interviews

had to be held at the participants work station which did not allow for the participant to confidently vocalize their perspective. Instead, the participant kept their voice low and demonstrated slight unease. The participant declined the opportunity to conduct the interview at another time. Given the informative data obtained, even with the restrained environment, it was decided to still include the data in the research.

Further limitations became visible during analysis of the results. Given the richness of the data the possibility of misinterpretations of data was possible. To avoid this, the data was analysed a number of times and from differing perspectives in order to interpret any underlying meanings and get deduce themes. The insider (emic) status of the researcher also provided challenges in that a conscious effort was necessary to exclude personal opinions and feelings in relation to participant responses. Conversely, the insider status did provide for greater understanding of context. In order to provide confidentiality to the organisation of study, changes were made to some participants gender identities in the results. Given the subjective nature of the stories shared by participants it was not always possible to share these throughout the research, however attempts have been made to capture some with interpretations given for other stories. Many stories were shared throughout the research collection stage and future research should consider the influence of these stories on follower connection to organisations. The research is highly subjective given the differing interpretations of spirituality made by leaders and followers which limits the generalizability of the research findings to other organisations.

The implications are limited by the complexity in which tensions create. It is suggested there may be many differing perspectives in which to interpret follower and leader perceptions however, it is hoped that this research provides the reader with a systematic means by which to determine how individual emotions influence and are influenced by organisational realities, of organisational culture, organisational practices and organisational outcomes.

## 5.9 *Future Research*

A strong focus towards the leader perspective as opposed to the follower perspective will continue to limit research on spirituality and leadership. Therefore future research should not avoid exploring the subtleties of the follower experience (Lips-Wiersma *et al.*, 2009). This research focussed towards understanding both the leader and follower experience, however, rather than focus on all leaders, it is suggested that leaders are gauged firstly for how spiritually informed they are and how influential they are on other leaders. During the research it sometimes felt that leader participants were attempting to identify with other leaders within the organisation that they perceived to be spiritual, rather than identifying their spirituality. The idea that power could be related to how spiritually informed one is invites further research to understand the social processes as to how individuals engage with others and the organisation to gain greater shares of power.

Future research should include extending this study through conducting a comparative case study exploring leader and follower perspectives of the leaders' spirituality between varying organisations that have spiritual foundations. This could determine how influential the positive deviant is in suppressing follower feelings through making salient negative effects. Additionally, not for profit organisations should also be included for a comparative study of the effects of the leaders' spirituality on the organisation for leaders and followers. Future research examining the hegemonic influences that followers also bring to organisations and which challenge alternative approaches to organisational design should be explored along with tensions that exist between individual spirituality and organisational realities.

Guided by conceptual development of a Critical WPS framework, (Lips-Wiersma *et al.*, 2009) further research should seek to apply the framework further to organisations. The development of a measurement tool to assist in firstly determining what is low and high instrumentality and control provides a means in which to further explore through an interpretative approach leader and follower perceptions, as similarities between conceptual suggestions and research results lend support to this model.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusion

#### 6.1 Overview

This research sought to understand both the leader and follower experience as to the effects of the leaders spirituality. A review of the literature illustrated the limited conceptual development and largely lacking empirical evidence. Instead, mainly positive outcomes were assumed to have resulted for leaders and followers. This research sought to explore both the positive and less than positive outcomes that may have eventuated for leaders and followers. Adopting a case study approach within a single case organisational observation, 29 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. Leader and follower participants were asked questions relating to perceived advantages and disadvantages as to the leaders' spirituality.

#### 6.2 Summary of main findings

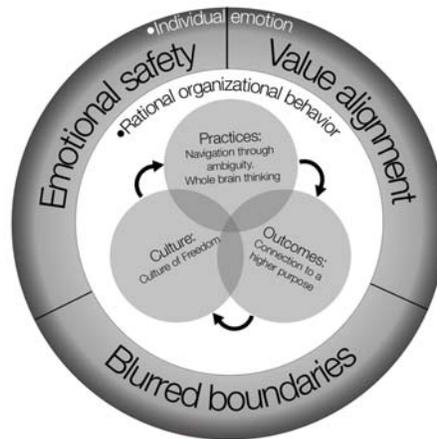


Figure 5.1: Relationship between categories and themes.

Leaders and Followers described the central effects of the leaders' spirituality as being a 'Culture of Freedom', 'Navigation through Ambiguity', 'Stimulating Whole Brain Thinking'

and 'Connection to a higher purpose'. Leaders and followers agreed that they experienced a culture of freedom through the lack of articulation of organisational values and also in prescribed meanings. They also felt the culture of freedom was provided through being given freedom in how they were allowed to connect to the organisation and to their work. As a result followers and leaders experienced a sense of belonging and connection. However, followers also described feelings of frustration at having to navigate through the ambiguity that existed within the environment of freedom. Leaders and followers were encouraged to engage in whole brain thinking as a means of gaining greater awareness and in establishing greater understanding of others. As a result some followers suppressed feelings as a means of justifying others behaviours. Leaders and followers experienced a connection to a higher purpose, however followers were more sceptical of the authenticity of leaders and the organisation resulting in followers seeking out other followers as a means of support and understanding as to observed inconsistencies.

Results indicated that positive outcomes did result from the leaders spirituality, however, the results also found a number of less than positive outcomes resulted also. The varying interpretations of the leaders spirituality resulted in three central themes emerging. These were, 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries'. Figure 5.1 illustrates the relationship between the categories and themes. The themes of 'Emotional Safety', 'Value Alignment' and 'Blurred Boundaries' were considered the expression of individual emotion, with the categories acting as directing rational organisational behaviour.

### **6.3 *Main implications and further exploration***

At the completion of the data analysis, it became clear that a number of tensions existed within the leader and follower relationship, based on the concepts of individual spirituality within an organisational context. Therefore, the discussion section considered the relationship between individual spirituality and organisational realities. The tensions raised queries as to how and if spirituality can co-exist within an organisational context. This research suggested that tensions can co-exist, as long as there is awareness of the possible outcomes if the equilibrium becomes unbalanced. It was found that follower assumptions of how they expected organisations to function may inadvertently prevent organisations from alternative ways of thinking and behaving. In this research, leaders were often more accepting of alternative ways of thinking and behaving than were followers. A focus towards shared

organisational goals does provide for a means to re-position current assumptions. However, the tension that exists between providing freedom to followers through a lack of articulation and allowing discretion in decision making for leaders in enacting their spirituality seems incompatible. This research illustrated that currently the equilibrium is balanced, however, the possibility of negative subcultures and cultural fragmentation is high.

Further research to determine how leaders and followers manage these tensions within organisations is warranted.

#### **6.4 Reflections**

As an employee within the research organisation, my research subject has led me on my own journey of understanding and sense making. Initially, I felt a natural scepticism of leaders' intentions as to the use of spiritual ideals, however, as this research was concluded, and results were analysed it became apparent that even I held assumptions based on how I expected organisations to behave. This was an organisation that behaved slightly differently. Leaders were more able to more easily adapt to the spiritual ideals held by the organisation, however followers appeared to struggle with this. As an HR Advisor, providing support to senior leaders in their decision making, I continue to struggle with managing how to encourage leaders to be guided by their spirituality in their decision making and in knowing and having to also manage the consequences of perceived follower unfairness based on these decisions. In saying this, however, I embrace the tensions raised as an opportunity to expand my knowledge in my own spiritual journey. Organisations that do not fit conventional norms and assumptions of what we expect organisations to behave like, provide exciting opportunities for researchers of organisational theory.

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## *Appendices*

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*Appendix A: Interview Protocol*

### Interview Protocol

#### *The effects of the spirituality of leadership on the organisation: comparing leader and follower perceptions.*

##### **Introduction:**

Interviews will be conducted either in the interviewee's office or within the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] at organisations premises. Participants will firstly be thanked for their participation and then the participant information sheet shall be read to the participant by the researcher. The participant will then be asked if they have any questions about the research. The consent sheet will then be read out to the participant by the researcher. It will be **emphasized** that the research will be audio taped to ensure accuracy and that confidentiality will be provided and any details or information that could lead to identification of the participant or organisation will be altered or removed. In addition, definitions of terms will be read out to participants to assist them in understanding the terminology utilised within the interview questions.

Questions shall be asked in exactly the same way of both leaders and followers, in order to understand similarities and differences in the perceptions of workplace spirituality between leaders and followers in the organisation.

##### **Definitions:**

<b>Workplace Spirituality:</b>	<b>"A framework of organisational values evidenced in the organisational culture that facilitates meaning, purpose and being connected to others and the environment in a way that provides feelings of completeness" (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003).</b>
<b>Leaders:</b>	<b>Those in positions of power.</b>
<b>Spiritual Leadership:</b>	<b>Leaders who provide meaningful work in the context of community with a sense of joy and respect for inner life of followers (Fry, 2003).</b>
<b>Followers:</b>	<b>Followers are described as all other participants in the organisation of research that are not considered leaders.</b>

Interview concludes with participant asked if they have additional comments to make. They are then advised that a transcript of the interview will be provided to them and informed that they can remove information at any time. Again the participant is thanked for their participation in this research.

## Interview Questions for Leaders

### *What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the relational authenticity between leaders and followers?*

1. What are the main values and qualities that you feel the organisation possess that are driven by you as leader?
2. What are the benefits of these values and qualities to you in your relationship with employees and why?
3. What are the disadvantages of these values and qualities to you in your relationship with employees and why?
4. What are the benefits in being able to personally identify/relate with employees?
5. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see by yourself identifying with employees?

### *What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the organisation?*

6. What are the beneficial outcomes you see by integrating spirituality within work practices for yourself and the organisation?
7. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see for the organisation and for yourself by integrating spirituality within work practices?
8. Do you feel that employees are able to express their own spirituality within the organisation? (*What informs you of this?*) Should they be able to?
9. What beneficial outcomes do you see for the organisation by its involvement in charitable, social and environmental activities?
10. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see for organisation by its involvement in charitable, social and environmental activities?

### *What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the power dynamics between leaders and followers?*

11. What benefits do you see for yourself and for the organisation in providing employees opportunities for individual growth?
12. What potential or current negative outcomes do you see for yourself and the organisation in providing employees opportunities for individual growth? (*What informs you of these?*)
13. What benefits do you see for employees in being able to express work frustrations to leaders?
14. What potential or current negative outcomes do you see resulting from employees expressing work frustrations to leaders?
15. We have discussed relationships, spirituality and the effects on the organisation today. Out of the things that you have mentioned what are the three most important expressions of spirituality to you?

## Interview Questions for Employees

*What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the relational authenticity between leaders and followers?*

1. What are the main values and qualities that you feel the company possess that are driven by its leadership?
2. What are the benefits of these values and qualities to you in your relationship with leaders and why?
3. What are the disadvantages of these values and qualities to you in your relationship with leaders and why?
4. What are the benefits in being able to personally identify/relate with leadership?
5. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see by employees identifying/relating with leadership?

*What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the organisation?*

6. What are the beneficial outcomes you see by integrating spirituality within work practices for yourself and the organisation?
7. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see for the organisation and for yourself by integrating spirituality within work practices?
8. Do you feel that employees are able to express their own spirituality within the organisation? (*What informs you of this?*) Should they be able to?
9. What beneficial outcomes do you see for the organisation by its involvement in charitable, social and environmental activities?
10. What current or potential negative outcomes do you see for the organisation by its involvement in charitable, social and environmental activities?

*What effect does a leader's spirituality have on the power dynamics between leaders and followers?*

11. What benefits do you see for yourself and for the organisation in being provided opportunities for individual growth?
12. What potential or current negative outcomes do you see for yourself and the organisation in being provided opportunities for individual growth? (*What informs you of these?*)
13. What benefits do you see for yourself in being able to express work frustrations to leaders?
14. What potential or current negative outcomes do you see resulting from expressing work frustrations to leaders?
15. We have discussed relationships, spirituality and the effects on the organisation today. Out of the things that you have mentioned what are the three most important expressions of spirituality to you?

*Appendix B: Human Ethics Approval*

Ref: HEC 2008/46

3 July 2008

Ms Jacqueline Christie  
Department of Management  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Jacqueline

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal "An organisational ethnography: The invitation and seduction of workplace spirituality" has been considered and approved.

Please note that this approval is subject to the incorporation of the amendments you have provided in your email of 28 June 2008.

Best wishes for your project.

Yours sincerely

Dr Michael Grimshaw  
*Chair, Human Ethics Committee*

*Appendix C: Consent Form*

Jacqueline M Christie  
16 Neville Street  
Spreydon  
Christchurch

August 2008



#### CONSENT FORM

*The effects of the spirituality of leadership on the organization: comparing leader and follower perceptions.*

- I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate voluntarily as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that confidentiality will be preserved. In addition, I understand that information may be incorporated into future studies undertaken by the researcher.
- I understand that any information that is published will be provided to [REDACTED] in aggregate form only and that the researcher will ensure that any details that could lead to my identification or the identification of [REDACTED] will be altered or removed.
- I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.
- I am aware that any audio recording tapes will be securely locked and all transcripts of tapes will be stored on disk with password protection. At the completion of the project all tapes and disks will be destroyed.
- I note that the project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

Name: (please print) .....

Signature:

Date:

