

## **Culture in the South African Police Services**

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### **1 Introduction**

Organizations are lifeless entities that require people to give them life and make things happen. Managers give meaning to organizations by creating rules, regulations and conditions in order to create uniformity in organizations. Employees develop certain perceptions of the organization based on these rules, regulations and conditions. Employees also develop a shared meaning as they attempt to make sense of their work place. These interactions form the basis of organizational climate and culture.

This paper discusses these two interrelated concepts and attempts to apply them to the South African Police Service as a government institution. The paper starts by defining organizational climate and the factors that can be used to get a better understanding of this concept. Organization culture is discussed in depth as it exists within the climate and understanding culture leads to an understanding of the climate as well. The paper concludes by focusing on a new culture for the SAPS with emphasis on a new model proposed to bring about change in the SAPS.

### **2 Definition of Culture**

Robbins (1993:605) defines culture as a system of shared meaning. It represents common perceptions that are held by members of the organization. This is also referred to as the dominant culture while mini cultures that are formed within organizations are called subcultures (Robbins (1993:605). The major source of an organizational culture is its founders who determine what they want the organization to be. This influences the criteria used in the selection of employees which, in turn ensures that the culture is sustained. The culture of the SAPS, as a government institution is largely determined by the government of the day. For instance, in the past, the government expected the police to serve it and not the community, so the police adopted values such as the use of force, alienation from the community, abuse of human rights because their primary client was the government. After the democratic government took over in 1994, which is opposed to these values, the SAPS had to make the necessary changes and start to be customer oriented.

Reyneke (2001:12) defines culture as "the deposit of knowledge, experiences, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving". This definition touches on all aspects that are influenced by culture and therefore indicates

that culture is a way of life which is developed and shared by a certain group. New members of the group must learn the culture, this ensures that it is sustained as it is passed down from generation to generation.

Boone and Kurtz (1992:99) define culture as "shared beliefs of a society". They further define corporate culture as behavior patterns that are generally accepted within an organization and are adopted by each generation of employees. This is in line with Dessler's definition of corporate culture, i.e. shared values and expectations of a company (1995 :953). Culture, the shared meaning, indicates a set of characteristics that are valued by the organization.

Culture influences what we believe in, choices we make and our attitudes. The ethnocentric character of culture may be a source of inter cultural conflict, i.e.. conflict which occurs among members of different cultural groups. People tend to believe that their own culture is superior to that of others and then judge other people from their own cultural background. It is important to remember that although the SAPS as an organization has its own culture which must be adopted by all members, the latter also have their own culture which they try to integrate with the one of the organization. It often happens that members have conflicts with each other because of their original cultural beliefs. For instance, the whites may believe that the purpose of having a barbecue is to relax while the blacks may believe that it is to change from the traditional way of preparing food which they must eat, and go on with other things. A conflict may therefore occur when a certain station or unit has a barbecue as the black members may want to eat and go while the whites may still want to relax and enjoy themselves.

### **3 Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture, whether good or bad, exists within the whole Organization. The culture has a great impact on the functioning of the organization. Whilst culture can be used to describe national, religious or racial beliefs, attitudes or values , organizational culture can be defined as a system of shared meaning and understanding that influences how the individual acts within the functions of that organization.

It is important to understand the impact of an organization's culture on its operations and the way in which that culture can be used to improve service delivery. The nature of the Police culture can have positive or detrimental effects on the way in which Police personnel carry out their function. Resorting to violence, harassment, corruption and other deviant behavior will be experienced in Police Organizations where these kind of activities are an accepted or enforced part of the prevailing culture. Culture change is inherently difficult, therefore it is important to establish what is it that needs to be changed and then to change that which is necessary.

Regardless, the breaking of cultural habits and learning new ways is a difficult process which is likely to be accepted more readily with improved consultation (both internally and externally), communication, training and

the development of appropriate human resource systems.

#### **4 Characteristics of Organizational Culture**

Robbins (1993:602) points out that research suggested that there are ten characteristics that indicate the essence of organization culture. These exist on a continuum and can be used to determine the culture of an organization.

- Member identity

Member identity refers to the extent to which employees identify with the organization or with their job or field of professional expertise. In the old SAP, members used to have a strong organizational identity to an extent that they even isolated themselves from their families and the community. There is a tendency to move towards the other end of the continuum.

- Group emphasis

this refers to the extent to which work activities are done in groups or individually. The commanders often encourage members to work in groups of three or four when attending complaints, doing visible policing, etc. because of the dangerous nature of their work. This helps them to provide back up for one another. Group emphasis contributes to group thinking within members. This group thinking influences their socialization process and their way of thinking, it could also have the following dysfunctions within the Organization:

- \* Dependency

This is a state of group disempowerment and helplessness. The group needs a parent figure who can protect and take care of them; or a messiah figure who can save them from their misery. The group also experiences a lot of anxiety if their dependency need is not satisfied. This could lead them to create structures as defense mechanism that can contain this anxiety. The problem with such structures is that the group's need for a leader is based on the assumption of dependency, and not on task performance. SAPS structures are not designed for effectiveness, but rather based on satisfying the dependency need.

- \* The Paranoid Schizoid Position

Paranoid refers to badness being experienced as coming from outside oneself and schizoid refers to splitting. Splitting is the process of dividing feelings into different elements. Splitting is most often accompanied by projection, which is locating feelings in others rather in oneself.

The projection of feelings of badness outside the self helps to produce a state of illusory goodness and self-idealisation. This white and black mentality simplifies complex issues and may produce a rigid culture in which growth is inhibited. Every organization has boundaries between insiders and outsiders. Splitting and projection exploits this natural boundary.

Sometimes splitting occurs between groups in the institution. Structural divisions into sections, departments, professions, disciplines and so forth are necessary for organizations to function effectively. However, these divisions become fertile grounds for the splitting and projection of negative images. The gaps between departments or professions are available to be filled with many different emotions denigration, competition, hatred, prejudice, paranoia.

The less contact there is with other sections, the greater the scope of projection of this kind. Contact and meetings may be avoided subconsciously to preserve self-idealisation based on these projections. This results in the institution becoming stuck in a paranoid schizoid projective system. Emotional disorder interferes with the functioning of an organization, particularly in relation to tasks which require co-operation or collective change

Often departments have a subconscious competition of who is going to be the dominant department. Maybe the dominant party can use the minority to be bullied and tortured, thus taking its own impurities, putting it in another place where it can be dealt with more easily. This is very much the case with different departments in the SAPS. Often quite evident with the detective services, the uniform branch, the functional staff and the support services. Each group creating its own containers for the people working there. These fears and anxieties are then projected onto the other group, creating the fantasy that they represent something good and the other department something evil. The two groups also ensure this split by avoiding contact with each other.

#### \* Survival

The struggle for survival is probably the greatest known dynamic. This survival instinct is very much alive within organizations. In the SAPS there are limited promotional posts available. Capital, human and financial resources are also limited. The success of one police official could thus be felt at the expense of another. The survival anxiety of the less successful official stimulates an envious desire to spoil the others success. This usually takes the form of active sabotage, mostly by way of counter proposing suggestions made by the successful official. The game of survival is very much one of being in control of resources. Promotion in the SAPS will make resources in the form of money, power and authority available.

It is however important to bear in mind that people need just as much to survive psychologically as they need to survive physically. The psychological survival of people has a lot to do with dealing with unfinished business.

A person who joins the SAPS in a state of dependence because of unfinished business in the family situation could very well subconsciously be replacing the senior officer with a parent figure. This is a way of surviving psychologically.

#### \* Projective Identification and Counter Transference

Projective identification refers to a sub-conscious inter-personal interaction in which the recipients of a projection react to it in such a way that their own feelings are affected. They thus unconsciously identify with the projected feelings.

Counter transference is the state of mind in which other peoples feelings are experienced as ones own.

The community projects their feelings of insecurity onto the SAPS. The message is that there are bad elements that cannot be trusted and that these elements need to be policed and disciplined. In response to this projective process, the police start experiencing these feelings as their own. There is some evidence that projective identification is at work. If one just looks at the incredible hierarchy and the processes that have to be followed, it speaks of a reasonable amount of mistrust and insecurity. The Station Commissioner reports to the Area Commissioner, who then has to report to the provincial commissioner, who then has to report to one of the top 19 Commissioners, who has to report to one of the deputy Commissioners, who has to report to the National Commissioner.

"It is also through the mechanism of projective identification that one group on behalf of another group, or one member of a group on behalf of the other members, can come to serve as a kind of 'sponge' for all the anger, depression or guilt in the group. The group may then launch the angry member at management, or a depressed member may be unconsciously maneuvered into breaking down and leaving. This individual not only expresses or carries something for the group, but also may be used to export something that the rest of the group then need not feel in themselves. Similarly, a group may carry something for another group or for the institution as a whole".

#### \* Power

This dynamic refers to the ability to act upon others or upon organizational structure. One also has to differentiate between external and internal power. The first is derived from what the individual controls and from the sanctions one can impose on others. The latter is derived from the individuals knowledge and experience, strength of personality, and what their state of mind is, regarding their role.

The problem that some groups experience, is their perception that power is located outside themselves. This leaves the group with a sense of powerlessness.

This SAPS has located a lot of power in the Organizational staff functions. They are the ones with the contacts, the ones who can arrange things within minutes. The line function often find themselves incapable to arrange even the simplest thing.

The situation that we have in the SAPS is that our line functions have authority without power, and the staff functions have power without authority. This leaving the members confused and most often leads to work related stress.

Authority without power leads to a weakened, demoralized management. Power without authority leads to an authoritarian regime. It is the judicious mix and balance of the two that makes for the effective on-task management in a well run Organization. A sense of responsibility without having adequate authority and power to achieve outcomes often lead to work related stress and eventual burn-out".

\* The Institution as a Container

Organizations often provide a sense of psychological and emotional containment to individuals. This enables a member to project parts of the self that he/she does not want to be aware of into other more distant parts of the organization. He/she thus simply thrusts unpleasant facts out of his/her consciousness. Splits between departments within organizations often serve as very convenient containers to project inherent laziness. It is always the other group doing nothing or being lazy. In the SAPS the uniform branch will talk about the wonderful life that detectives have. Detectives will complain on having to retake the uniform branches statements the whole time, etc. In the larger context, one could say that the SAPS contains a tremendous need for dependency for its members. Wearing uniforms, calling people on ranks, having clear instructions on every single issue (even toilet paper has a SAP code) provides structures in which people find certainty, reduce choices and also avoid the responsibility for decisions. In all of us, there is the impulse to work and there is the impulse not to work. Where can this impulse not to work be located? Very conveniently, in the department or office down the hall, or in the other building; they are the lazy ones, or the reason we are not doing well at this moment. This is one unconscious reason why we form and join organizations: to provide us through splitting and projection, opportunities to locate difficult and hated aspects of ourselves in some other. On the one hand we can say that the police is still very much an old fashioned institution, not at all geared to operate in the 21st century; but on the other we cannot deny the psychological containment that this organization provides to the community. The popular over-emphasis on cost effectiveness in the public sector often obscures the psychological task of this sector. In the case of the police, the public are now called customers. While no doubt an important change in the sense that the police are trying to view us in a different way and asking us to do likewise, this can bring with it a different problem.

We need the police to be available, psychologically speaking, for the protection of certain of our attitudes towards authority. Indeed, accepting these projections, working them through, and handing them back to

society at large is part of the task of the police. If the police see themselves only as providing a service, and do not realize that psychological containment of tensions within society is also a central function, there is likely to be an increase in disorder rather than a reduction. If the police are no longer available in this way to society, they will not provide the necessary sense of authoritative containment.

## **5 Defense Mechanisms**

- Denial

This is one of the most common defense mechanisms. Denial is the act of refusing to accept the realities of a situation. This can often prove unhealthy when denial is not soon replaced by acceptance, because the longer the gravity of a situation is ignored, the more serious it can become; for example, if one is in denial of a disease diagnosis, the disease may become worse as it goes untreated.

After 1994 the South African Police was transformed into the South African Police Service which incorporated eleven police forces that existed. One of the most observable defense mechanisms during this phase, and even currently, was denial. A large percentage of the members in the service refused the realities of the new dispensation in South Africa and the effect that it will have on the police service. Close to a decade has already passed since the first transformation initiative, and many police people are still trying to cling to the values of what use to be.

- Displacement

This is another of the most common defense mechanisms. This occurs as a result of repression. When one is not able to release stress, or satisfy the urges of the id, due to circumstance, the resulting anxiety is often displaced onto another person or object innocent of any wrongdoing and disconnected from the situation. Most commonly, displacement takes the form of outward physical or verbal aggression. For example, a commanding officer that received a verbal maltreatment from one of his superiors might deal with his anger by going back to the office and verbally abusing his subordinates.

- Rationalization

In rationalization, one tries to find a reason or excuse for ones behavior which is more acceptable to the ego and superego. Again, one often fabricates a great deal of information as opposed to facing the reality of a situation.

This particular defense mechanism works extremely well as it totally rids the individual of any sense of guilt, remorse, or responsibility; therefore, it must be avoided as it tempts the individual to hide from reality.

For example, a female police official is departmentally trialed for missing an excessive amount of days at work without explanation, and for poor work performance while she was on the job. The real cause of the problem is the woman's alcohol abusive nature, but she rationalizes that it was due to the fact that her commander hated her, the other officials felt threatened by her ability, and that the police discriminate heavily on the basis of race and sex.

- Projection

Basically a projection is making something which is happening on the inside appear to be on the outside. A projection is similar to denial in that one is unwilling to accept the realities of one's own self. In projection, the faults and shortcomings, the taboo urges, of an individual are seen not as present in one self, but rather in others. Often, it is the urge to perform an unacceptable deed, the will of the id, which the super-ego will not permit an individual to perform, which is seen as present in others. One's inability to commit an act, and the urges subsequent repression, can manifest itself this way.

In the SAPS you often hear these examples; top management that does not allow us; Members are lazy or In this new South Africa nobody needs to work".

- People Focus

People focus refers to the extent to which management decisions are people or task oriented. Decisions in the SAPS are usually taken by those in higher ranks and imposed on subordinates who are expected to carry them out. This is probably because of its formalistic structure and previous militaristic style. The culture should be people centered and also promote entrepreneurship or individual thinking within management of the Police.

- Unit Integration

This refers to the extent to which different units in the organization are encouraged to function in a coordinated or interdependent manner. Police work often requires different expertise at the same time. For instance, in a scene of crime, the uniformed members are required to control the scene and help the detectives, the latter must start with preliminary investigations, the video unit is required to take pictures of the scene and the forensic expert is needed to gather evidence such as pieces of clothes, hair, blood stains, etc. which can help in the investigation. This indicates the need for activities of all these units to be coordinated so that objectives can be achieved.

- Control

Control refers to the extent to which rules, regulations and direct supervision are used to oversee and control

employees. The SAPS can be placed on the extreme side control on the continuum. Every decision that is taken is guided by rules, regulations and standing orders.

- Risk Tolerance

This is the extent to which employees are encouraged to be innovative and risk seeking. The SAPS has a low tolerance of risk as members are expected to conform and obey orders without questioning. Police officers were not trained to challenge the system or come up with own initiatives. Reynecke (1997:11) points out that an entrepreneurial climate must be established so that the SAPS can function more effectively. This will enable the police to be more creative, take calculated risk and network with other departments. This may occur when, for instance, different departments deal with the four pillars of the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS).

- Reward Criteria

The extent to which rewards such as salary increases and promotions are allocated according to employee performance rather than seniority, favoritism or other non-performance factors. The SAPS is struggling to start rewarding people according to performance. This is supported by Reynecke (1997:13) who says that competence is not always the criteria for promotion but seniority and favoritism.

- Conflict Tolerance

This is the degree to which employees are encouraged to air conflicts and criticisms openly. There is no general order on this in the police. It depends on the manager of the specific unit or section.

- Meanness Orientation

This refers to the extent to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and processes used to achieve those outcomes. Police managers always put pressure on their members for more arrests (outcomes). This sometimes makes members abuse peoples rights in an attempt to satisfy management.

- Open System Focus

The extent to which the organization monitors and responds to changes in the external environment is called open system focus. The SAPS functions as an open system. Community Policing Forums have been established countrywide so that the police and the community can work together in identifying the needs of the community and address them properly.

## **5 Learning Culture**

A learning culture is a process where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learned how to learn together (Kretner and Kinicki, 1995:575). Learning culture Pro-actively creates, acquires and transfers knowledge and that changes behavior on the basis of new knowledge and insights.

Robbins (1993:615) identifies four ways in which culture is learned. These are briefly discussed in this section of the paper.

### **5.1 Stories**

Stories are usually told in organizations, about who the boss is, what he/she likes and expects, etc. In the SAPS, stories are usually told about what the SAPS was like when management was predominately white English speaking males and the discrimination which prevailed in the past. Some people tell stories about the tough training they received in the past, how things have changed and who the Commissioners are. Hodgetts (1991:437) classifies story telling and the use of ceremonies as forms of symbolic actions. He indicates that story telling can be used to encourage employees to perform better. For instance, a superintendent in the SAPS can tell young detective sergeants how he used to trace suspects and apprehend them.

### **5.2 Rituals**

According to Robbins (1993:616), rituals are A repetitive sequences of activities that express and reinforce the key values of the organization, what goals are important, which people are important and which are expendable. In the past, the SAPS used to have a police woman and policeman of the year award. They presently have a SAAMBOU bank community policing award on an annual basis. The purpose of this project, sponsored by the SAAMBOU bank, is to encourage cooperation between the police and the community by selecting the best police station in terms of cleanliness, effectiveness and cooperation with the community.

### **5.3 Material Symbols**

Material symbols convey information about who is important and the kind of behavior that is desirable in the organization. Top executives, like in the SAPS, qualify to stay in luxurious police houses, have official vehicles and chauffeurs in addition to their finance cars and get large offices. People in the different hierarchies in the SAPS have different ranks ranging from constable to commissioner. The non-commissioned officers must salute the commissioned officers as a symbol of respect for the power vested on the officer by the State

President.

#### **5.4. Language**

Organizations and even units within organizations make use of language to identify members of a culture or subculture. Members indicate their acceptance of culture by learning the language, just like members of a gang. Police persons, for instance, like to call members of the community haas, an Afrikaans word meaning hare. Unique terms are also used to refer to supplies, products, etc. Police books all have SAP numbers, so they are usually called by numbers alone, for instance, a leave registration book with SAP 26 is called a 26. The police also make use of certain words to refer to alphabets, for instance, GP is called Golf Pappa. The purpose of this is to ensure that the letters are heard clearly especially when checking suspected vehicles over a two way radio.

### **6 Sustaining Culture**

When people apply for jobs, the decision maker usually selects the candidates whose values are consistent with those of the organization. Candidates also select themselves for the organization by only applying to those organizations whose values are in line with theirs. In the past, the SAPS did not only select candidates whose values were in line with those of the organization but the criteria followed also stipulated the desired weight and length. Police women, for instance, had to be slim and of a certain height and men had to meet a certain breast measure. This means that some small built men who could have probably been good policemen were rejected.

The role of selection as explained above does not mean that new employees automatically become part of the organizational culture. They still have to internalize the culture through the process of socialization. This is important for the organization because new members can easily disturb the culture as it is still strange to them. In the past, all police recruits had to go through a six months training at police colleges that were situated throughout the country. The training Program included intensive physical training, gun handling and classroom studies. The emphasis was on producing tough cops who are aggressive, never cry and follow rules without questioning.

Top management ensures that a culture is sustained by specifying the acceptable dress code and desirable actions that will bring about rewards such as promotions and salary grades.

### **7 Benefits of Culture**

Hodgetts (1991:438) indicates that organization culture can provide certain benefits to the organization. Culture can serve as a control mechanism because people will know what is expected from them and work

accordingly. Behavior which deviates from cultural norms and values is discouraged by managers and others. Strong cultures create consensus regarding appropriate norms and they are strongly supported by all.

Culture is selective as it sets guidelines of what is acceptable, thus limiting the behavior of its members. The police regulations spell out the culture of the organization because it indicates the behavior which is considered to be a lack of discipline. These are behaviors such as sexual harassment, being disrespectful towards superiors, abuse of state property and the like.

Culture can also promote innovation in organizations that favor creative thinking. Some managers do encourage a culture of innovation while others expect members to follow the old ways of doing things and disregard new ideas. This is particularly the case when these creative ideas are suggested by members from the lower ranks. Organizational culture also helps an organization to formulate and implement strategies. The new culture of the SAPS encourages members to be more customer oriented. Strategies are then formulated and implemented around this culture.

Hodgetts (1991:441) identified personnel commitment as another benefit for the organization. Strong cultures make people identify with the organization which then increases commitment and morale of the employees. Commitment occurs through three phases: during the first phase, called compliance, employees allow themselves to be influenced by others in order to obtain external rewards. The second phase is identification, during which individuals accept the influence from others in order to satisfy their need for belonging. The last phase is called internalization, where individuals find the values of the organization to be intrinsically rewarding and corresponding to theirs.

## **8 Managing Organizational Culture**

Culture must be properly managed in order to ensure that the norms and values of the organization are maintained. This is done by determining those beliefs, values and norms of an organization and communicating them so that they can be internalized by the employees. Rewards are offered in the form of money, promotion and approval, to those who are committed to the culture. The recruitment, selection and promotion policies that are followed by management are a way of ensuring that culture is sustained. All other practices in the organization are strategically planned to sustain the culture. This is a way of managing culture.

Smit and Cronjé (1997:11) define management as as the process of planning, organizing, leading and controlling the resources of the organization to achieve stated organizational goals as efficiently as possible. This definition applies to everything which must be managed, including culture. Management must plan how culture will be developed and sustained, for instance by determining the kind of behavior, belief system and values that will be allowed in the organization. Management determines an organizational structure which will symbolize the culture. The leading and control functions are performed to sustain the culture. Members are

motivated and socialized such that they can internalize the culture. Behavior which is in line with the culture is rewarded while deviant behavior is punished.

## 9 Changing Organizational Culture

Robbins (1993:625) indicates that cultures can be changed. He identified four conditions that are most likely to bring about cultural changes.

\* a dramatic crisis: this is a situation which causes an organization to be in chock and start to question the relevance of the existing culture. In the case of the SAPS, such a crisis could be a situation in which the community boycotts police services and create their own crime fighting structures. Vigilante groups such as Amapogo a mathamage have emerged but they are not yet strong enough to cause a crisis for the SAPS.

\* a turnover in leadership: in most companies, the culture of an organization is determined by management. New top management can introduce new values and ways of doing things. This has happened in the SAPS, in 1995 when the first National Commissioner was appointed. The changes which were introduced, were basically influenced by the government of the day as indicated above, that the SAPS largely shapes their cultures around the beliefs of the government.

\* young and small organizations: an organization which is young and small is less likely to have a strong culture in which case it becomes easier to communicate new values.

\* weak culture: it goes without say that it will be much easier to change a weak culture than a strong and well established one.

Robbins (1990:459) indicates that the above are conditions that may be favorable to change culture, but the critical question to ask is how is culture changed.

The first thing is to unfreeze the *status quo*. A clear strategy is required for this process to be successful. Management may have to do a cultural analysis to determine the weaknesses and strengths of the current culture as well as the proposed one. These will also be compared to each other to see what needs to be changed. Those characteristics of culture mentioned above can be used to analyze the current culture. Management should also look at the background of the founders of the culture, how the organization responded to past crises and who are considered to be deviant and how the organization responds to them. Those cultural values and beliefs that must be adjusted should be determined so that the correct and relevant step can be determined.

The next phase is to execute the change by introducing new values and rules of behavior. The last phase of

changing organizational culture is rephrasing so that a state of equilibrium can be attained. A people oriented organization should offer support and motivation to its employees so that they can internalize the new culture with ease.

In 1994, after the new dispensation came into existence in South Africa, the SAPS had to make a lot of changes in its structure, culture and strategies, as demanded by the government of the day. Cultural changes included a move from a culture of militarism and power to one of self-control, movement from emphasizing hierarchy, rank and authority towards an emphasis on development, creativity and flexibility. Moving away from emphasizing old practices and standing orders towards maintaining a balance between old practices that are still relevant and new ones. Members were encouraged to start thinking for themselves, view themselves as community problem solvers and not just people who follow rules.

It seems like the change process described above was not followed in the SAPS when changes were introduced and implemented. This is probably because a culture of policing in a democracy was supposed to be introduced, so management just implemented it. The approach taken was not people oriented, the National Commissioner even told some members that they must either adapt to the new changes or leave the SAPS. This shows that the fact that people are, by nature, resistant to change was not taken into consideration. Some members have become negative towards the SAPS that they no longer became effective and others have taken packages. This shows that if the process of changing a culture is not properly managed, it will have some undesirable consequences such as resistance.

## **10 A new Culture for the SAPS**

A culture of entrepreneurship must be created in the SAPS if the police are to meet the demands and needs of the community in a more successful manner. Reynecke (1997:13) indicates that a culture of entrepreneurship did not exist within the SAPS in the past as emphasis was on bureaucratic rules and regulations. The basic police training in the past encouraged unity in everything. Students were trained to march at the same pace, shout commands in unison and be accountable for one another's actions. For instance, if one member did something wrong like not following commands or instructions, his/her whole platoon would be punished.

This culture must be changed because entrepreneurship requires people to think as individuals, come up with strange ideas, advocate them and ensure that they are implemented.

Knowledge of police work and in-service training are needed to stimulate the entrepreneurship potential. The SAPS must be mission driven and find the most effective way for delivering a real service to the community. Risk taking and initiative must be encouraged and rewarded accordingly. Reynecke (1997:14) indicates that entrepreneurship may be successful in smaller organizations than in large ones. This means that authority

must be decentralized to lower levels so that station commissioners can be able to practice this new culture. An entrepreneurial culture must be encouraged in the SAPS through frequent communication across departmental lines and among people with different viewpoints, structures that provide access to innovative role models and more risk tolerance. Courses on creativity must be arranged and members be allowed to implement new ideas. Management must start encouraging upward communication and participative decision making. The police has to adopt a new cultural change to meet the external environment challenges and expectations.

## **11 The SAPS Structure Defense Mechanism**

The SAPS has a very over bounded bureaucratic structure. The conscious reason from top management will be that these structures are there for discipline and control. The first question that jumps to my mind is whether this is the way that adults would want to be treated. My hypothesis is that people join the organization in a state of dependence, still needing a parent figure. Anxiety is caused by the thought of having to function independently, making own decisions, taking responsibility for own actions, etc. This anxiety can be contained within an over bounded bureaucratic organizational structure. In this type of structure there is always a parent / child relationship. No situation or decision can be dealt with, except if there are rules and regulations dictating every fine detail of the action. Once again the ritual task performance culture creates a structure within which members can contain their anxieties.

The dependency paradigm is also quite evident in the language that police people use; e.g. "*Halo ouboet*", "*Hey pappie, ek het darem vinnig gery*", "*Ma maar ek is nou honger*" or "*Ja boetie, wat wil jy hê?*" or "*As ons dit nie doen nie gaan ons pak kry*".

Functional police people often refer to the organization as "Fivaz and sons"; 'Fivaz' referring to the police commissioner (or father) and sons to the rest of the people working there. In all these examples there are referrals to some authoritative figure within the family set-up. Police people who enter the organization are discouraged from using their initiative and discretion (children should be seen not heard). People leaving the organization usually go to similar bureaucratic structures like universities or other state departments.

An interesting phenomena is when members attempt to minimize their anxiety regarding individual responsibility. Powerful internal conflict is then experienced between the responsibility demanded by his/her work and his/her wishes to avoid this burden by acting irresponsibly. This intra-personal struggle is then often projected into interpersonal conflict.

This system has been going for many years now, and since there is no profit connected to its outcome it can be artificially kept alive for decades on end. As new members enter the system they are forced to introject the organizations defense system which leads new members to experience a considerable degree of pathological

anxiety.

As Bion has shown the work group ceases to operate when anxiety and other emotions cause the group to work in one of the basic assumption modes. This is highly evident in the SAPS. From 120 thousand members, only + one tenth are at any time busy with matters of safety and security. On an average station of 50 people only 4 are out on patrol vans dealing with issues of safety and security. There are currently more Captains in the SAPS than there are Constables. The list goes on.

## **12 Making Culture Changes**

There is no question that we cannot hurtle into the future with our eyes fixed firmly on the rear-view mirror. The fact is that we are moving through some of the most tempestuous years in the history of our nation and this turbulence will put enormous strain on our police system. The police must anticipate what is coming and plan for it. Here is the five A5 MODEL as an ingredient for successful management and leadership:

- **A clear shaped vision**

Having a clear shaped vision of where the organization is going based on the input of the employees and the community.

- **A Personal Commitment**

Management having a strong , unyielding and continuous commitment to the values of the police. Hire the best and brightest and commit to the diversity and representivity. Build trust by maintaining respect for and amongst all members of the organization.

- **A System that Empowers People**

Promote employees participation in the direction taken and decisions made by the organization. Encourage them to empower the citizens of the communities in which they live to actively participate in meeting their own expectations.

- **A Method that Develops and Rewards People**

Develop the skills and abilities of members of the organization and ensure continual improvement through coaching, training and rewarding.

- **Ability to Think and Live in the Long Term**

Operate the police on a Long term basis with persistence and patience. As in life, the band aid approach to problems will have short lived success, at best.

We must find the root of the problem and be willing to commit to real solutions. In most cases, these will require a great deal of time, effort and energy.

- **A Forceful Culture Change**

If the traditional concept of police management needs to be changed it would have to follow the development of the new A5 MODEL. This development process must produce creative and innovative agents of change amongst leaders who can make it happen. The police should for visionary community policing. Participatory management should be emphasized as a dominant and a productive style. Public access to information should be promoted and community policing for increasing pro-active public mind set. Encourage management to accumulate post graduate qualifications for independent thoughts and behaviors. Labor partnership should be enhanced through integrated strategy plans for effective and efficient utilization of resources. The police should get the total understanding of the whole criminal justice system and also understand the socio-political context of the police environment. To lead successfully, management will have to master the art of data driven decision making and surround themselves with similarly skilled staff.

### **13 Relationship between Climate and Culture**

Smit & Cronjé (1997:238) treat organization climate and culture as having the same meaning. These authors say that culture is the personality of the organization which enables management to know why employees do or do not do certain things. It also helps anyone who wants to understand organizational phenomena as it is a cause of and explains these phenomena. The complete Word Finder describes climate as the prevailing trend of opinion or public feeling, the mood. It can therefore be said that the climate of an organization is the general mood, atmosphere or feeling of the organization. This can be clearly understood by comparing different organizations. For instance, most people say that the climate in institutions such as the SAPS and the Defense Force is more formalistic, rigid and employees are distant from one another. Other departments such as Sport and Recreation are less rigid and when comparing with the private sector, e.g. the insurance companies, the atmosphere may be even more relaxed and less formalized.

Climate refers to the employees perception of their work environment while culture is their beliefs and values, i.e.. their way of life. This means that culture exists within a certain organizational climate.

This brief discussion indicates that the climate is influenced by the culture of the organization. Schein

(1989:314) indicates that culture operates at one level below the climate and largely determines it. This is supported by Hodgetts (1991:432) who asserts that organizational climate also changes when the culture changes. Understanding culture will help a public manager understand the possible and desirable climate for the particular organization. The climate is the general mood which exists as a result of the values, beliefs and practices of the organization. This means that a discussion of the culture of an organization will also be explaining its prevailing climate.

## **14 Conclusion**

The SAPS is currently experiencing difficulties servicing the community properly as some members still treat the community as the enemy and not partners in crime. The organization has also experienced a brain drain as a result of cultural changes. However, one cannot say with certainty that this is the case as people left for various other reasons, like better offers in the private sector.

In order for the SAPS to implement the policies of the government of the day, such as *batho pele*, it must change completely from its previous culture and start to be people oriented. The demilitarization process was interpreted by some members as implying that there is no longer respect and discipline in the SAPS. Most members have lost a sense of pride and commitment in their job. Some are still confused about what their role is in relation to that of the community in CPFs. These must be changed for the SAPS to render a real service and create a safe and secure environment for all people in South Africa. A culture of entrepreneurship must be created so that members can start to be flexible, innovative and respond to the real needs of the community. To succeed today, police management must lay a strong foundation of strategic thinking and culture building, but they will not be able to attain that unless they develop anew culture which is individually focused than group focused. To unite strategy and culture you need to develop a clear vision of the policing goals and then to implement strategy for making the vision a reality . Management needs to cultivate a departmental culture that is dedicated to the vision. Culture change in any organization is an evolutionary process. Law enforcement organizations, due to their strong military background and traditional reliance on "*esprit de corps*", have developed strong vocational cultures.

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